

University of Illinois Student Life and Culture Archives

Interviewee: Hannah Gallivan

Interviewer: Jo Fogg

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Jo Fogg: Hello, my name is Jo Fogg. I'm here interviewing Hannah Gallivan. Um, it is April 17th, 2026, at 12:24 PM, and we are at Nugent?

Hannah Gallivan: Yes

JF: Nugent Hall. Uh, this is for the History 468: Locating Queer Cultures class with Prof. Somerville. Um, so the first thing I was going to ask is just to tell me a little bit about yourself.

HG: Yeah, my name's Hannah. I'm currently a sophomore at the U of I, and I'm a Media and Cinema Studies major with a minor in Gender and Women's Studies. I originally grew up in Vermont, and I am here for college, um, have a Service Dog named Gabby. Um, and she's lovely and like anything else specific or?

JF: Um, so you grew up in Vermont. –

HG: Yes.

JF: Can you tell me a little bit more about that, like what it was like? Maybe some of your favorite things about living there.

HG: Um, I grew up in like a super small town. Vermont's, like really small in general and super spread out, so wherever you kind of—where you grow up is like, kind of becomes this little bubble of like, oh my gosh, you like know most of the people that like walk down your street every day, which is like really cool in some senses and also kind of like... not fun in other

senses, just because you're like, "Okay, why do I know all of this about like a person who I'm like acquaintances with?" So like, good and bad. But I went to a high school that was like middle and high school combined, so it was like seventh grade through twelfth grade, so I was there for like six years. And I think in all we had like almost 800 students, so like super small and I graduated with 90 people. So I think definitely it was like, really, really nice to have such a strong community of like people that I had known for so long.

But I think also, as I grow older and like thought about where I wanted to be in the next phase of my life, I like knew that I wanted to be out-of-state because I just like I feel like the world is a lot bigger, you know, and I like wanted to see it. And I have a lot of love for where I grew up and like, I always love going home. But I sometimes it's small in the way of like, "Oh, this is so nice to have a community," and sometimes it's like small in the way of like it's a little bit suffocating. So, I think like there's good parts and bad parts. It's really like super... It's very mountainous. So that's like, always really nice. I was really surprised coming to Illinois, because you like, go down the highway and there's like nothing in the distance, which is something I'm just not used to. But yeah, I grew up like being outside a lot.

The winters are really long in Vermont, so we always joked that like you have to find something to do outdoors, or like you're not gonna survive, because like people just like go into hibernation, almost. So I like grew up skiing. Um, doing like adaptive skiing also because I have a disability um, and so I like grew up doing a lot of Adaptive, like outdoor sports, which is really cool, um, they have an awesome ski program. And then I go to—so I like grew up doing that. And yeah, I was always like around nature. Um... I think some of the biggest things about like being here is how flat it is. Like, I'm just so not used to that at all, but it makes it a lot more like easy to get around, because a lot of places in the Northeast are really hilly. Um, and so sometimes harder to get around um, and so it's nice to be in a flatter area for her like, I think I'm there's like pros and cons about everywhere, you know, and I like, never thought that I would be in Illinois like it's kind of a random place to go if you're from the Northeast, but I had done a lot of research on like, disability and accessible campuses and stuff, and it just kept coming up. And then I toured it and really liked it. Um, and like DRES [Disability Resources and Educational Services] is awesome, and like the disability culture is awesome, so I'm like, really glad that I ended up here.

But I think I would have laughed at like someone if they had told me, like, I would have been going to school, in Illinois, like it's just very—most people from my high school, like either go to school in state or go to school like around the Northeast, like Boston or New York. So Illinois, is very far, um, so I think it's like surprising to me, still that I ended up here, but I'm like, I also really enjoy it so... Yeah.

JF: So you mentioned like the disability culture at UIUC, um, cause that was one of the things that I was going to ask you about, was kind of what drew you to campus, um, and you kind of answered that for me? So, could you tell me a little bit more about what kind of you mean by “disability culture”? And how it affected your life and your experience here?

HG: Yeah, um, like again. I'm from a very small area, and I definitely did seek out and have like disability community. Um, but it wasn't always super local, or like easy to get to all the time when I didn't see people all the time. So I like had that community of people, but not like as a constant thing, and I kind of talk about it as like, I was a little bit of a unicorn in the sense of like people, just hadn't interacted a ton with disability, um, where I was from, so it was kind of like um, people were like, figuring things out as if like I was the first person ever to like, have different needs, which obviously is not true. And there'll be people after me. And there's people before me. But like a lot of my experience in school was like asking for accommodations and people being like, “Oh, we never considered that before. But like thank you for bringing it up.” And so I knew that, like, if I was gonna pay to go to school for 4 years, I like wanted somewhere that was accessible and like, not even that, but just um, a culture or like an amount of people, but I could like know that I wasn't the first one and know that I wasn't like the last one. And DRES really stood out to me because I went and like toured it when I was on my campus tour and like I walked in and I saw like all the racing wheelchairs that they have for wheelchair track and I was like, “Wow, I've never seen like that many wheelchairs before.” Um, and you would just, you know, walk around campus, and you see people in wheelchairs all the time.

And that's just really not an experience that I had in Vermont, it wasn't necessarily like a negative thing. I think I was just more like aware of it. Um, and so not just the fact that it's like there's really good services and stuff, but also just the fact that, like I often like brace myself to

have like kind of awkward conversations where, like you explain yourself or whatever, like what you need help with. Um, here I really haven't had to do that, I think, because people are just more used to it, even if they haven't like, experienced disability in their lives before like coming here you just, you see it all the time, whether it's like physical or mental or whatever. Because so many people are registered with DRES. So, I think it's like just a thing that DRES exists, and that people think about, and it's not like perfect, but I think the biggest thing for me is like knowing that like such a big part of campus, um, is impacted and uses services from DRES, so I knew that, like I won't have to be like a trailblazer. Which was like kind of nice because I was like, I want to be... I just want to focus on being a college student, and not have to be like emailing the same person every day that, like the elevator wasn't working or something, and so I think just the general like level of awareness that people have, um, even if it's not perfect, like, I think the general level of like awareness is just so different from like, what I grew up with and it's made me really comfortable, and like it's just nice, seeing people like me and knowing that, like people have done it before me, people are doing it after me, um, and like, I wish everywhere was like this. It would be really cool.

But yeah, I think just like the level of awareness and not feeling pressure to like, over explain yourself, or even if I do have to explain, like, it's in a lot less... like stressful situation because often people are genuinely curious and they genuinely want to help— And not that people where I'm from didn't do that, but it was very much like, there was a lot of preamble to like me getting what I needed. Whereas here it feels like more built-in and then bec— I mean, even in like PDP [Penny Dreadful Players], which is the theatre club that we're both in like, um... I think people are just like way more used to it and like want to help and are super... and there's not a lot of like explanation needed. So, I think that's a really big thing of like me, just feeling comfortable and confident, and like, able to— and makes it easier to just like advocate for like what I need in the day-to-day.

JF: So, um, with that, what are some of the places that you feel like you feel the most welcome on campus? And the places that you frequent the most?

HG: Yeah, um, do you mean in like a metaphorical way? A literal way?

JF: It can be like physical buildings or like organizations, social groups.

HG: I mean, like, I really like, I said we're both in like a theatre group and so I would say like that's where I found most of my like community of people that I hang out with. Um, I did kind of theater in high school, and I knew like I want to kind of continue with it, but not in the sense that it was like a major because I worried that that would kind of take the fun out of it. So, I'm really glad that I like found PDP and found people cause it's been like such a positive experience and like things to do every week. And I like having a routine and like something to look forward to and like, I like working with a lot of people on very collaborative, so it like is all the kind of things I really like the most and people are so kind and so I would say like there, definitely.

Um...In terms of like physical space, I love like just sitting on the quad in the grass when it's really nice out, um, did some of that yesterday. It was lovely. Um, cause it made me feel like so... I don't know. It makes me feel like peak college. You know, like, that's what they put on the brochure. Um, and I love being outside. I really like like Siebel Center for Design. I think it's such a cool space, and it's like super open and wide and um, there's like huge ramps that are right inside where you go in which like is super cool. And it just makes it feel like it's like more integrated rather than like, oh, this is an afterthought to be accessible which I really appreciate.

Um...Yeah, I would say like...um... Those kind of groups and then, I am also, involved with like Illini Democrats, which is really fun cause it's like a way for me to be involved like politically. And we get to like work with local candidates and things like that. So that's like, really nice. It's like, if I'm ever like, freaking out about the state of the world. We can all like get together and be like "This is crazy. But we're gonna like do something about it." So yeah, I just like, I think the variety of people that you'll meet here is like, super cool. Um, and I really like, I'm really a social person. So like if I want to feel better like I recharge my social battery by like being with people, and I feel like there's all this stuff to like do... and be... and go to... so like, that's really, really nice.

JF: Yeah, um... Well, the question I had just left my brain was a follow-up for something.

HG: Take your time.

JF: While I try to remember what I was gonna ask before, um, I wanted to ask about Gabby, and if you'd like to talk about her?

HG: Yeah, she's, um, Gabby's my service dog. I've had her for... three and a half years now, I think? Because I got her when I was a senior in high school, and I'm a sophomore. Um, she came from Massachusetts, she was trained there at a place called NEADS in Princeton? I think it's called? In Massachusetts? And so she spent like the first year and a half, two-ish years training, and then I trained with them, for two weeks to like learn all of her commands. She was more prepared than I was like she was like "I know all this" and just getting used to a person to do it with. Um, and I won't lie like I was terrified getting her at first, because I was like, "Is this what it feels like to like have a baby?" Like it was just like I—this dog is so well-trained, and like, I don't want to mess this up and like, you know, she'd been born there and like, been trained, and so I was like, very aware that I was like, tilting her world upside down and thinking, you know, like, I just want to do right by her like she's gonna do right by me. Um, so it was stressful, in the beginning. But then, I think she doesn't need much like day-to-day. So now she's been like so integrated in my routine, and I think she's helped me be like more confident if I'm going somewhere on my own, cause like I'm not like, fully alone alone, which is like nice.

It was always my goal to have like a service dog in college. So, I'm like, really glad that it worked out that way. Um, and she's super smart and lovely, and like people are obsessed with her as they very well should be um, and a lot of people like get to hang out with her when she's off duty, which is like so fun and a lot of people will say, like, "Oh my gosh, I miss my dog and she just like made my day," and I love that she has that effect on people like I get to be with her throughout my life but she also gets to, like impact other people so positively, so I feel like that's super cool and she's helped me with so many things and, like doing things that I took for granted that she's like there to do. Um, she can like put things up off the ground, and like give me her leash. And she can like nudge elevator buttons with her nose, which is so cool. Um, and yeah,

she's super awesome. I'm really really grateful for her, and I think she's like allowed me to be... More like adventurous? Because I know that like she'll be with me.

Um, and... Yeah, no, the first time I like left her at home or something, when I was—cause there are some places so go where, like I don't bring her—um, and I was like, “Is this what it feels like to like leave your child with someone else?” The first time like it was so weird and she, you know, she likes to work, and so I think like, whenever I leave, she's like, “Wait.” But yeah, she really likes to—it's really cool that she... is really... like, you can tell that she knows that she was like born to do this. And like It's so cool when dogs are like “This is my thing like I-I want to help you.” And you could like see it in their faces, and it's so cool. Um, and they can train dogs for like alt— all sorts of things which is like so cool.

Um... She doesn't come to rehearsal with me very often because it's a little bit chaotic, but um, after shows that usually let people like, say hey to her, which is like, super fun. And... Yeah, she's pretty— pretty lovely. She doesn't really go out with me because there's like, always stuff on the floor and then like I don't need you accidentally [Giggles] getting drunk like from something on the floor. So those are like usually where she doesn't go, but then other than that, like she usually comes with me pretty much everywhere else. Um, which is super cool she's a great traveler, and super chill, and like is very good emotionally at like grounding me, which is like nice. Um, I think she's a very steady presence. Um, and then it's like, “Maybe my life doesn't suck, you know? If your ears are this soft.” Like maybe things are gonna be good. Um, so that's also, yeah, she's—she's the best.

She's about—I got her when she was like almost two? And she's about four and a half now. So, it's been like a wild which is kind of crazy, because I remember being like so nervous, getting her and just being like, “I don't want to mess this up,” and they were like, “You're not gonna mess it up, and she's not perfect, either.” But, I remember being so like, “Oh my gosh, I just want to do it right.” And yeah, she—she puts up with me [Giggles] which I'm very grateful for. I often joke that we have a very transactional relationship, and like, I think we are bonded, and she obviously like knows that I'm her person, but I also like I'm the one who feeds her every day. So that's also probably something to do with her, um, because she's very food motivated, like, as am

I. So, I don't, you know, I don't blame her. Probably just sweetens the deal that I'm the one with the kibble. But, yeah, she's—she's the best. She's like my little partner in crime.

JF: Yeah, she's an honorary Penny Dreadful Player, uh

HG: Yes.

JF: Board member.

HG: Yeah, [JF: At the meetings] she's an honorary member, for sure

JF: Yeah.

HG: Yep.

JF: Um, so would you like to talk a little bit about PDP?

HG: Yeah, of course.

JF: I know you mentioned it a little bit-

HG: Yeah.

JF: But I know you're very, very involved with the club.

HG: Yeah, um, I—I think it was...was it last semester? Yeah. Maybe? Yeah. Last semester I got—so I'm on PDP board, and then last semester I got elected to like HR liaison. Um, and then, like a week ago, got like re-elected, so that's cool. Um, and it's been really fun. I like being like more involved and like getting to choose the shows that we do is always really cool. I also like, really think it's like healing to my high school musical theatre self, cause like I loved doing theater in high school, and it was really fun, but it was also like... Often the same people get cast in the

same roles, and it was just like very like... You know, everyone knew everybody and like... I feel like it's really cool that different people end up directing different shows because then, like you get different points of view in terms of casting and stuff, and I think that's like, a really cool way to like, not type cast people or like pigeonhole, them, or anything. Um, that's what I always talk about when I talk about PDP is like it's just cool that we get to, we get to work with, like, our peers. So it's a lot less intimidating than like a—like an adult adult being your director. Um... And... yeah, it was like a little bit scary like, being on exec, because I was like, okay, like, this is this means I have like actual responsibility, and I want to do it right. But people are super supportive. Um, you [JF] just got elected as Artistic Director

JF: Yes.

HG: So that's awesome. I'm so excited and... But, yeah like, honestly, it's like been such a positive experience. I feel like I've met like so many nice people. It's definitely healing my, my high school theatre self a little bit. Um, I don't know it just feels different in terms of... Not that I didn't like high school theatre, but like the atmosphere feels a lot more like even in PDP, I think because like, again we're all students and like it's like less intimidating and you get directed by different people, which is like really nice. Um, you're [JF] directing me right now-

JF: Yes.

HG: Actually. Um... and yeah, I just think it's like, super cool and really awesome to see people like direct things and do things that they're passionate about. I've done so many like shows that I've always like wondered about. Um, and like, that's been really cool. Um, and we always like try to highlight student playwrights, which is like, super great. Um, I mean, like I did a little of that in high school, but not a ton, so like that's also been super fun. It's definitely like, my biggest um, like form of community here, I think. Or like, just the way that I've gotten more involved over like the last couple of semesters. Um, but yeah, it's super lovely and I'm basically— my job is basically just to like, make sure it remains like a really opening and welcome— welcoming and open space and, um... People have been really lovely, so my job is usually not that hard. Which is nice.

JF: Yeah, that was kind of going into my next question, which was about um, being HR chair? Kind of what is maybe like the easiest parts of that versus what are some things that are maybe a little more um, like difficult to deal with. Because it is, it can be a hard job sometimes.

HG: Yeah, um, I think like...[sighs] I guess easiest part is just like knowing that...like 99% of the time people are really committed to like our values. And like, it's just a really welcome space, so I don't often have to be worried. I think the hard part of it is just like, I guess knowing that like I am the person that people will come to often with like very sensitive information. Um, which is my job, you know? But I think I feel a lot of responsibility for like someone sharing something very vulnerable um, and so I feel a lot of responsibility, and like making sure that I handle it correctly and like validate the person's feelings or their experiences.

Um, I think it can be like... I'm not a super confrontational person, so I think it can be hard like having to actually put my hat on and like do something. Um, but also, I think whenever I like get worried about it, it's like, I always remind myself like, "This is my job if I'm trying to make the environment like better for everyone and so like, sometimes that means doing things that like"—[Gabby shakes] Alright, all that fun. I recently had to put my HR hat on, it was a little scary, but um, it also was something that was like it needed to be done and it was like a pattern, and so I'm glad that um, I was able to help you [JF] with it because like a lot of people were... Talking about it and it was a thing where I was like, "Okay. Like, this is not necessarily going to get any better." So, I felt... grateful, in the sense that I was able to... help people feel more comfortable, even if it is like... hard, sometimes I always remind myself like it's something that needs to happen. And like, make sure that people are comfortable so, it is really... it's sometimes really hard but I think it's also helping me be more like assertive and... Not as much as of a people pleaser so it's kind of helpful. Because I'm trying to... break out of those tendencies a little bit? Um... So it's been like a nice kind of exposure therapy type of thing. [To Gabby] I know. We just want to distract Jo this whole time. [Giggles]

JF: For the record, Gabby's woken up from her nap.

HG: Yes and is like rubbing everything. [To Gabby] Sit.

JF: Okay.

HG to Gabby: Sit.

JF: Do you want to talk at all about– I know you're co-directing a show next semester– or are you excited for that?

HG: I am. I'm like kind of nervous because I did it like one or twice in high school, and it was really cool, I directed like a one act, um, and... That was really exciting, um, I got to learn how to like... Be in kind of a leadership position and like give people feedback. Um, I think like... It teaches you a lot of good skills about like how– Yeah, [Addressing Gabby] where are we going? Come here. You're getting off twisty. Fix. Fix. Yeah, fix. Um, back um– come here. Fix. You'd just like and then you freeze once you're– Gabby. Okay, go that way. Sure, whatever.

She likes to get tangled up in her lead. And then like looks at you, when she gets stuck and like, you know, how to unstick yourself, but she just likes to be like– like, dude, you're someone so smart. Sometimes you can just see all of her thoughts er– floating away [gestures to the air].

But yeah, I think I'm like, I'm excited a lot like I've– I really like directing, um, and I really like, like having ownership, over– or like some sort of part in a creative process. Um, I think like that's why I want to be like in film. Um... So, it makes a lot of sense. I am definitely like I wanna like strengthen my balance between being like... Obviously like kind of welcoming. But also, like knowing when to be like, “Okay, like take me seriously.” You know, um, and I think I'm still working on like a lot of that. So, I think I'm a little bit nervous about like, striking that balance, I'm sure you also like, have learned a lot and have an insight and stuff, um, but yeah, especially just among your peers, it's like... How to strike that balance between like “This is what I need from you,” and like... This is what kind of the show better and also be like, “Yeah, we're all like friends.” And you know. Um, but I think it's like very helpful to work on my like

being assertive and like, you know, so I'm really excited. Um, it'll be really fun. It's like a take on *The Crucible* from like Abigail's perspective, which is really fun, because I've personally always believed that like John Proctor is not that much of a hero um, so it's like, really cool to kind of tell it from like the women's perspective. Um... And it feels very timely, and like fun.

Um... Yeah, I really excited and nervous. Mostly excited. Like a lot of the nerves I think will like iron themselves out like once we actually get started. I think it's like the anticipation of like, you know, you don't know how it's gonna go until you like cast people and like, get a feel for how people work together. Um, but I think a lot of it will just be like, okay like, one day at a time, you know? Um and not expecting perfection, but like, you know, people— like wanting people to work hard and all of that kind of stuff. But... Yeah, maybe Gabby will sit in with me as co-co-director. [Both Giggle] Who knows, then she'll be another pair of eyes that you don't want to disappoint. She's very judgmental, like she'll raise her eyebrows at you, and you'll just go, “Oh my God.” [JF giggles] She'll like side eye you so fiercely? So, maybe that'll work in my advantage. You know, who knows?

JF: Yeah, I get people to lock in a little more.

HG: Yes. Do it for Gabby.

JF: So, uh, for PDP, I kind of think of it usually for myself as like an “undercover queer space”

HG: Yes, mhm.

JF: So could you maybe explain like some of the ways that you feel um, PDP while not being like labeled as a “queer space” um, promotes inclusivity and um, diversity.

HG: Yeah, that's a really great question. Um, we were like, just talking about, like underground spaces in one of my other classes. Um, I think I'm gonna just like in general, I think a theatre is very associated with like the queer community, um, but I think also like, in this day and age. We

just talk– we're just like– we just talk a lot more about like queerness. And um, I think that's really beautiful, because like, you know, we were sitting backstage last night and just like talking about, like: These are stereotypes I get as like bi women, you know? And like why do men have to be so weird about like people being bi? And like, I think... Yeah, I think it's an interesting question. Because like you said, like we're not like labeling ourselves per se? But like there are a ton of queer people.

And I think part of it is just like I kind of think of theatre as like a way to like... Step inside somebody else's shoes for a while. Like you get to keep the essence of yourself, but you also get to, like explore the perspective of like, whoever it is that you're embodying or... like in a story. And I think that's probably why, like a lot of queer people are like attracted to it, because it's like you get to kind of– sometimes it's hard to be in your own skin. So you get to kind of like... Keep your essence, but like shed some of the anxieties that you would have like as your regular self and be like, “Okay. What would my character do in this moment?” And I think also like, in PDP we um, I'm try to– like we're not very specific about like traditional casting or whatever? Um, and so I think like that's really cool. Um, I've always wanted to like do WLW [Women Loving Women] Shakespeares. [Giggles] Um, when I was in high school, we did *The Tempest*, and I was– my friend, my friend was playing Miranda and I played um, Birdman and that was really fun, um, but yeah. I think like it's just a very... I think theatre like, there's a lot of expectations of like you commit to a show and you show up and you do your work, but there's not, like in terms of like culture world, it's like one of the least rigid spaces that you can be in. So I think like that also helps people be like comfortable in who they are. You know, um, and I just think like that's so beautiful and um... Yeah, I love that it's like a space where people can... feel free to be themselves. I feel like we do a good job of like not assuming anything, like putting binary assumption on people.

Um, I mean, we have a lot of talk about like... Making sure people are comfortable even within like, I got to do some intimacy coordination for um, Charity Show and like I had never done it, but um, it was a really cool experience. Just kind of talking to actors about like... “It's not gonna be this huge, like scary thing, like we're gonna take it step-by-step.” And it was just a lot of like, “Okay, like you touch hands with your partner, and you breathe in, and then you're in the scene

as your character, and then after you touch hands. And you breathe in, and then you step back into yourself.” And so it kind of like separates this thing that's kind of like intimate, personal and kind of scary from like something you're doing as a character, and so I think like... It just taught me a lot about how to like, make sure people are comfortable and like I think it just goes through, like overall culture too people, just in general, like not even just me as HR Chair, but just in general, people are very specific about like, we want to make sure you're comfortable, like, just because we're doing this show, or doing it this way doesn't mean that like it has to be the end all be all.

I know, some theatre directors can be very like specific, and I experienced a lot of like, “Oh, we have to cast this this way,” so like the same blonde soprano would get cast in the same roles, and I just feel like we're not perfect, obviously but I feel like that happens less here? I think, because again, I think a lot of it has to do with like we're all kind of in the same stage of our lives and so like I think you're more— we're more comfortable with each other? Like, that's what I've observed, you know? It's less of like, “Oh, I'm contradicting this like adult, or this person who's like above me.” And more like “I'm gonna like respect the person as my director,” but like also it makes it a really like— even as directors like I feel like people are very much like. “Please come to us, like let us know if we can rework things.” Like there's a lot of dedication to like the integrity of the show, and the quality of the show, but there's also the same level of that, like care towards, like the people that are in the show. Um, which I think is like really important. And so, like, I guess... Just, I don't know. I feel like we treat people with a lot of care? Um, or at least that's the goal. Um, so I think it helps them feel comfortable too, like bring their full selves in a way that you know they might not in other spaces or not like as emphasized as much in other spaces.

JF: Yeah. So, kind of when it comes to like theatre and like being an actress and then also like you're gonna be a director and being on board, um, how do you typically go about kind of separating um, that... Like closeness, like ‘friend’ type stuff and then go more into like ‘professional’ mode.

HG: Yeah, I think it's definitely— it's tricky, because again, like we're all— I've said this a bajillion times we're all like friends, a lot of us, and like it's very peer to peer. So it's sometimes hard to like separate. Um, I think that's something I'll like have to juggle being a director too. Um, is like, okay, this is when to be like super da da da, and this is when to be like, “Love you all, I need you to like do something.” You know? Um, I have a lot of faith in people, and people's level of like respect for one another. So, I think that definitely helps.

Um, I think... Um, in terms of like my role in like board and whatever, um, I tend to think of things like, if someone has something like serious to bring up to me, like... I always make sure to like emphasize, like, “I'm here if anyone needs anything.” Um... And... So I try to be like as open and making people comfortable as possible, and then um... When I hear things or it's, like the same thing about one person from like multiple people, then my senses kind of go up, and I'm like, okay, like, this is... I'm hearing the same thing from like multiple people, so like obviously this is a pattern of like— and it's not making people feel comfortable, so like, I think that's when my brain kind of goes into, like, “Okay, this is my job.” Um, I have like a form that we have people fill out for like, records purposes. Um, and then I try to work really hard, like, cause obviously people are my friends, so I care about like their feelings and protecting them, but I think a lot of my role is like protecting people's safety and anonymity, specifically, so like making sure that... If like a person reports something like it stays— like it goes to me first and then like sometimes I'll loop in our managing director if I need to, um... But like just emphasizing to the person that like I'm talking to like, you can tell me as much as you want. You don't have like— it's— every part of the process is like up to them. And like, I'm just there to, like, kind of facilitate um, and like, take actual action if like needed.

Um, but I think that's when I step out of like the friend thing, and I'm like, my job is to like, keep them safe and like comfortable, and like, um... I think it can be like, some pressure sometimes because of like, sometimes this kind of job. It's like sometimes you don't know what the right thing is until you're like in a situation because sometimes it depends on the situation. Um... But I think sometimes it involves me being like, “Hey, this might be uncomfortable, this might like, you might have to share stuff that you don't share with anyone else and I just make sure to say like obviously I'm your friend and like, I'm here to make sure you're comfortable, but also, like...

I'm telling other people out of like the sake of your safety.” If I am telling other people like it's very much focused on that. And just being like, “I trust you and like thank you for telling me.”

Um, yeah, I mean, that's like most of what my role is, is just making sure that we maintain, like the environment that we strive to create, um, which is pretty easy since most people are very like committed to that. Um, but it definitely is hard when like people... People um– like you can sense that people aren't comfortable, and I always try to, um– I think a lot of it too is just like, keep being a look out of like people's body language and like how they're feeling, and how– because like, even if they're not like physically upset, like, I feel like I can sometimes tell so I always make a point of like... Checking in with people, um, even if it like– nothing actually happens like, you know, just being like, I'm here if you need to talk or whatever. Um, so just like being approachable while also like, having the right tools to do my job, um, because I think sometimes there's a lot of stigma of like “Oh, I have to record this, and then it's gonna be like, super like sanitized and like cold,” and like... That's why I try to walk the line between like being an approachable and warm and– but also being like... look like, for your safety, I do have to, like know information, and it's not going anywhere besides like me. Um... But I do have to write it down, and like that kind of thing, and just like assuring people that, like... It's for the benefit of like their safety and other people.

Um... And then I think, like as a director like... Obviously a lot of people like know me in the club and um, I think it'll be like... important for me to... Be like, in the beginning like set expectations, that's like we're here to help you and guide you through this process, you want it to be fun and exciting and awesome, but like also being like, “Okay, I'm speaking with my directorial hat on,” and like knowing that like, you know, cause I get a lot of again, I'm not a confrontational person and I get a lot of like anxiety about being like, oh my gosh, if I say this to this person like, will it not like me? Or like, even if you're giving like a note, I think sometimes I can overthink it and it's like, then I have to be like, okay. This is like my job and they're my friend but they're also an actor like I want them to be... You know, the best that they can, and um, but I think that that's something personally that I'll be working on like throughout because... I'm a very like friendly approachable social person, but I think also like, so it'll be interesting to be kind of bring the two parts– the two, like hats.

Um, but yeah, I think I– I have a lot of faith in the people around me and like working together to make it the best thing we can do. And like, I'm not afraid to stand up for myself. So I think that also helps, and just knowing that, like... From a directorial standpoint, like, we are making– you're trying to execute a show like that's a huge task. I mean, like, yeah, I mean, especially like *Gatsby*, so intricate and like... There's so much going on and it's like that's a huge undertaking, and so like when I think of you and Kyara, and you're like asking things of us and you're like giving us suggestions for the purpose of like, we wanna– oh if like, we're here and we wanna elevate to, like here.

Um, and it's so hard to get in this show off the ground, like it's– it's a huge undertaking. So I think I have a lot of respect, um, for people? And like, I think I've gotten to watch, like other people do it and so it gives me good like kind of tips of like “Okay, this person is doing this, and like I want to emulate that.” Um... And I'm also a very– I'm good. I love scheduling, I love logistics, so like I think those things will be like my strong suit which is nice. Um, but yeah, I think it sets me up like, for– in a really good position to be able to have watched like people do it for me of like, okay. This is usually how it goes and like... There's always people around to help. And it's like putting a lot of... Overactive puzzle pieces together, um, which is like is kind of wild, you know? It's– I think it's gonna be really fun.

And like, um, *Gatsby*'s really coming along, which is so exciting. Um... I hadn't read that– I hadn't read the book since high school and then I read the script and I was like, “Dang, they really just like– we just get to like watch them be like, be so human in their relationships and like they all, you know, are cheating on each other and like, and then we're all just like, ‘Hey, we're gonna go over your house and drink a lot of wine and like and then just like disappear.’” Um... But yeah, it's so like, I think it's super fun to like see kind of the world building that happens, like as we get closer to show, like, see how people get so in it. It's like so cool to watch people like like your friends are like, “Oh my gosh, you're totally different person than like this character,” but when you see them like like, fully like lock into it, it's like, “Oh my gosh, this is so cool.” Um, and just like the amount of work that it takes from like every person it's so wild that it gives you like such an appreciation– I think like that's why I want to go into film production, is like it's

kind of the same thing with, like so many people doing such specific jobs to like, make a bigger thing happen and like... I think that's why I have like so much appreciation for it. But yeah, I'm really excited and nervous. And like I hope it'll go well and I'm really excited because I've always liked loved the whole Salem Witch Trials aspect of history. So, when Finn like was like, "I did this show in high school" and I read the script and I remember thinking, "Dang, this is a really good script." Um, so I really, I'm excited to get to bring it to life.

JF: Yeah. So for the film production, um, I know, you've mentioned um, that's kind of what you're hoping to like get into and do is that gonna be something you're hoping to do like career-wise, um, post-college? Or more as like a side job?

HG: Yeah, I mean, I feel like I would do it in my career like for my career. Um... Like as everybody knows, the arts are like a very fickle industry. So I am not like naive in knowing that it will take a lot of work to get like where I fully want to be because I want to be like a cinematographer and work with like the camera team and stuff. And that's a lot of like visual style kind of thing. Um... But I think postgrad like I will, um, be a production assistant for a while. Because that's like the best way to get experience, um, and kind of build a resume, and then people can be like, "Oh, I worked with you on this project, and like you did a great job. I'm gonna recommend you for this thing." And then sometimes then you can move up to be like, assistant camera and things like that. But it's not super linear. So I'm— but I honestly don't really mind that because I really, um, I really just like want to be on a set, you know, and I feel like that's the best way to learn, and a lot of PAing is just doing a lot of random tasks. But you get to watch people do what they do. So I'm like, really excited to just like learn from people that way.

Um, I want to take like advanced filmmaking in the spring, um and then one of my professors in that department like had this internship with like a production studio in Rantoul, um, so I want to do that like in the fall of my senior year, because I think that'll give me like a lot of good experience. But yeah, a lot of it is, like, building like a portfolio where you can like show people like... You know, "I did this in college, or I did this in an internship." And so, um... You don't have to be like... Super storied in terms of like your body of work. But like it's the kind of job where they're like, the kind of degree you have really doesn't matter. It's more like what have you

done out in the field? And that will— sometimes will take a while. But like for me, I don't really mind it, because I'm like, I've never been a barista, like that might be fun to do like on the side, um, when I'm not like doing a project. Um, I feel like that's ideally how I want to go like you really never know.

Um, I find it so annoying people are, like, “Oh my gosh, you're going into the arts? You're gonna make money!” And I'm like, dude like, I wouldn't have chosen the arts if I wanted to make a lot of money. Um, like... I always tell people I would rather be really happy and make your money than be like making six figures and be really miserable. Um, because that's like not what I want to do. Um, and yeah, I mean, like I do, believe that's what I would do. But also, like it could mean like doing media for like an advertising agency or like just stuff to gain experience. And then, like, I mean, a lot of people are like super self-taught, a lot of people work for years before like doing like a big thing. Um... But there's a lot of ways to like find mentors and people and doing the things that you wanted to do so I think a lot of it is like about taking opportunities and just being like, I don't really know fully what I'm doing. But I'm like, willing to learn, um, and I think that's what people like want to see is that you're just like willing to do, like get coffee for a month. You know? Which doesn't seem super glamorous, but like again, you get to watch people do what you want to do. That's why, like, I'm definitely not taking that for granted. And um, maybe see some different parts of the world, and like be somewhere new and... Like kind of prove to myself that I can? I guess in a way? But yeah, that's like the goal.

JF: Nice.

HG: Yeah.

JF: So if you've like worked on new film projects. Can you kind of tell me about that, and then, like if not, maybe, um, could you tell me about some things that you hope to do soon, or maybe some things that you've done that you feel like, will have like prepared you for working on in the future.

HG: Yeah, I, so I've done a couple of short film through um, my classes— my production classes that I've taken because those are often like our finals which are really cool. Um, so I've done a— um, I did a film last... So, last year that I'm really proud of. Um, I got to be assistant camera for that so that was really cool. Um, and then I did a film two semesters ago that was really cool. I got to be director of photography for that which is like, that's the dream job. So it was really cool. And so I'm like, slowly but surely building a portfolio. I think I've learned that like you gotta have a lot of patience. It is not the kind of thing where, like... You'll film for like five hours, you know? Like it's not— you can always tell when people are like... When people are like... You know, “Won't be done in 2 hours?” And you're like, “No... this is not— I'm so sorry, like that's not how this works,” um, because it just takes a while to like, set up equipment and do all that stuff, and you're doing multiple takes and whatever. Um, but I think it's taught me like a lot about just like patience and wanting to get things right. And learned a lot about how to set up cameras and make sure you don't drop extremely expensive lenses on the floor um, the cameras that we use last semester, my professor was like these are amazing cameras, and it's like, really cool that you guys get to use them, but they're also like actively 15 grand and so like, please don't break them. And you're kind of like, “holy shit,” because that's like a semester of tuition.

Um, and so that's definitely like terrifying a little bit when you're using them because you're like, you're putting a lot of faith in me, um, but peop— it's very collaborative which I love, and then this summer, I go to a camp with people with disabilities, um, like near my hometown. And I'm gonna like make a documentary while I'm there, which is like super cool and I kind of want to do it about like the culture of like caring for each other and like being interdependent and all that kind of stuff, so I think like that would be a really cool experience too. Because I haven't gotten to do that kind of filmmaking much before, um, so it's kind of a big undertaking, but I definitely have hands to help me, which is awesome when I think it'll like, um, set me up to be like I've done different styles and like use my resources and like my professors always say, like, keep making things even if they're bad, you know? So like— because all people want to see is that like, you have actually done stuff. Um, so I think it'll set me up really well and then like going forward I just wanna like, maybe be get another internship in like the summer or something and just get as much, experience, as I can before, like... Applying to be a PA because like you definitely can with no experience, but like, I think it'll just make it easier to kind of like jump in

with that kind of experience. Um, and a lot of it is just like... You work really hard and sometimes things don't and out, and sometimes you wait a while and but like, I really appreciate it, because it's super collaborative, so you're not ever like shouldering at all on your own, um, which is like super cool. Did I—I feel like? Did I answer like what you were asking?

JF: Yeah, I think so

HG: Okay, cool.

JF: Um, I did want to ask, like, just a small clar— like clarifying question? Um, just because you used the term interdependent, and I haven't quite heard that before, so could you maybe talk about a little bit, what that means?

HG: Yeah, um, interdependent is essentially a term... It's kind of similar to like codependent in that it's like you're, um, relying on somebody else. But codependency can sometimes have some like negative connotations associated with it, um, so my friend actually taught me interdependent. And it's essentially— like I use it to talk about, like, care between disabled people, because we're both, you know, dependent on other people or each other for different things, but we can like help each other out in whatever ways that we can. So it's not— you're not fully independent, but you're not also, like, there's not the toxicity of being like codependent, or like it gives you some of your... It gives you freedom, but it also like allows you to be like, “Hey, I know you know you're also disabled but like... I believe you can help me because we can— we each have our strengths and weaknesses, and we can help each other out.”

And like— so it can be like me in my wheelchair, going closer to my friend and like helping him open his takeout or something like that. Um... And so my friend actually taught me it as like a alternative to being codependent, um, and I think it's like a really cool way to describe our relationship where like you're not... It's not about give-and-take, but it's more about, like, “What can we offer each other so that we both can be like— do the things that we want to do and be more like independent?” Um, and I think that's really cool. Um, so I and like— we um talk a lot about, as you know, like the value of care, um, and there's people with disabilities, people

without disabilities, but we try really hard not to make there be like a hierarchy, um, and I'm like, I've been on the support side of it for a while. Which means I get to like, hang out and support my other friends with disabilities and that's been such a rewarding experience because it just like helps me have faith in my ability to, like help other people? And I think as disabled people like we're not often asked to help other people in that way? So it like was a really cool experience, and so I want to kind of talk to people at my camp about like... How is this model care different from like what you see at home or what you experience at home? And like, what you like about it? What's hard about it? Like, what has it given you in terms of autonomy, and like, independence and agency? Um, because I think it's a really cool way of exploring like what makes the Zeno ecosystem like work and be really cool?

And everyone contributes in like a way and um, like in a society where disabled people are often like... Not asked to contribute, it's like, super cool that you know, you give the people the chance to... Like, do a chore, or like, check-in with someone or— There's just so much like emotional intelligence that people possess and like that's also a form of care. And so I'm excited to like talk to people about it and be like: What about it? Is like what about Zeno is special about this part? And like, what do you wish people knew? Um— [To Gabby:] Yeah, what do you wish people knew Gabby? Huh? Oh I know. She's like “I want treats. I want people to know that I want treats.”

JF: But that— that does sound um, very rewarding, definitely.

HG: Yeah, I'm really excited about it.

JF: Um, so since we're I'm running a little short on time now. We've been talking for about an hour. I was just gonna ask you maybe like one more question?

HG: Absolutely.

JF: Before we finish up, and it's kind of what is like, maybe the biggest thing that you would like to change either in like Penny Dreadful Players or in the campus community at large?

HG: Like... In like a general sense? Or in like a... In a specific sense?

JF: Um, just kind of overall, like what– what change to, um, like, campus do you think would be like the most beneficial, or do you think like you would love to see?

HG: Yeah. There's so many options. Um, I think... Um...

JF: We could narrow it down if you would like.

HG: Yeah.

JF: Okay. How about we talk about just the club then?

HG: Okay, I think um... We do a really good job like promoting diversity, um, but our club makeup is not the most diverse, and I don't know if like that means... Advertising to different people or whatever. But I think it's important that we like, tell all kinds of stories and like theatre is supposed to be for you know, everyone and I don't know like it's hard down to between, like, not trying to single people out for being marginalized, but also being like we want you here. But not in like a tokenizing way, I think that can be the line is like really hard, even for me to, like, think about. Um... But I think yeah, like I would love to see um... Like more diversity in the club itself and like, um... We finally have like an awesome accessible space that we use, shoutout THB [Temple Hoyne Buell Hall], which is super cool. Um... But... I know, like in terms of getting spaces reserved it can be like hard, so I also just like– I'm looking forward to working with you on like that kind of thing and just making sure that um, we keep access as like, open as possible for like everyone. Um, just like literally and metaphorically and physically and whatever. Yeah, I... And I think there's a lot of things we're doing really well.

Um, but I think... I also just like— in club in general like, we have like exec board, and we also have general board, and I would love to like get general board more involved in like things or give them more responsibility um, because, like theoretically, that's why they're on board. Um, and I feel like we can be like, “Hey, does anyone want to make up poster or a program or a... Whatever,” and I think we're like on our way there for sure and like, Kyara's marketing ideas are really great. Shout out Posterpalooza. Um, but yeah, I think like, just making sure that people know that like they have a space here, um... And like, we're trying our best to like, make it so that people feel that and... Um, like, with all the shit going on in the world, it's like: here's a space that you can like, come and be really silly and like... Pretend you're in the 1920s for a week, um, like that's what I found a lot of levity in and just like all this shit that you've seen the news every day. It's like okay but then I go to rehearsal, and I do the Charleston, you know? Like— and so I feel like there's a lot of— there's so much value in that and just giving people space to be like: Doesn't mean the world doesn't suck, but like you can put your mind to something else for a minute, and like something that connects you with people and like gives you purpose.

And like, that's why I do it, you know? Give me purpose to be like, I'm— what I'm doing is like, helping all of these people do what they do. Um... It helps me take my mind off other things, because I'm like a chronic worrier so it's like nice to just be like, “Okay, I'm doing something that's purposeful and feels... Feels like a contribution and like we'll make people better. And we'll make something better. And we'll provide people joy.” And like I feel like especially now, it's like so nice that we get to do that. And everyone else is super also dedicated, and it's like really cool to be in a space where so many people are so like dedicated to that and making something I'm really good because sometimes you see people who are like, “I could care less,” and I'm like, that's so uhh, like if you're here, why? Like, why not commit all the way? But yeah, I— I think that we have a really bright bright future ahead of us, and, it's so cool that it's all student-run, like it's always super awesome that, I don't know. I— It's so cool that we're able to like do all of these things. And—

JF: Yeah.

HG: Like... I don't know, manage money by ourselves. And like— and like, do all these things and put on productions by ourselves. And like I feel like that's not what's expected of like people our age, or like people are always like, “Wow. I can't believe you... whatever, did this yourself.” And it's like, yeah, a lot of help, but we're also very well-oiled machine at this point, so it's like, really cool to see it all come together and people be like, “Oh my God, we just did that!” And yeah, it's really cool.

JF: Yeah, there's definitely a lot of, uh, passion and dedication.

HG: Yeah, and just like a sense of like pride and ownership, that like... You know, your friend like, directed it. You know, or like— you know, like someone did set design or like it, just— it feels so much— there's so much payoff in like getting people working something— so hard on something and then people come watch it and... And then they're like, ‘Wow, that was amazing!’ And you're like, ‘I'm so glad you noticed!’ You know? Like, um, and I think that's so cool. Also, you're doing an incredible job-

JF: Aw, thank you.

HG: -by the way. Um, I'm gassing Jo up in this interview. [JF: Laughs] Um... But, yeah, no, it's been like so fun and such like a moment of joy and ridiculousness for me because it can be happy— like the world can be happy sometimes but then it's like: Is it really that serious? If... Like, you're going to a really rich man's house and pretend to be drunk and like... Now I'm— my favorite line in the whole show is... It's, uh, I think it's Kyle's, but it's ‘Tut Tut...

JF: In a disapproving way?

HG: [Both giggle] Like who— and then I was like because Ryann was talking about it, and she was like, “Oh yeah,” like and she said the thing, and I was like, “You mean to tell me it's been about a flag this entire time? This entire time, it's been about a flag?” Like that's amazing. Anyway, that's my um... That's my um... Thought in general, I think everyone should have more whimsy in their lives, and um... I found a great place to— to do that.

JF: Alright, um, I think that's– we're about out of time.

HG: Amazing.

JF: because we've talked for so long now. [Both Giggle] But, um, thank you so much for meeting with me.

HG: Yeah, thank you.

JF: Especially a short notice. I really enjoy talking to you–

HG: That's okay. Yeah. Me too. Thank you so much for reaching out.

JF: Okay. It is now 1:36 PM and we are ending the interview here.