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### Angel's Queer World.

Due to the pandemic of COVID-19, all CUNY schools were transitioned into distance learning, leading me to interview my partner Angel through chat. Angel is from Dominican Republic and is currently 19 years old. The moments I've shared with Angel gave me the impression of him being very open-minded, supportive and understanding of others' situations; I received this impression without ever thinking that those qualities Angel has, come from being part of a very open, supportive community like the LGBTQ. Even though his subculture is not the LGBTQ community in general, his subculture is the "Queer Culture" as he stated. Angel says the Queer culture, also well known as "sexuality and gender identity", is a community that believes everyone has the right to express themselves clearly in whatever way they wish to and supports them in doing so.

The interview started by asking Angel what subculture he belongs to which he replied he was a part of the Queer Culture and he went on telling me how it is a safe place for everyone no matter the color, weight or race of an individual; in the queer community everyone is empowered into expressing themselves as much as they can. Also, The queer culture is composed by a group of those who form part of the LGBTQ community, since not everyone in the community is outspoken or "out there" to identify themselves as queer. I then asked Angel why does he considers himself part of the subculture to which he stated: "to start I'm gay but I identify myself as Queer because I am open to many things, have high self-esteem and I support diverse sexual

behaviors”. This illustrates how in the queer community people are encouraged to be happy, live life and enjoy the wonders of it. We can see that those who form part of the queer subculture tend to be very aware of themselves as they have high self steems, and tend to mind their business while letting others simply be. To follow up on his response, I asked him what exactly did he referred to when he said “diverse sexual behaviors ” and he informed me that he refers to barebacking, having multiple sex partners, etc.

To continue with the interview, I asked him what are some characteristics of someone who belongs to the Queer culture. Angel kindly replied how some characteristics of “a gay queer guy would be open to all the ways that a person could express themselves while accepting and believing that everyone has the right to express themselves the way they want to. This allows me to see, from an outsider point of view that people inside this subculture treat others the way they wished they were treated. Moreover, I asked Angel how an outsider could differentiate someone who is from the queer culture than someone who is not, to which he listed many reasons as to why. Some of the “easy indicators” that would let you know if someone is part of the Queer Community is the way they carry themselves with “gender fluidity and expression” and also being very “expressive” about their community and sexuality, “something that’s always topic of conversation for them”. Thanks to this, it will be pretty easy for me to spot someone for the queer community, taking into consideration all the qualities mentioned by Angel.

I wanted to know for how long Angel has been identifying himself as a part of the Queer Community so I asked him and he informed me he has been a part of it for six years now, “since

I was in 8th grade". This supports the idea that people can be clear on their gender and sexuality, not how past generations believed that a 13-year-old is too small to know about those things. In the same fashion, I asked Angel if there was anything in particular that represents the Queer Culture such as dancing style, popular phrases, and looks. Queer people are known for being very extra and express themselves with their hands and this is supported by the famous dance "Vogue". Angel explained to me how it is a "very prestigious and honored among the Queer Community because it allows you to freely express your gender and sexuality". Also, Angel informed me of how some popular phrases among the Queer Community are "queer, homo, tranny, dyke, twink", and these are names that people get called depending on their sexuality. Angel also states how some people are okay with the word "faggot", to which he is not in favor of the use of the word due to the degrading meaning society has given it. Furthermore, another

To conclude the interview, I asked Angel what was the thing that made him most proud about his subculture, to which he goes on to tell me how many things make him proud of his subculture but that there is one reason in particular that he is the most proud of. Angel told me that he was most proud of the advance the LGBTQ community has acquired through the years bringing more understanding towards those who compose the community "what makes me the most proud is that as the years go by, there has been more acceptance". Angel also says how thanks to the acceptance the movement is getting, he sees that "people are starting to feel more comfortable to be themselves and fight for what they want". This illustrates how those who form part of the queer community are being more accepted in today's society thanks to the understanding that everyone is different and has the right to do whatever they want with whoever they want

whenever they want. To conclude the interview, Angel stated how proud he is of "the freedom of expression that we have and that no matter the tag people place on them, they still move by what they believe is right".