

NEW YORK CITY TRANS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

RONA LOVE

Interviewer: Aviva Silverman

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Transcribed by Amanda Chu

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Aviva Silverman: Hi, my name is Aviva and I will be having a conversation with Rona Love for the New York City Trans Oral History Project in collaboration with the New York Public Library's Community Oral History Project. This is an Oral History Project centered on the experiences of trans identifying people. It's July 2nd, 2019 and it's being recorded on Broome street in Chinatown in my apartment. Hi, I'm really excited that you're here.

Rona Love: Hi.

Silverman: I'm really excited that you're here.

Love: Thank you for having me here.

Silverman: Yeah.

Love: It is my pleasure.

Silverman: Thank you.

Love: I'm introduce myself as Rona Sugar Love.

Silverman: Yeah. Hi, um I thought we could start with where you were born?

Love: I was born in a town called Toa Alta, in Puerto Rico on April 29, 1961.

Silverman: And you want to talk a little about your childhood or?

Love: Yes, um. As a child to the age of seven I was in the farm in Puerto Rico until 1968 that I got kidnapped with my twin sister. We spent two years in captivity, and in the process, I lost my sister, my twin sister. She'd die before we could get our rescue. In 1970, I was flown to New York where I was placed in and children mental institution because I lost my mind behind losing my twin. And we just still haven't been the same. It's like losing half of your heart and your soul. Thereafter, I spent nine years in a mental institution, and I wanted to uh revenge when I found out where the people that killed my sister and harm us as a child, I went and killed them I took the law into my hands. I killed them for the simple fact that two wrongs don't make a right but I couldn't live in my clear conscious mind, thinking and knowing that they could harm another child or another woman. So I thought that they don't need to be on this earth anymore. I was sent to prison where I spent three decades of my life. Thirty-five years. I have been recently released on April 17th, 2019, two weeks before my fifty-eighth birthday. During my hospital, um, treatments were supposed to been treatment. I was tortured, by mental health staff. I was sexually and physically abused. I was placed in strait jackets which that no longer exists anymore and while in strait jacket, they would drug me with medication and rape me in a room they call the quiet room, the rubber room, which is a room designed so that you don't harm yourself or others, but there's no windows on the door so staff go in there and do whatever they want with you. You help as you can. Bye bye. You too, drugged up. And you tied up in a strait jacket. After that

experience that I was incarcerated for the murders, for double murder, uh, my first years in incarceration, I suffer the same thing physical and sexual abuse by other prisoners as well as correction officers, guards that are supposed to be protecting us. I tried to commit suicide several times, I cut my veins--because I was tired of the pain that was never ending. You think that when you are incarcerated that you will be protected? No, you won't. Especially if you're gay, you bisexual, you transsexual, you're lesbian, and butch whatever was where you identify yourself in the LGBT community. You will have it rougher than anybody else because we are targets, at least back then in the 70s and 80s we was the worst target ever. It was the worst the words we was called the scum of the earth, we was called the most nastiest thing you could have ever known. You come in there as a human and while you in there you become a human animal. You do things that you never thought you would be doing in life. You are subject to so much craziness that your mind becomes adapted to the environment and negativity in that environment. To the 90s or to the beginning of 2000's to 2015 and 2016 was the last experiences I had in prison and meant to help with sexual and physical abuse. And 2015 after filing a complaint against a deputy superintendent of security, he had placed me in a mental health observation cell. Why they call it a mental health observation cell, its a cell that has a sign mental health that has nothing. You, they take your clothing away, there's no bedding, there's no mattress, you sleeping in a steel frame. And its a torture and doesn't help you, what it do to you, is it makes you [inaudible] your mental state of mind and it makes you want to commit suicide instead of helping you. And in the first place, you were supposed to have been there. They drive you crazy to justify putting you up there. After my third day up there, I was call one afternoon. It was in June. I never forget, they said that I had go to a medical, see a medical. Before you come out, you have to put your hands behind your back. There's a, there's a [inaudible] door, steel door with a slot on it that they open. You put your hands through there from behind and they cuff you before they open up. They're supposed to for security reason and for protecting them and protecting yourself. When they took me out, I came out like I'm going to medical unit. They put me in a side room that they have their, what they use for interviews during the daytime. It was on the 3:11 shift was it was around 5:00 in the afternoon. They pinned me on the wall when I was on the wall all of a sudden. The officer came in and grabbed me by my leg and took me down to the floor. They started punching me and, in my ribs, and slapping me in my face and telling me, this is for Deputy Superintendent Piccolo send you this and say hello. And then they spread my legs open and they took a baton and rammed it up my rectum. I lost my mind. I was really gone because I thought I'd never do that again. You handcuff, you helpless, they're holding you down. And there's nothing you could do. I lost my mind and I was placed an um, I now call it emergency P.K. wishes a transfer out of that facility to the Sing Sing Correctional Facility when I was placed in their mental health unit. And because they seen that I was in function and to write, they send me to the center of New York Psychiatric Center on December 30 of 2015. On February 2016, when I was sent to New York Psychiatric Center, staff got mad at me for some apparent reason. I never knew why. And they said that I was acting violently and that I was acting that I would go to harm. They took me to what they call now a five-point, which is the replacement of the straitjacket. What they do is they strap your hands. They strap your waist. They strap your legs. They strap your neck and they strap your forehead. They pin you down, like you getting ready to get executed in the electric chair. That's how they tie you up. After about a half hour or two, about 40 minutes after I was strapped. This T.A. that I would never, ever forget for the rest of my life. And I see his face every day. Walks

in the room while another one stood at the door and proceeded to rape me. While the other one watched from the door and telling me, "this is what you like right? This is what you like?" I mean, as a transgender woman since childhood, yes, I love consensual sex. I love to have intercourse when I want it, not when somebody is forcing it on me, and I have to like the person. I don't go around just having a sex with anybody, because it's been since 2017 since I, since November 4th, 2017 when I last had sex with someone that I really cared about. And that person disappeared from my life after that. And I have not ever since had any sex with anyone. And at the cause for that matter, because, first of all, I love myself. I take good care of my health, which is the most important in order for me to mess with somebody. They have to go get a physical, bring me paperwork and show me that they have very well the same like me. Every six months I get a checkup for my full physical, which I just recently had one, two weeks ago. And I have the paperwork with a clean bill of health. I'm very healthy, so I don't want to catch anything from anybody. And likewise, most if I was to ever have any type of sickness, I guess if for any reason I want people to know that I am sick for whatever other reason, maybe not necessarily means AIDS or anything, but you can get sick for many other things. I like the same when I'm honest with people like people to be honest with me.

Silverman: And when you say you love yourself like having self-love after all those experiences is like unbelievably beautiful possession, self-possession that you can have that. I wanted to know like what helped you survive. Like what gave you hope?

Love: Well, when I said that I love myself, I used to hate myself first. I wanted to die so bad that there wasn't a day that I didn't think about dying. There wasn't a day that I think about getting my freedom and come into my hand and climb on one of the highest buildings and just jump headfirst and commit suicide. Twelve years ago, I met this young intern by the name of Mick King K... he was a freshman at a, he's a trans man and he was a freshman with prisons, legal services. I was having problems with medical tending in my transitional, um, my focal glasses, I guess seizure disorder is due to a wrong medication that was given to me. I don't have seizures from birth or from anything else other than they gave me some medication was supposed to be for pain, for my lower back and end up on my late end of having me to get seizures, experience something I never experienced. Although it is gone all that's gone out of my system now. But it lasted quite a few years before it started slowing down. I keep the seizure medication, Keppra, what I used to take three thousand milligrams a day. I still keep a bottle of it just in case it comes back or something. But I haven't taken it in over a month, I haven't had a seizure. So, meaning that it's almost all out of my system or it's completely out of my system. Besides that medical issue, I take um hormones and I take hormone shots and stuff and just found that out for my transition in which in prison is how everything is hell push back due to bureaucracy [inaudible] and discrimination. They took me off my hormones in 1995 and had me 23 years without any hormones or treatment for my transition. And it caused me to lose whatever I already had developed since 1980 to 95'. [inaudible] concern what was the thing that hurt me the most. I hated myself so much and I wanted to die so bad because it made me feel less than a woman then. And I'm back to normal now, restarted back in 2017 that restarted me back on my hormones in November and it's been a different experience and a different process because it's slower than they used to be. It's not as fast and in my development, I'm not grown as they should

have been. I um..I went to Mount Sinai hospital St. Luke's. When I met with a surgeon who's going to do my breast implants in November, the first week in November. Due to a load of...surgeries they have, and then I'll go and get my SRS surgery done and then after that, I have to meet with Dr. Deng, also from Mount Sinai.

Silverman: And did you have access to like researching and finding out about this while inside or like how did you?

Love: No I already have, having all this in 1982, I've been in the process of doing it.

Silverman: Yeah.

Love: While being incarcerated, you limited to medical treatment and the thing that could provide you with and they don't want to pay for the surgery. I was fighting it for 30 years before I got approved to get it done. And then once I got approved to get it done in two weeks, later they decided to release me from prison.

Silverman: Wow.

Love: So, you know, it was a bureaucracy. But um--

Silverman: Yeah.

Love: *To* get back to the point of why--to me. Aye, aye. I had become a more healthy by myself, because I love myself for finding the people I have met, Hazel Katz, who I met [inaudible] project and Daniel Poliak, they make [inaudible] promoted, guy graduated, become an attorney, then got promoted to the [inaudible]. Director of Prison Justice Project and now currently working with, um, PLS again, and in Rikers Island to shut down Rikers Island. My community, I got involved with them 12 years ago too heavily with advocacy, I used to do articles for Black and Pink. And I still do, which I work with them and volunteer a lot of work with them and the mail process and writing articles.

Silverman: Did you get--did you have a pen pal when you were inside, or did you...?

Love: Yeah. Vivi. Vivi was my pen pal, which is also another transgender, I love her to death. She had to disappear for a while due to some problems she had, so I just received last night she called me, it was the most surprising thing because when I picked this, I got a phone call coming from Chicago, and I said who the hell is in Chicago calling me? And when I pick up it was ViVi, that was the most wonderful moment of my life because I love ViVi to death, she had been a great sister, great supporter and I was looking forward to seeing her at my release. But she was gone before I got released [inaudible] when we last spoke was, I want to have laughs on the phone.

Silverman: Wow.

Love: And so, then Emily because Emily was from NYU, she was in the studying and communication as journalists and we used to communicate. She used to come visit me. So, we got to become very close and now she's interning in California and has been rough because I miss her so dearly, we used to hang around a lot. So, I've met a lot of my other trans sisters and trans brothers who we hang around now together.

Silverman: That's so beautiful that you can meet them huh?

Love: Yes.

Silverman: Did you have anyone while you were incarcerated that was a friend to you or that you could bond over a certain your relationship to gender and your sexuality?

Love: Let me tell you. Um. In prison you don't have friends. You have associates and you can't trust nobody. Everybody in prison has an agenda. They want to uh...They only close to you for two reasons. What you could give them or what they could get out of you, or drugs. And these are the biggest problem that our community is divided in prison. Why? Because they're all busy going at each other's throats. And it's one of the promises I made that when I get out, I will have to unify our community in order for us to succeed and get what we want and be [inaudible] of progress, we all need to unify as one. Gay people doesn't see us as part of they family. Bisexuals are in between. Drag queens, they entertainers, and they really don't care about the transsexual because they feel that they are stealing they spotlight. So it's this kind of thing that is very hurtful. I mean, I said this story before and I said a thousand times how you greet a gay couple and they respond back to you is fuck you, bitch. That hurts, that hurts deeply because you still my brother.

Silverman: Yeah.

Love: You know, we still a family. We gotta--.

Silverman: What do you--Well, uh what do you sense are the differences of like this generation or younger, gay people now versus when you were here in the 70s?

Love: Well, it's amazing, uh this generation here. It's so wonderful and powerful that, it puts us to shame, the old generation because we didn't have the energy, the courage, to stand up the way the new generation is standing now. We didn't advocate as strong as hard as they'd doing for us today. We should be the ones advocating for the young generation, but it's the opposite. They bright. They smile. And they know what they are doing. They're very politically motivated and activated. I'm very proud because, two reasons, one, because they don't have it as rough as we had in back then. Ok, there's few incidents that happened and, you know, tragic. But in the 70s, we had it worst, we used to be tortured and really disrespected by society since people was like out of this world and very bad...

Silverman: Where did you hang out in the 70s, like were were places people gathered?

Love: Well, I spend my whole childhood life in mental institution, so they used to take us on trips to Riis Beach, to Bronx Zoo, Central Park.

Silverman: What was Riis like then?

Love: Oh, Riis was amazing, and you know I recently went to Riis and it's still amazing. It's--I mean, there's been some modifications in that beach, but it is amazing. It's one of the best beaches you would because you free as a, as a transgender, as a bisexual, as a gay person, as a lesbian, as a butch, as the LGBT community in general, when you went there, there is no..this is what I understand, when we in Riis, we are one family and we sense each other's love and we all have fun. What do it takes the beach to feel that love and outside of that you back to your normal self?

Silverman: Yeah.

Love: It's like it's a magical moment when you in there it becomes like magical.

Silverman: Was it as like busy in the 70s when you were there?

Love: Absolutely, it was packed.

Silverman: [laughter].

Love: I mean, packed when I mean packed it was hard to even walk and--.

Silverman: So it was the same cause it's like that now.

Love: Now I've been there twice already and then and it hasn't been--as its been packed, but I haven't seen it as packed as back in 70s', I've yet to see it real packed. I went to Coney Island and Coney Island is not the same, they did a lot of modification changes and new activities. I went to Far Rockaway Beach and the same thing. That one has like always been boring because hardly barely people go in there.

Silverman: Yeah.

Love: I mean, you know, you limited people especially on a weekend and holidays and-- .

Silverman: Were their certain clubs that you hung out with, uh hung out at, in the 70s?

Love: Well I used to go to Limelight as a young girl and I used to sneak in at times, sometimes they let me sneak in sometimes you can't come and depending who was security at the door.

Silverman: Mmhm.

Love: And if you knew the people you were with some transgendered, then they liked it. And um, and I went to Sparkle. They had another one, and [inaudible] Tremont in the Bronx and another couple [inaudible]. And then I used to walk to the village, I loved the village. And go to Washington Square Park because that's, that's the community's park and that's the community neighborhood.

Silverman: And did it feel like there was all these different groups of people that associated as trans fem or like butch and stayed separately or did it feel like everyone was kind of together?

Love: Well, we're unified. We were unified and the village has always been unified. But the most you find on the village was the transgenders and the drag queens, because there was all these places down there all the way to 32nd Street or 14th to West 4th to Beckley, all the way to Washington Square Park. All of that was entertainment because all these clubs was all in that area. [inaudible], you barely find gay couples now. There's one on 54th and 9th called the Blazing Saddle. Oh, I love that club there, I go there it's amazing because it's a gay couple, but they are so wonderful in there and it's so unified and they dance on stage and we have lots of fun over there. And we don't have any [inaudible], they don't discriminate. They got women to going there. And you had the lesbians and butches, they also go. They have no problems. Never have any type of problems, arguments and bickering. And everybody just get along just fine, which is beautiful.

Silverman: What do you do for employment? Like, how did you get money or...?

Love: Back then? Back then I was, I was working in the phone company and I worked in the electric company, and on the weekends my father used to own a gas and I'm an auto mechanic so I could take a transmission your car, rebuild it, take it apart and build it--.

Silverman: Damn [laughter].

Love: And used to take the motors out and clean them up and I rewire cars. Rewired the cars for the radios and everything out that needed to be uh rewired. You could take a car, from the junkyard, there's no car, and [inaudible] computerized cars right now, but if you buy a junk car, from the junkyard and you give me a week with it...

Silverman: That's some magic.

Love: When you get it back, it will be like you got it from the car dealer.

Silverman: Damn okay.

Love: And I have it running like nothing happened to it. Like it's just back and brand new. Those are talents you never forget.

Silverman: Yeah, that's a really good one to have.

Love: I'm good with fixing anything, I fix lights, I fix broken fans and broken TVs, anything broken. Refrigerators, uh, washing machines. I could fix wiring in the house, so then the phone the same thing, the old phone, doing the installations and take the phones apart and put them back together. Take the pay phones and put on the rack in the streets.

Silverman: Well now the payphones are a little ruined.

Love: I haven't seen a pay phone in years since I've been out! Everybody's just walking down the street with their--

Silverman: Yeah, does it feel very intense now that you're out on the street seeing technology used in that way. How's that changed?

Love: Although I get frustrated even with my phone cause still haven't fully learned how to use it yet.

Silverman: Yeah. And I also read that you had an art practice, that you draw?

Love: Oh, yes, I did a lot of arts. My artwork comes from how I feel. How I feel with the person I'm communicating with and the person I want to send it to. Like me and Hazel, uh, Hazel's so very special. When I go to certain things and I talk with Hazel, and Hazel [inaudible] I draw one came out, which I used to do on handkerchiefs, and I would send it to Hazel and Hazel will keep safe, putting them up on the wall. But she's, she's amazing to me. She's...She's the best thing I have out here. [inaudible] I could call her truly, truly, true sister. And... I'm sorry to say anybody that would do anything to Hazel, I think I'll go back to prison. That's how much I love Hazel and will protect her with my life. And when Hazel's hurting, I hurt. And when Hazel [inaudible] I call her. We used to help each other. Hazel used to come visit me and we sit there, [inaudible]. And by the time we would cracking up and laughing, and we were back to normal, it's something that I miss so much. Cause I've been out here, we committed that we went to the beach together and everything we had a good time.

Silverman: Well, because I mean, it's beautiful. You had relationships with people on the outside, and I'm wondering what you could share with us about what people need on the inside now, like what you think would definitely help raise their spirits. Give them...

Love: Well, what, what people need if they sincere about turning their life around using a bad experience. Whether there was intentional, unintentional. You need positive people on this willing to give you a helping hand when you come out, to give you that one push where you can move forward. Have that man, [inaudible] make Daniel Poliak, my community and the Jewish community, cause the Jewish community has been one of my biggest supporters.

Silverman: Could you talk more about that, how did you, how did that happen?

Love: Well, I used to practice Judaism for quite some time until 2012, when Rabbi Epstein came to my cell and the prison, and told me, "I've some bad news for you". I said, "huh?". First thing come on my mind I thought he got emergency call from one of my families again. There's something that must happen in my family. So, he scared me that time. And I said, "please don't tell me it's my mother", he said, "no, no, it ain't got nothing to do about your family" and he said [inaudible]. They say that's a new rule that's implemented at the New York State Department of Correction, main office with Commissioner Chris said that if your mother wasn't Jewish, then you can no longer go to the synagogue. I heard him, and when he told me that, I cried for two days, because I love, I love that I was having some much fun in Judaism. To take that away from me in the times that I was going through was like putting another knife in my chest. I [inaudible] on the feast after Passover that the rabbis from the border rabbis in my communities come in the facility to celebrate after Passover, the end of Passover. I met some good rabbis. I met Rabbi Epstein, I met Goldstein, and they [inaudible], I started communicating with them on the outside, which I got connected to other places. I started writing letters and finally complaining about why does my mother got to do with me and my, and my beliefs and what I want. Regardless that my mother was born in the moon or anybody else, but you can't take away from a person where they feel they should believe and all they want to practice, whatever religion they want to practice. You think that. And today's I'm amazed that you will be more than happy to have outsiders come because it grows your congregation and your support more. To limit you that and take that away from you, you decreasing your attendance and one, and then you have people confused that don't want to believe in you no more and then you heard other people that they're really deeply enjoy. So since I've been out, [inaudible]. She's director from witness [inaudible] and conservation. Through her, they got the suit case project, where they provided me with a cell phone. They provided me with a laptop, and they paid for a whole year. And I go to the synagogue, go to the synagogue on Saturday from west 86th street, and 51 Centre street to that AJS synagogue. Then I go, on Friday nights, I go to the West 30th Street for celebrations so--.

Silverman: What are some of your favorite parts of Judaism? What are some of the things that you connect with or like enjoy?

Love: I love to sing. If you never sing, I encourage you to one Saturday, go to AJs at 15 West 86th street.

Silverman: I never heard about it, but I'll look it up.

Love: Yes. They're amazing. The Judaism song, they're so wonderful, they [sighs] so relaxing. You go there from 9 to 1 o'clock...It's like magical and it keeps pulling you and pulling you to keep coming. I am starting back to Judaism, and to I'm prepared to convert fully to Judaism, which I'm working on that now. And I love it. I mean, because so many positive people in there, they're willing to help. Through that, I got an extended family, so I'm enjoying it. And because of the love and that's what's keeping me moving on. That's what's keeping me strong and that's what made me change my life from what I was feeling down on me to, to what I am today, to positive advocate.

Silverman: And what else are you working with as an advocate, you said um, Pink and Black and-
-

Love: Black and Pink.

Silverman: I mean Black and Pink, yeah.

Love: [inaudible] Project, the Parole Preparation Project, and I do advocacy for my community, for the LGBT community. And wherever else they need me, they call for me to help, I'm there because, you know, I don't get tired of saying it that, the only way that society will be educated if we educate them by talking. If you hold it back it bottles in, and when something bottles in, its like takes you back to [inaudible] and you just go stir crazy.

Silverman: Totally. Yeah. How do you get others energy? You just have so much to give right now, it's beautiful.

Love: The energy I get from the love I get from the people and society. The love is what energizes me. When I see the love and the appreciation in people's eyes, when I speak, when they see me see. The eyes that will lie. When you communicate with someone, you seeing their eyes and they [inaudible], you automatically know that person is lying or they telling you the truth. And when I see that there's so much more truth than there is lies, it gives me more energy to move on and continue doing what I do. But it's been the most, I never had so much fun, I feel so much happier in my life than I do now. And that's thanks to this new young generation that is so brave and so open minded and have no rocks in they tongue. They'd mind, they would tell you how they feel, sometimes they made me feel like a dummy.

Silverman: Well, there's this also new evolution of language--

Love: Because they're so smart--

Silverman: Yeah. I heard you didn't like the word queer.

Love: No, I don't like queer.

Silverman: Can you explain why?

Love: Queer to me is like a curse, like a bad word to call somebody. I don't know how somebody could [inaudible] was queer. Either you are a woman, or you're gay. But to be queer, as the opposite of what you call a black person the N word. That's how I look at it.[inaudible] is a friend that I used to write to, his name was Dante. He was a social worker working with the [inaudible] project but he moved on. He used to say he's queer and I express it once, okay, yeah okay, no, we don't use that where I grew, it's just a bad word. And although identify yourself, and if you don't identify yourself. What are you afraid of? You need to identify yourself. There's no such thing as you don't have no identity. It's like saying you don't have a name. So, if you are having

sex with another male, then you are gay or that you either transsexual if you don't want to look like a girl dressed like a girl, then you are gay. All that queer, weird, nah. I don't believe in none of that. I believe only in three definitions, that gay people, transgender, the lesbians and butches. Because they are, I mean we represent who we are. I don't care what people think. People could say whatever, those who agree with me and [inaudible]. My heart is always with them. Those who thought I was [inaudible], kiss my ass.

Silverman: [laughter].

Love: I mean, you know, because, actually if we continue to feed into what society wants you to do, we become a robot. You're never going to be happy because you're going going to be trying to please everybody else and not pleasing yourself. You deny yourself happiness just to please somebody else, or you worrying how people going to see you or what people going to say about you. Just like when you put your clothes on, oh if people are going to see me like this then forget about how the other people see you, see yourself in the mirror, and if you love what you got on, and if you feel beautiful in it, then you walk out that door because you know how you feel, not how they feel. So you going to act on their feelings? You going to be crazy. I mean, it pushes you to depression on this while I was girl-- This is what I understand models, they psychologically they fuck them up, you can't be fat, you got to be skinny, you got to be this. And you make them starving and harm themselves physically. Accepting big girls, medium girls, the skinny girls, the small one. It comes in all sizes. So let them be who they want to be. Let them enjoy and you'll see there's more progress in life for that one.

Silverman: Is there anything else you want to share with us?

Love: Well. The only thing I like to share that, for the new young generation that I would love to see is that more advocacy in the community by unifying, by unifying one family, the gays, the lesbian, the butch. The drag queen, the transsexual the bisexual. We are just one family, we're just one thing. Human beings. The only definition to us is humans. We are human, human, whatever decides we have to have in life. We decide to be happy. We need to be unified. In that way, we'd be able to accomplish everything we want in life, because if we don't unify, then we divided, how we expect us to fight. Why you wait till June to celebrate pride and celebrate who you are? Because we're not celebrating pride. We pride ourselves day and day, the minute you wake up to the minute you go to sleep, if you don't feel your own pride, your own love of who you are, you never will. You have to identify with your heart. Every day of your life all day, live each day as it's your last day. Because tomorrow is not promised to no one. You don't deprive yourself of happiness or whatever you want. Whatever you want, go for it. Don't be afraid. If you like someone or you want to be with somebody, whatever you want, don't be afraid to ask them. The worst thing that could happen, that person tell you no. Then they don't mess around. But at least, you acted on your own emotion, not someone else's emotion. So do you feel. Be who you can be. This is like the army. Be all that you can be. As long as you're happy doing what you do, don't ever let nobody take you down. Don't let word when people degrade you, "oh you ugly bitch, oh, look at that motherfucker", or those types of languages that society sometimes tends to use for these degraded people in society. Let it go like the wind, go in one ear, and out the

other one. When somebody tells you something negative, tell them something positive. When negativity is hitting you, you hear the worst parts of you, each part is positive, the only way you're going to survive. If you respond with negativity or with violence back, then you going to be like me. You'll find yourself behind bars for a very long time and suffer things that I'd never want you to suffer, because when you go in that prison system, it's like signing in your life to hell and the devil, because that's how you want to be acting in prison, and that's the way they're going to treat you. Like you one of those demons that they need to kill. Other than that, I'm happy. Be happy. Keep going, keep advocating. Don't stop. Don't let your energy wear out. Till you get to my age and then you teach the next generation. When I die, I want to die happy and die happy knowing that I left a good young generation, they still want to continue fighting. Just that we continue fighting after Sylvia. We still fighting. We fight it for you now, and then the next generation, when they get to that stage, they will fight for the next young generation. This is the only way, but we can't do it if we don't stay unified. We don't spread the love amongst each other. And we have to respect ourselves to respect others, so that goes back to society. Don't be a douchebag, be like a marshmallow, sweet as a marshmallow, and soft and tender. [laughter] It be the best way to describe it.

Silverman: Thank you Rona.

Love: I thank you for this opportunity and for giving the chance to let a young generation know that, although we go through what we go through in life, we have better things to give. Don't let your heart take away your passion. Don't let the bad things deter you from being who you want to be and to progress. OK, we get delayed. You run into bumpy roads, but you lift yourself back up and you show them, don't let them win. You win. Beat them at their own game. Because if you harm yourself, you kill yourself, they win. So they go to the next one, so you don't let them know. You stop them in your tracks. You become that roadblock to make them go away. Be happy. Keep moving around. Enjoy and keep spreading the word around. Don't stop. Don't sleep. I love you with my heart.

Silverman: Thank you.