

'Bisexual Representation' with Charlotte Moore

• 49:17

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

bisexual, queer, representation, people, bisexuality, characters, episode, glee, article, media, feel, fanfiction, kya, journey, queerness, speak, write, column, terms, read

SPEAKERS

Isabelle Gray (Iszy), Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester, Charlotte Moore

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 00:00

Welcome to Bite My Tongue, the podcast where we invite our fave people from the creative industry to tell all on a topic we're so used to biting our tongue on.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 00:08

Hi, everyone, and welcome back to Bite My Tongue. It is Fozz speaking. And I am here with Izzy once more, hey Iszy.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 00:16

Hello.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 00:17

How are you?

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 00:19

Yeah, I'm good. Thank you. I'm good. How are you?

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 00:22

I'm fab, thank you. And also I always say this every episode, but I'm always like, Oh my gosh, I love this conversation. I enjoyed it so much. Imagine we were just like, this is our iffy episode. Skip it. But no, that is not what we think of this one, or any of our episodes. Because this week we were joined by Charlotte Moore. Who is a sweetie and a half.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 00:54

The cutest, honestly, like, I die.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 00:59

It was actually because, not that she isn't cool for when we met her. But her Instagram is very cool. Like, she we talked to her about this, but she's very like, yeah, it's very, like sultry and serious. And you talk to her, and it's met with this loveliest bubbliest personality ever.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 01:20

So true. So true. Yeah, it was a joy.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 01:24

Yeah, it was a joy and delving back into sexuality for us as a topic. And yeah, I really enjoyed the subject matter for this and yeah, Charlotte Charlotte Moore is in sort of writing expert we'll say on this topic. Um, and yeah, I just really vibed with this and I hope that a lot of like, bisexual plus listeners will also enjoy this.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 01:55

Yeah, definitely. Um, yeah, I thought it was. Yeah, it got like, deep at some moments and got a bit emotional at times, which was really nice. And felt very I don't know, it was just like, wow, like, yeah, very touching, I think. But also like, yeah, like, more like light hearted, like light hearted pop culture, references and stuff.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 02:24

Another episode of sort of a mix of all that sort of thing of giggles and emosh moments.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 02:34

Our favourite.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 02:36

And we hope that you guys love it as well. So let's have listen.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 02:42

Hi, everyone. Welcome back to another episode. And I'm back again. This is Izzy and Fozz say hello.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 02:49

Hi, everyone. How are you Iszy?

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 02:52

Yeah, I'm alright. How are you?

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 02:55

I'm grand. I'm very excited for who we have.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 02:59

Yes, me too. Charlotte. Do you want to introduce yourself?

Charlotte Moore 03:06

Yeah, sure. Hi, I'm Charlotte Moore. I'm a Manchester based journalist. I cover lifestyle sex, LGBTQ stuff, and mental health.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 03:19

Lovely. And how are you? Oh, sorry. I didn't even ask how you were!

Charlotte Moore 03:22

Oh very good.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 03:25

Okay, good to hear it good to hear it.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 03:27

I also hear a congratulations is in order. Because didn't you have some good news the other day. I did, no I was I was super pleased. I made the shortlist for the freelance writer awards in two categories. And I ended up getting a, what is called? A special commendation?

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 03:50

Highly commended?

Charlotte Moore 03:51

Highly commended! Highly commended, which was absolutely amazing and completely ridiculous and very surprising.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 04:02

Not surprising to us.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 04:03

No, not at all. I was I was very pleasantly shocked.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 04:09

No, I like honestly, we were rooting for you. And we saw the goodie bags that everyone got for the ceremony. Very impressive.

Charlotte Moore 04:19

It was so good. They had these like millionaire shortbread things, that everyone in the sort of group chat that I was everyone was like, oh, we're all going to save them for the night to have them at the awards evening, and I have no impulse control. So by the time the awards evening came around there was just the one left.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 04:40

I would have been the same. I mean,

Charlotte Moore 04:42

They were there were spectacular. They were spectacular.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 04:46

Sorry, but yeah, massive congratulations.

Charlotte Moore 04:48

Yeah, thank you.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 04:50

And it was great too because Aurelia magazine got highly commended as well, didn't they and you do a column for them.

Charlotte Moore 04:58

Yeah. Aurelia got a highly commended as well, which is amazing because Kya is so like, ridiculously talented, I think the work that her and Shahed have done. And Monica obviously, as well, to like build Aurelia to build up this amazing publication, was just, it was just so well deserved.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 05:19

Do you want to um, let the listeners know about your column if they're not currently aware of it?

Charlotte Moore 05:25

Yeah, sure. So I write a column with Aurelia magazine called Existential Bi-sis. And it was a name that me and Kya came up with. And I pitched her I would say, 10, terrible puns. And it was like, perfect, let's do it. And I spoke to her about the column idea. Literally, as soon as they started, I was like, Oh, my God, I've had this column in my head for so long. And this has never been the right place to kind of go with it. And there's just never been a publication before that I thought, oh, this would be a really good fit for this idea. And, and as soon as I spoke to Kya, I was like, oh, thank god, she is so the right person to be able to take this idea to. And when I first came up with it she gave me so much feedback, and so many, like really interesting ideas, I was like this, this is a match made in heaven.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 06:14

Oh that's lovely. And that brings me on to my first question, actually. So your column seems to address this gap that the majority of LGBTQ+ plus journalism has, how do you think queer media treats bisexual identities?

Charlotte Moore 06:29

So I think it's quite a wide question. And I think I was really surprised to find that Existential Bi-sis was one of like, a very limited number of columns of its kind. I sort of assumed that it wouldn't be an idea that was particularly original, I figured that there would be just like loads of columns about bisexuality out there. And I was really surprised when I found out that there wasn't. And I think the problem with, the problem with the way that we talk about bisexuality a lot, it tends to relate to this idea of like no labels, which has become something that's become really popular for showrunners. So across kind of wider media, rather than just publishing, which is the idea that you don't actually have to put a label on your character if you do ensure that they don't actually have to say that they're bisexual, say, for

example, it was Piper Chapman in Orange is the New Black, who was, you know, clearly a person that identified as being bisexual and I think canonically that was something that was accurate. But during the TV show, there was 97 episodes, and she was referred to as both a lesbian, a straight girl, there were so many different words framed. And in 97 episodes, the word bisexual wasn't mentioned once. And it really surprised me. Because I think there's this idea that if you label the characters by sexual connotations with that, that sometimes people might see that characters maybe being a bit more scatty or a bit more. There's certain connotations that kind of come with bisexuality around the idea of being promiscuous or unreliable in some way, or even deceitful. That mean that kind of wider media tends to veer away from it. And I think it's something that's definitely changing. But the idea of bisexuality, I think, is still treated in both the kind of LGBTQ community as well as something that's just not, something a bit unsettling. I think there's something about the idea of kind of the uncertainty, almost of bisexuality, that just doesn't quite fit with a lot of a lot of people's ideals in terms of the way that they see it. And I think it makes it tricky for people to come out as bisexual because sometimes there's this idea like, oh, you're almost begging for attention, or you're overreaching somehow. And I think it does make things quite tricky. So I think in terms of representation, representation around bisexuality, but more importantly, positive representation around bisexuality, so acknowledging that bisexual people are just like everyone else, they can be promiscuous, they can be very monogamous in terms of who they are, they're still just people.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 09:08

Yeah, I mean, I've I mean, for full disclosure, I am fellow bisexual aswell. Iszy is also our token hetero for our diversity quota this episode. But yeah, I was so grateful for your column. And because it was just a thing of that, I hadn't seen many people talking about it in journalism. Like I'm someone that, I consume articles on the daily and a lot from LGBTQ+ publications, but there's never like a regular series, I felt, until Existential Bi-sis came along. And like if I think that was something that was so widely felt, because there were It's such a positive response when the column was announced like it was just floods of replys.

Charlotte Moore 10:07

I was like, I was so happy with like the messages that I got and stuff. I was so surprised by the reaction to it. And it was ,Oh, my heart. And especially I was really surprised the article, the first article that we launched on, I had like a last minute wobble the night before it went up. And I said to Kya, like, it's the wrong article to launch on and we're launching too niche. And I was like, the problem of writing about queer experiences is that sometimes when people read them, especially when it's something that you don't read a lot about, say, maybe bisexuality, when someone expresses an opinion, and they're like, this is my journey, this is my experience. And people tend to see it as completely homogenous. And then like, well, you don't speak for my bisexual friend from this place. And it makes things a bit tricky, because suddenly you're like, oh, I don't necessarily want to speak to everyone, I kind of just want to talk about my journey and how that relates to people I know or culture or media traits and stuff like that. So I was really nervous about launching on the fanfiction article, because it is such a niche. But I do think there's such, if if anyone reads fanfiction, it was such like a, it's so rare to meet people who write and are really engaged in in kind of traditional fandoms that aren't queer. Like, I remember, there was a point where there was like, a special tag for straight writers that people could be like, oh, my god, like, go read the straights work. Like, because it was so unusual. And and Kya really gave me a lot of

confidence that she was like, no, we're going with it, its something really different, its something no one's read before, like, it's a really good shout. And I went on a Reddit thread afterwards. And there was someone talking about my article, and they were like, oh, my god, like someone's written about us in a way that isn't like really shitty, and really condescending. And just talks about how like, we have to write ourselves into these stories, because they were was so little representation for us. And it was, yeah, it was a really, it was a really amazing moment.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 12:03

I mean, yeah, it shows like how much people are hungry for it. And I think what you spoke about, then about that sort of difficult, you know, that friction, of wanting to speak out on your own personal experience, but then also, because there's so little representation like journalism of like, bisexual experiences, that then being painted as, like the widespread experience, but kind of linked to that you've described in the past about how, like, the journey of pride is something that isn't always linear. And so I was just wondering whether you could like, touch on that a bit more.

Charlotte Moore 12:44

Yeah, of course, like the, the pride article that I wrote wasn't, again, in typical, like, very traditional journalistic standard. The article that I wrote for the June issue wasn't the one that went out. I actually wrote a completely different article that me and Shahed had started editing. And then I had one of these sort of, like, you write in like always, like a fever dream, you do it all in like an hour, and you just kind of word vomit onto a page. It was like that, and I think I'd never, I'd never really written about my personal journey to pride. And I think, because I've always been quite like, open and quite nerdy anyway, I've like, I've never been as ashamed as I probably should be about my very niche interests. I think everyone else is like oh, I'm so embarrassed that I like fanfiction. And I was like, from the age of like, 16, I was like, oh, my god, I love it is so great. I think there's this real sense that the journey of pride is one where you decide you're bisexual. And then or you decide you're queer in some way, and you are part of the LGBTQ community. And then that's it, you're proud, you're really happy to be there. And I think for me, it was a very different experience. I could remember feeling really bitter at pride. Because I was still in the closet. And I was like, God, it's so unfair, that all these people get to be like out in themselves, if I don't. And I'd like just come off the back of getting like two buses of this really depressing, like AA style meeting for like closeted teenagers. I got like two buses, make sure it was really far away from my school. And I sat down, the first person I saw was a guy that I went to school with. And we never acknowledged each other. He literally picked up his bag and left. I hope he's doing now. It was so bad. And it was basically everyone went around and talked about being queer. And there's some people obviously, that were really confident with themselves, but I'd say the majority were pretty miserable and definitely didn't want to be queer. I think we we really forget that the landscape even 10-15 years ago was really different. And so I'm fast approaching my 29th birthday. And I think back in 2007-2008, you know, one of my tasks in a PSHE lesson with my classmates was to debate, we were, the class was split in two. And you will be given a debate such as, like, is school uniform a good idea? Is having pizza on a school menu, is that positive, or should we only serve healthy options? And one of the ones that we had to debate every year was should gay marriage be legal? And it was pretty depressing, because at the time, obviously, I was. I was never someone that was like, in denial, I was always very aware that I was queer. I just decided that I wanted to keep it to myself. And I think stood there, openly debating that, I, of course, I think queer people should be able to get married, like,

of course, you should be able to marry the person you love. And a guy in my class turning around and saying, well, if you can marry a girl, then I should be able to marry a goat. I was like, that is so clearly not the same thing. Our teacher was like, no, no, please let him finish his argument. And that, like, it seems ridiculous now. And I think when we think about it, everyone's surprised. But this was still a time as well where, like, your response to anything negative would be like, oh, that's so gay. Like that was that was something that you'd say. And unlike, despite the kind of connotations that that had no one saw is everything inherently negative. It was just something you said. And like, gay marriage was something you'd debate and I think, because of my proximity to queerness, as my, I grew up with gay godparents, I maybe had slightly more of a positive experience in terms of representation to that. But like, I knew people that I went to school with that were terrified of interacting with gay people in case they got AIDS. And that was something they'd learnt from their parents and that like to think that that was only what 12-13 years ago, I think we forget that the landscape has changed so much. Like nowadays, I think, you know, you can turn on the TV and see so much more. And by all means, I'm not saying it's perfect at all, you know, so much more work that needs to be done in terms of representation. But I think back then, the best we had was Glee. And I think that says it all. And you reflect on it now you're like, oh...

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 17:37

Oh, god, yeah, in every way.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 17:38

So I'm 22. And it was a thing of that, like it was there was always a gay marriage debate at school. I was so annoyed and resentful that something that I was having to grapple with. And inevitably, like other people in the year group were having to contend with, and it could be very distressing. We're having to watch it be used to improve someone's debate skills and its just like what the? Like, I do hope that like kids now because like, as you say, we forget how the landscapes change, but I think the big change has been really in the last couple of years. But yeah, what you were saying about like, growing up and with Glee. Like, was it literally only just Glee for you? And like, how, what was it? Brittany specifically included? I'm thinking?

Charlotte Moore 18:33

I think, in terms of representation, there was, there was a couple of key queer moments, I think, in my life that kind of prompted that linear journey. And I think the first one, I don't know if you'll remember, this was Sugar Rush. It was like it was a Julie Burchill book. I remember I got it for my school library and then instantly returned it to my school library because I was like, don't want anyone to see, then went out and bought it in a book shop, came home, read it, loved it, I must have read that bit like 10 times. And then it was turned into like a Channel 4 TV show that I stayed up late to watch and and then after that, we had the like, kind of weird Channel 4 period where there's like Glee, there was Skins. And there was I think there's Maxi and there were two queer girls in Skins. I don't know how well they were like treated in terms of representation. I can't quite remember. I'm going to go out in a limb and say it probably wasn't that bad, because I can't remember it being horrifically offensive. With Glee, the main thing I remember was that there was an episode where Blaine who's Darren Criss, and I'm a big fan of Darren Criss was like, he said to Kurt like oh, I might be bisexual. And I was like oh my god, this is such a nice moment. Like the words being used. I was like, oh, we're gonna see it like he's gonna be

presented as bisexual. And then Kurt kind of said, you're not bisexual, like only people who are actually gay come out as bisexual and they come out as a stepping stone. And then Blaine agreed with that. And then other people agreed with that. And I remember thinking, like, why is the show like cementing this really bad take like that is so clearly not true. And the thing is, I hear this argument time and time again, like, oh, well, my mate came out with bi, and then they came out as gay. And I'm like, yeah, that's totally fine. That's their journey. Like, of course, you're gonna like, I don't think anyone instantly knows what they're into in the same way. As I, you know, when I was 16, I feel like emo sort of guys were very appealing in a way that now would probably not be. One thing that we actually really forget about Glee is that there wasn't really anything else like it was a big budget TV show that had queer characters, that representation in a lot of ways was really important. But I do think that were some very questionable and problematic decisions made specifically around Britney and Santana's relationship. So obviously, Santana was outed in just the most horrific way. And Britney was kind of shown as being someone that didn't really have any onus of her own decision. And it sort of felt in terms of modern standards, I guess I'm judging it against the wrong thing. But it, it feels like there wasn't particularly good representation of her as a bisexual woman, I think in that show.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 21:38

So kind of looking forward. What are your hopes for more for bisexual representation? How will that change, you know, with with the next generation where they grow up and view media?

Charlotte Moore 21:52

So I think there are a couple of things that I really feel ambitious for, I think, I wrote an article for it was actually from the same column that we've been talked about already, on kind of representation within wider media. And there was an episode of Brooklyn 99, where Rosa Diaz comes out, she has like three very simple questions, I think, like posed to her. And then she just moves on, and the show kind of keeps rolling on and there's no kind of a herd feeling, you know, this is such a bad decision. I don't like this for me, she's, she's fine with it. And, you know, she approaches her parents who are initially uncertain, and then they kind of come around. And I remember someone messaging me on Instagram, saying that they had finally come out as bisexual to their mum, and they had sat down with their mum and watched that episode. And their mum afterwards was like, oh, my god, that is so you. She's so feisty. She's so like you, you know, I can see the similarities there. And I thought like, that's what good queer representation is, you know, having kind of someone that looks and feels like you, someone that your mum can be like, oh, that's so you. I think that's what we more of. And I think the problem of representation is that for so long, we were all so desperate for it, that any representation was better than no representation. I think we've got to a point in terms of like discourse now, where that is not the case. And it's far better to just have representation that's accurate and positive and truthful, you know. If you think about how much It's A Sin reflected with everyone because that representation felt so honest, you know, it was it was a really beautiful, beautiful show. And I think, you know, having queer storytellers and having queer writers and more people engaged in it, really, it shows when that influences the writing, I mean, apart from Steven Moffat, and Mark Gattis, which I have personal beef with, the queer writers that let us down.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 24:07

Yeah, what you were saying about Glee and Rosa Diaz was super significant for me, because, I mean, first of all, with Glee, I remember feeling so frustrated with Brittany and with the Blaine story, and not knowing why because I hadn't realised things about my own sexuality, and just being like, why is this not satisfying for me, there's something that is really making me feel let down. And I think only sort of realised that when I was older and watched like Rosa Diaz on Brooklyn 99 and also like David on Schitts Creek with his I like the wine, not the label speech, which is not the perfect speech that maybe some people might think it is, but it was like much better than what I grew up with. And they were things that I watched with my parents and they had such positive responses to. And it was just a thing of like, gosh, if I had had that, like 10 years ago, or even, like, six, five years ago, that would have been massive for me. Because even though I come from a family who have always let me know that they have unconditional love for me, and which is like a massive privilege, yeah. If I can hope for next generation that they're just a little bit less scared for that coming out for their own journey with their sexuality. You know, if it just makes them like, you know, not fear coming out as much or just like, they just cry for 10 minutes less when they come out, like the tiniest thing. Surely that is worth our time and praise.

Charlotte Moore 25:54

Oh, that was so beautiful. Oh, I'm actually very moved.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 26:00

Yeah, same.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 26:02

Sorry, I didn't need to go heavy.

Charlotte Moore 26:05

I feel my heart.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 26:10

Yeah, definitely. Definitely. You okay Fozz?

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 26:13

And sorry, I just like, dumped that.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 26:17

If you want like, you can have a minute, feel free to

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 26:19

No no, it's, it's okay. Um, but yeah, so that is why it's just like, so important to me. And like, it's obviously saying, Why? Because like, you and me, Charlotte, like, I mean, we're not decades apart. We have very similar feelings about Glee. And so even though every journey is personal, there's still something significant that like, we're still all watching the same TV shows, we're still reading the same books sort of thing.

Charlotte Moore 26:52

Yeah, definitely. And I think there are like, finding that representation is just, it's something that like, I think, all LGBTQ people have almost like a sixth sense for I think it's why they're all quite big shippers, and we're all more likely to be like, oh, my god, that person is definitely in the closet. I think it's, it's this sense of like, finding representation, and picking up on queerbaiting techniques, in a way that maybe kind of straight audiences might miss. And I watched like a really interesting video, which I will send you the link for, I can't remember the name of it, about how kind of queerbaiting came about. And obviously, it came from the Hays Code and stuff, which was followed by section 28. But I do think it's really interesting about how that kind of journey to finding ways of vail queerness came about.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 27:52

Yeah, especially because with queerbaiting, I find that a lot of time also queerbaiting sort of intersects with like, bisexuality for me. And when I say bisexuality, I will also take moment to say, I do sort of mean like bisexual plus, so like, things of like pansexual, queer sexually fluid, like under that umbrella. Because I think a lot of our experiences do overlap. And so just as like, a side note, but yeah, like, I think a lot of queerbaiting there's been this dominant narrative that it's been like, oh, it's the closeted gay, which it could be also, because there's this sort of ambiguity, and this, you know, lack of certainty about it. I think it's always had more of like a bisexual leaning, but then, of course, I would think that as a bisexual person, like, naturally, but I think I haven't seen that much conversation about how like, yeah, queerbaiting I think does lend itself sometimes more to bisexual plus sort of identity, because it's that sort of weaving in between, like, a straight and a gay vibe.

Charlotte Moore 29:14

I think you need to write this because I definitely want to read that.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 29:21

Don't give me ideas!

Charlotte Moore 29:25

I've got expectations now. I think that the idea of the queerbaiting coming from the Hays Code and Section 28. You know, queerbaiting gets such a bad rap now. But actually, at that time, when like, there's restrictions on it, it's sort of like, as we were saying before, you're sort of grabbing at whatever you can get, and that was as much as you could get through queerbaiting.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 29:50

Um, so obviously, we've talked about kind of positive representation. So I kind of just wanted to ask how that kind of works in in media where It's like characters that are like can be a bit messy and dislikeable more like how do you kind of draw that line with positive, being positive representation, but also letting characters have their flaws and stuff, if that makes sense.

Charlotte Moore 30:17

I mean, who doesn't love the antihero? I think those are the most popular characters in English literature and wider media, and a lot of them aren't necessarily that likeable. You know, if you think of is Arthur Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes, is one of the UK sort of biggest media exports that goes out to

every single country across the world. And you know, from elementary to Miss Sherlock, in Japan, there's all these different interpretations of this one kind of story. And Sherlock Holmes isn't, you know, necessarily the most likeable character. And even when you think about, like, some of your favourite books and your favourite literature, I don't, I don't encourage us to be lovable to be, you know, representation. I don't think those two things need to equate, I think they just need to be grounded in truth. And be they think it's like when people are like, oh, you know, it'd be hard to have a Marvel queer superhero, because they're too busy fighting the sort of galaxy and aliens, I don't watch Marvel films, and it's showing. Or Fast and Furious person who's queer because they're too busy driving cars. Again, I don't watch Fast and Furious. So my knowledge and guesstimation of this is going to be very poor. But I imagine in both these films, and in fact, I'm well aware that both details make time to have some sort of romantic relationship. And I fear that there is often moments within all of these kind of contexts, these big, very big action movies and that sort of thing, where they will be huge, huge characters, and they will ignore any element of queerness. Because they claim there's no opportunity for it. And yet, straight relationships are definitely prioritised within those forms of media. So I always find it a bit reluctant. The excuses, we sort of didn't have time, or we, we didn't have the opportunity, because I think it's a case of making the opportunity where it feels right and relevant. And but again, if you think specifically about superheroes, and and those characters are always flawed individuals, you know, no one wants to see a perfect character, the perfect character is the villain. You know, you if you think about the structure, traditional storytelling, you don't want a flawless character, and you want someone that is flawed and relatable. And someone that kind of feels like you, you know, one of the most popular TV shows over the past few years, I May Destroy You and Fleabag. And both of those have female protagonists that are, like spiky, and they have edges and they're funny and dark and interesting. And you fall in love with them, not because they're perfect people, but because they're the perfect characters.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 33:09

Yeah, I totally agree.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 33:11

Yeah, I think, what makes it difficult of like, why there's such a discussion about like, oh, are they good representation? Or are they bad representation is the fact that like so long, we just haven't had enough to go off of so it's the idea of that like, straight characters can be dislikable can be flawed. But that's because the next movie you will watch, there will be a straight character. So it's not all you have to like, represent a sexuality but if you've only got like, a handful of bi or queer characters, and, and they are all the same, so they're all like, you know, perpetuating like negative stereotypes. It's that sort of thing of like, well, yeah, that doesn't feel like good representation, because it's all that we're seeing. Whereas if we had those, and then we had just something different and another character, it'd be like, well, there's not so much pressure on the first one to be perfect, sort of thing. So yeah, it's that thing of like, we do want flawed dislikable that's not a thing that everyone has to be like a good PR exercise for the sexuality. It's just that we need more of them. So that isn't so much pressure on the other ones.

Charlotte Moore 34:37

Yeah, I do often feel as if we're, I mean, I say this it's it's part and parcel I guess, of all of our jobs to critique media, and we can see me here and then critique it and hopefully in a constructive way, in

terms of the criticisms I think, I whenever I look at media in a critical way, I always consider a few things in terms of would, I necessarily feel the same if this was maybe a straight character because I do think there's this element of we are more likely to be critical of queer characters. Because we're almost on the hunt for kind of signs that representation will be really, really naff. And I think they are hit and miss. But again, they're hit and miss because there aren't enough of them. And like you said, I think if there was more, we would find it easier to be like, well, that was a bad critique. But I guess there's so many great ones that we don't need to worry. And that just kind of isn't isn't a thing really. Is it?

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 35:40

Yeah, I think that is the thing of like, you know, that's why it's such a relief of that. When I was younger, I just had like Idina Menzel from Rent as like the token bisexual character who was, you know, this massively flirty promiscuous person and therefore, it was like, oh, she's bad representation sort of thing. But then when Brittany came along, who again was disappointing ways, but at least it was a difference. And then you had like Rosa and stuff, it's like, okay, we're seeing like a full spectrum here. Which is great for bisexual plus woman, but I don't think we've come on much in terms of bisexual plus men or other genders. But that is something of like, men who are bisexual have their own sort of complications that maybe women don't relate to. and and you know, you have pansexual David in Schitts Creek, you have like nods from Andy Samberg in like Palm Springs, and sometimes Brooklyn 99 that like there's, you know, an incident or a vibe or whatever but there is like nothing to go off of.

Charlotte Moore 36:57

He is a bi icon.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 36:59

I'm like, he's, he's a bicon. There it is.

Charlotte Moore 37:02

There's nothing else to say, he is, I claim him. He is one of us.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 37:09

Don't you're gonna make me start chanting like one of us, it will turn into a very quick bisexual cult episode, Iszy will be like, oh no, not again,

Charlotte Moore 37:19

They are shafted in a very different way. And the problem is that it is I mean, I'm gonna be really careful how I phrase this. And so I think when you're a journalist, there's a tricky balance between knowing what the difference of staying in your lane and supporting things that you're interested in supporting in. And so for example, I, when I first started out in journalism, I knew writers that wouldn't kind of necessarily speak to people that were very different to them. And because they didn't want to seem as if they were kind of stepping into a space where they shouldn't be stepping into. But I think there's a big difference between supporting and finding different ways to highlight injustices and writing, where you shouldn't be writing. So I think, for me, there were a few areas that I probably wouldn't touch, I wouldn't, I wouldn't get to write about them, because they're not my lived experience. And also, I don't have anything interesting to say about them. In the same way that if you ask me to write for a knitting

magazine, I can sort of Forrest Gump together an article. But it wouldn't be particularly good or insightful, or for anything particularly useful. And I think that's the way that you've got to approach a lot different elements of your writing. And I think when it comes to bisexual men, and it was something that I really wanted to talk about, and I pitched 11 publications, four of them within the queer media realm, I spoke to eight different bisexual men as well as bisexual trans men and all these different facets of the queer community who identify as bisexual. And I came up with what I thought was the best pitch of my career. And not a single publication wanted to touch it, which really surprised me. And I'm still really gutted about that because it was it was one of those articles where there have been like three articles in my career that I've wanted to write since I started, the first was the fanfiction. I like knew right from the start, I wanted to do something I wanted to cover something on fanfiction, I'd never seen it be talked about in a positive way. It was something that was a really big part of both my LGBTQ journey. I didn't go to university, it was something that's big part of my writer's journey. And it was something that I felt really, really passionate about. There was another article that I wanted to write which was about the link of depression and debt, and I was lucky enough to be able to do it with Cosmo, which was amazing. And the third article has always been to talk about the ridiculous ways we separate bisexual men and women in terms of tropes and the way that they're framed and participated in and the the way, the both straight and queer media treats them. And I speak to some of these men about their experiences. And it was really shocking how different some of them were to my own when they were the same age from the same sort of places me, and we technically identified the same. So I think I naively assumed that our experiences would so directly correlate with each other. And I was so surprised when they didn't. And that it was, it was really surprising, I think. And it's something that really bugs me because it's something I really want to talk about. And I still want to talk about, and I haven't got a platform for it just yet. I'm still really hoping someone will take it. And but I think when it comes to some of this stuff, it's a it's a tricky one to broach, especially in terms of being female writer. The reason I wanted to write it, though, is to kind of examine the way that we treat bisexual people based on things arbitrary is their gender, and how they identify. And that kind of disparity in the way they're treated. I thought I thought it'd be a really interesting article. Maybe it wasn't, I don't know. But I'm still really disappointed that that one hasn't quite landed yet.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 41:18

I think that definitely sounds like a very interesting article. And I hope that someone does take it because I'd, I'd love to read that. Yeah, yeah. It's a shame.

Charlotte Moore 41:28

Yeah, it's a shame. I think that's yeah, that's, yeah, that's the key takeaway. I'm sad that hasn't sold yet. I'm hoping that someone else will hear this idea. Take it, write it for themselves and get it published somewhere. And until they do, I will keep pitching it. So yeah.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 41:48

Yeah, I'm keeping my fingers crossed for you. Because it is a thing that yeah, bisexual across genders. It we all have like our overlaps, but there's also different complexities, different identities. Yeah, I'm keeping my fingers crossed. But I think we're sort of coming to the end of our chat, which is super sad. And I've really enjoyed it. But we do have a couple of questions left for you. Which first of all, we'd love to know who was like your ultimate bisexual plus character.

Charlotte Moore 42:26

Oh, there are a lot I think. Most recently, my by my favourite bisexual plus characters don't exist in canon. I think that's the problem. I like again, I feel like oh my god, how much I talked about fanfic in this podcast is actually embarrassing. And I think because there was so little representation when I was kind of getting started in consuming media on the internet. Fanfiction came at like the perfect time for me, because every single person I read about was bisexual, and it was all of my favourite characters in all of my favourite books and they were always bisexual. They were like, always queer. And I read the same characters coming out story told 55 different ways. And like, I think the problem is my favourite my favourite characters are ones that don't necessarily exist in canon. But I do love reading, coming out stories and coming of age stories and it's some people think they're really naff and Love Simon, etc, etc. But I I love coming of age, films and media, I love coming of age books, but it's like a real soft spot for me. I love YA work. I think there's something so fantastic about capturing that time in your life, where we are so unsure of absolutely everything but also so sure of yourself. That you are like that age between 15 and like, 19 where you everyone's terrible, but everyone's also wonderful. I hate everyone but at the same time you're so in love with everyone, it's awful. And I think it's just it captured some really weird time that everyone goes through. And then we all sort of forget about it it's always laughable now that we were saying like silly and emotional and it's it's a wonderful time to capture. I love reading people's stories from that time about figuring out who they are and kind of finding that journey of self acceptance. So sorry, that was a really wishy washy answer.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 44:23

Not at all not at all!

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 44:25

I love that because yeah, that is what so many people have to go off of of just like making up the queer stories in their head and stuff in terms of not being in canon and stuff. So yeah, I think a lot of people will be like Yep, relate to that big. I mean that Jake Peralta, bicon. I'm so here for it.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 44:52

and so as we as we close the episode, and we always ask our guests this closer question. And it's to do with, you know, the reason the podcast exists. And so yeah, um, has there ever been a time where you've regretted biting your tongue in the past? And what would you like to bite your tongue less on in the future?

Charlotte Moore 45:14

It's a really good question. And I feel like I bit my tongue for a really long time. And especially around like, casual homophobia, the sort of the sort of experience when you're 16-17, you're still trying to decide where you sit on that kind of fence. And you don't want to be that person said the party police. But then someone says a homophobic slur and you're like, oh, I really hate that. And it makes me really uncomfortable and and saying that is not great. But I am probably have the opposite problem, in that I really struggle to bite my tongue. And I tend to like, always, I don't think I've ever had a passing feeling that I haven't instantly articulated. And especially if you're unlucky enough to be kind of trapped around me, where like, every passing emotion I have, I'll be like, oh my god, I felt like this right now. I think

that's the thing that I really love about writing is that I have like, a way to channel that. And, but I should probably be quiet more, than I am. I yeah, I think I probably have the opposite problem. I can't help but say what's on my mind almost all the time.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 46:37

That's good. I like that. Yeah, we rate you, we're not judging you for that. So don't worry. It's good to be a troublemaker, it's fine, it's interesting.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 46:53

So that was our episode with Charlotte. What a lovely time and I can't believe we're getting to the latter half of this series. It's gone so fast.

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 47:04

It's gone super quick. And yeah, I think Charlotte's episode is a sort of good one of like, as we were saying at the beginning of this episode, encompassing the sort of light hearted and more heavier stuff. Because yeah, I think after the recording this my heart sort of swelled to twice its size. I really enjoyed the chat. Oh, don't I sound like a wet flannel! Oh, what am I like, but yeah, we've only got a couple of episodes left now.

Isabelle Gray (Iszy) 47:40

Yeah. We hope you enjoyed this episode. Let us know what you think. And we've got some even more exciting guests. We just keep reeling them out, don't we? We just can't stop!

Charlotte 'Fozz' Forrester 47:52

A conveyor belt of content, that is us. Yeah, I mean, we won't spoil it for you guys now, but we think that you'll enjoy what's to come. Yeah. And thank you for listening. This episode was brought to you by Gals in Journalism and you can find us on Instagram and Facebook. Our show notes and transcriptions are on our website www.galsinjournalism.com. This episode was produced by Fozz and edited by Isabelle. Our music is an instrumental version of 'Sertraline Gang' by Trannieboi. Trannieboi is the abolitionist queer Afro futurist hyper pop brainchild of Jolliffe Seville. As Trannieboi, he celebrates the multiplicity of Black, queer disabled existence by transforming what is frightening - mania, trans homelessness, trauma, the immense difficulty of being a Black working artist - and making it an expression of joy. Our logo was designed by Megan Shepherd, who also designed the Gals in Journalism logo. We'd also like to shout out to City Ventures for supporting this podcast.