

HOST 1: How many people are actively involved in this vision of creating a national bisexual organization?

GUEST: Its big difference of members is 133 people-- on the listserv, about 10, 15 people probably involved in the long-term vision at the moment.

HOST 1: So is that how many people were at the inaugural meeting today?

GUEST: Well, there were some new people we hadn't seen before and those people who were invited to become part of the vision for the future, and some people were able to join us online through a chat link. We had actually a number of activists from the Toronto region, and they all happen to be from [INAUDIBLE]. I don't know why. It's just there.

HOST 1: How many people were on your chat link?

GUEST: There were about eight at one point--

HOST 1: Oh, wow.

GUEST: --including two people who have been very interested in the growth of Bi-Net Canada since its beginnings. And they wished they could have come here, but they couldn't. So the best way they could participate was online.

HOST 1: Wow, so now you guys had all of 90 minutes to have your meeting today. This is the first time you'd ever met. What are you able to accomplish in all of an hour and a half?

GUEST: We were able to get an idea for our future. We were able to say to ourselves that we are interested in incorporating as a non-profit. We have to figure out which way it's going to be, whether it's going to be provincially or federally, and so we start to settle that. Realistically, I have sensed before we came all to Vancouver that it would be perhaps a year or two or three years before we really got going as a full-scale organization. So we're just taking our baby steps right now, and hopefully, we'll be able to get up on our two feet and start toppling on, as it were.

HOST 1: So what do you see as being the next few steps for you and the key people who have been driving this?

GUEST: For myself, I'm happy to take an equal role in fashioning the future in a little bit of a longer term. I have determined that for myself whether I want to be involved in front lines or whether I want to base myself out of Ontario or I live in Toronto and be involved more in the provincial end of things.

HOST 1: But are you-- I mean, you said that you decided that you're going to set yourself up as a non-profit organization, but obviously, that involves all kinds of things, like board of directors and governance structures and blah, blah, blah. I mean, were you able to get a sense of where you're going to go with that and what the immediate steps are that you need to take?

GUEST: Yes, that I see myself involved to probably increasing degree in at least the next two years. And hopefully, we'll be able to find more people regionally, more people interested in working on national level, and maybe I'll be able to move to more of a lower key role. We'll have to wait and see really. Yeah.

HOST 1: And what's this conference been like for you in terms of being able to network with other organizations, like Bi-Net USA, and the representatives of the community in Mexico and just people from different parts of North America in terms of learning how other people's communities work and what you can take from it?

GUEST: Well, first, I have to admit that I haven't unfortunately been able to connect much with the Mexican contingents here. Bi-Net USA, on the other hand, I have been able to speak with many of their representatives, and they've welcomed us with open arms.

HOST 1: Oh, wonderful.

GUEST: Yes, I've recognized some people from when I was at Boston. But there were a lot of new people who welcomed the vision of a new national group to the north, and they're ready to help us with some ideas and thoughts. They're not going to do the work for us. We don't need that to happen.

HOST 1: [LAUGHS] Oh, come on.

GUEST: No, we can try to do it ourselves, but it's nice to have some visions and thoughts from people who've been involved in activism for many, many years.

HOST 1: So what kind of things have you been getting in terms of practical advice from them? Or has it gotten to that yet?

GUEST: Well, the one thing that I did find useful so far that I hadn't had any exposure before was how to see myself dealing with media, both in print and-- all in print, online, television, and the like. I've had little experience at home in Toronto. On behalf of the Toronto Bisexual Network, asked to comment on different things or to contribute to stories, and sometimes, I determined for myself whether I think it's good or whether it's something trying to exploit the community. I've turned down a few stories because I can tell they're looking for sensationalistic viewpoint.

HOST 1: And did the media workshop today change your approach to how you would deal with that in future?

GUEST: Yes, I have to study--

HOST 1: What did you get out of that?

GUEST: Well, I have to study the guidelines more than I received. But it allows me to get a clearer idea of who to talk to and whom not to talk to. And they come across and say, hey, we want a comment out of you-- or more

HOST 1: Interesting. So there are people that you're not supposed to talk to. I always heard that no media or that any media was good media.

GUEST: Well, it depends. From what I've seen in the past, some people are looking to honestly explore bisexual identity, bisexual community, and then there are other people who think, well, what about Anne and Ellen? Like, they're talking about actors and actresses and trying to assume their bisexuality and thinking, how am I going to comment on that? What does that have to do with the community I'm part of? Nothing.

HOST 1: Yeah, that's true. [LAUGHS]

GUEST: I've had a-- I've had a couple of attempts to be asked to comment on stuff like that.

HOST 1: You've been asked to comment on Anne and Ellen.

GUEST: Yes.

HOST 1: I don't know. GiGi, what would you say about Anne and Ellen?

GIGI: Anne and Ellen.

HOST 1: As a bisexual activist, what would your comment be on their breakup and Heche's subsequent dating of a man?

GIGI: Bisexual.

[LAUGHTER]

GUEST: Oh, OK.

GIGI: Totally.

HOST 1: We're trying to give-- [SIGHS]

GIGI: I'm coming in a little--

HOST 1: [INAUDIBLE] some help here.

GIGI: --late on this discussion. Oh, OK.

[LAUGHTER]

HOST 1: We're talking about the Media Essentials Workshop.

HOST 2: My [INAUDIBLE].

GIGI: Oh, OK.

HOST 3: We're still here--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

GIGI: I've been so wrapped up in those national meetings stuff.

HOST 2: All I would say on that whole "never judge yourself by what famous people do"--

[LAUGHTER]

HOST 1: Never judge yourself by what famous people do?

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

HOST 2: --all of these people are messed up. People, these are broken people.

HOST 3: I know. I know. But for so long, they were like symbols, and now all of a sudden, not only just Anne Heche but Julie Cypher-- it's just-- yeah.

HOST 4: Well, the problem with it is both of them basically are bisexual, whether they wish you admit it or not--

HOST 3: That's right.

HOST 4: --and whether society wishes to accept them as such. And my contention has been, for the 20 years that I have been out, that everybody is bisexual to some extent, given the right person and the right situation.

HOST 3: Yeah, I think so.

HOST 2: [INAUDIBLE]

HOST 3: [LAUGHING]

HOST 2: I think I would-- I think I might have--

HOST 3: We have silence on the other end [INAUDIBLE].

HOST 2: I think I might have been bisexual in first grade.

HOST 3: [LAUGHS]

HOST 2: That was the last time I had a girlfriend.

GUEST: 16 for me.

HOST 4: Yeah, [INAUDIBLE].

GIGI: Well, you know me. [LAUGHS]

HOST 3: Oh, yeah. Girl, we know you.

HOST 2: Everybody knows GiGi.

HOST 4: Everybody know GiGi.

Yeah, [INAUDIBLE]

GIGI: [INAUDIBLE] GiGi. [LAUGHS]

HOST 4: And in the biblical sense, too.

HOST 3: Yeah.

[LAUGHTER]

I was so not going to go there.

GIGI: [INAUDIBLE] maybe. [LAUGHS]

HOST 4: I have no shame.

[LAUGHTER]

HOST 3: What was the question again?

HOST 2: [INAUDIBLE] [LAUGHS]

HOST 3: I don't even remember the question anymore.

HOST 4: have a question for the gentleman who is--

HOST 2: Steven?

HOST 4: --forming the group in Canada there. Is this going to be specifically a Canadian organization, or do you visualize this ultimately encompassing almost an international type of organization and with the cooperation and liaison between the other groups or other countries?

GUEST: It would be a Canadian-based national organization for Canadian volunteers but with links to Bi-Net USA, the Australian Bisexual Network, various groups.

GIGI: I'd like to jump in here.

HOST 4: Do you ultimately visualize an international group that will be not necessarily an umbrella but perhaps maybe a coordinating group for all of the various different countries?

GIGI: I think we're jumping way ahead. I'd like to--

HOST 3: Oh.

GIGI: --say a few words here.

HOST 2: OK.

GIGI: Bi-Net USA has been having its national meeting here, and they've been sharing information with the Canadians and sharing-- we did a work-- Barrie did a workshop this-- I think it was this morning. I haven't had much sleep. [GIGGLES] But anyway, he did a workshop on running and some of the things Bi-Net USA had done and the mistakes we've made and the things we've learned. And we've shared a lot of information with the Canadians.

GUEST: Yes.

GIGI: And [INAUDIBLE].

HOST 2: I see it as-- what I see happening is cooperatives forming between nations.

GUEST: I believe so. It's been very, very useful. Very helpful. And myself and the other two core members of Bi-Net Canada.

GIGI: Yeah.

GUEST: Thank you very much for that.

GIGI: Yes. And to me, this has been so awesome. Just meeting the Canadians, feeling the local culture and the customs, and even their money. What is it the I forget the--

GUEST: Loony and toony?

GIGI: Yeah, loony and toony. This is great. I feel like I've found fairyland up here.

JACKIE THORN: Well, GiGi, do you do you feel like, and the gentleman there also, do you feel like that the climate and the attitude, both societally and governmentally, are perhaps more acceptable in Canada than perhaps they are here in the United States?

GUEST: I think for Canada it's in certain cities really. Certainly Vancouver. Certainly in Toronto. And to some degree, as far as I can see, in Montreal.

JACKIE THORN: But in some of the rural places it's not as acceptable?

GUEST: You go 30 miles probably outside of any large Canadian city with a bi group and you're in Neverland.

GIGI: Yeah. No. You're not and Never Never Land anymore.

GUEST: Where there's never a bisexual anywhere.

GIGI: Yeah. Oh, that's true.

HOST 2: Yeah. Now reach the outer limits of people's--

GIGI: I need to jump in here and remind everyone that they're listening to After Hours Queer Radio with Attitude on KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station. Thank you.

HOST 2: So it's pretty much not much different in that respect than most other countries. Here, in Houston, in Montrose, Houston, it's easy to be queer, bi--

GUEST: Yes.

HOST 2: --Whatever. You go outside what we affectionately refer to as the loop, and it gets a little more difficult the further out you get.

GUEST: Sure.

GIGI: Until you get to Spring Branch.

But we're kind of coming to the end of this segment. OK I wanted to ask do you have any last thoughts or any inspirations that you'd like to share about the Canadian group?

GUEST: Well that's-- We're going to continue to grow slowly but surely. Bi-Net Canada's website at www.binetcanada.org.

HOST 2: That's easy enough.

GIGI: And check out their site. I saw it during-- when they had their meeting they had it projected up on the wall. They have really worked hard putting this together.

GUEST: Just before I go if I could say a little bit of a hello to anyone listening over the web link who's from my home base in Toronto and also to anyone who I know as friends worldwide who found out about this through bisexual.org's chat room.

JIMMY CARPER: Good.

GIGI: So some people right now on the other side of the world are waking up to Bi radio. And while you mention the internet and being simulcast on the internet, After Hours is becoming more of a global show.

JIMMY CARPER: It certainly is.

GIGI: And Bi-Net is becoming more global in its scope and I think by Bi-Net USA and Bi-Net Canada have formed a really powerful partnership this weekend.

HOST 2: Good.

GIGI: And I think we're going to see some wonderful things happening in both organizations.

JIMMY CARPER: Wonderful. Wonderful. Thanks

GUEST: And thank you for letting me be part of the show.

GIGI: Oh you bet.

JIMMY CARPER: OK GiGi, let's go back to a little bit more of your favorite song as you bring on the next group.

GIGI: OK.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

[MUSIC - SISTER SLEDGE, "WE ARE FAMILY"]

GIGI: Of kind of cultural workers. Oh here we go. Hello Jimmy. Jimmy are we back? Or did something get turned down? Songs faded. Hello Jimmy. We're in dead space. The song just faded and nothing's come back.

HOST 1: So you heard the song fade but nothing came back?

GIGI: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: So we could be on the air now.

GIGI: Hello Jimmy.

HOST 1: There's no reason to think that we got disconnected.

JIMMY CARPER: Hello.

GIGI: Hello Jimmy. You're back. We were wondering what happened there. The song faded and--

JIMMY CARPER: My OK. We're back.

GIGI: OK. Good deal. We have our next guest. Let's see. We have Ben?

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

GIGI: Yes.

JIMMY CARPER: Ben Silver.

GIGI: Ben Silver.

JIMMY CARPER: Hello Ben. Welcome to After Hours.

GIGI: And why don't you tell us a little bit about your topic tonight and before you do that. Tell us a little bit about your experience with the conference. Just a quick word or two.

BEN SILVER: Well, I'm enjoying the conference. There are any number of different things going on at the same time. And many different possible things that someone could be interested.

GIGI: Uh-huh.

BEN SILVER: You have-- It's pretty hard to choose at times.

GIGI: Hell Yes.

BEN SILVER: We don't get into any stereotype jokes about that.

GIGI: What, like going both ways?

BEN SILVER: Many ways.

GIGI: Many ways. Yes, we are. Well, what would you like to talk about tonight?

BEN SILVER: Well, when I first jumped into this my thought was that we would have a panel of artists, of bi and trans artists, and I don't know that I can speak for bi and trans artists and cultural workers in general, but I will certainly be happy to speak about myself as a cultural worker.

GIGI: Why don't you do that?

BEN SILVER: --in bi community. Well, do you have any?

GIGI: I saw you brought your guitar here.

BEN SILVER: I did bring the guitar and I figured that somewhere in there I would play a couple of songs.

GIGI: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: Wonderful.

GIGI: Yes.

BEN SILVER: That must be Jimmy.

GIGI: Jim Carper.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

GIGI: Hi, Jim.

JIMMY CARPER: Hello. Welcome to [INAUDIBLE]. Yes. Thank you. We love [INAUDIBLE] music. It's a wonderful thing.

BEN SILVER: Yes.

GIGI: Well, how do-- I'd like to kind of ask, how does art relate to you with bisexuality?

BEN SILVER: Well, that's been a real question for me. How art-- how I relate art to any number of different things that are true in my life, including bisexuality. And in fact, one of you asked about the conference. One of the workshops in the conference today was about bi and trans artists. And there were a lot in the room so I'm surprised that there aren't more here, but--

GIGI: They may not have heard. We had a problem with the-- We announced the radio show early this morning and I think a lot of people were still sleeping in.

BEN SILVER: And that's fine. One of the things--

JIMMY CARPER: Right? More for you. More time for you.

BEN SILVER: I guess so. One of the things that struck me, a discussion I got going, was about the responsibility of the artist to any given-- when they're modeling something. You know, I am bisexual and I'm an artist. Does that make me a bisexual artist? I am polyamorous and I'm an artist. I do a lot of work around different issues having to do with racism and classism. And what is my obligation as an artist to deal with those things?

And there was sort of a split in the room about people who felt that it is the artist's job to be a role model for any group that they are a part of. In this case, that I might be, for example, a bi role model, and that my music would be about bisexuality. And then it was brought up that we're all many, many different things and that once an artist gets pinned to that it may be hard for them to express themselves in other ways. To express their entire personality. That, do they have to-- the question of whether they have to toe a party line and make people in that group look good.

GIGI: Quite an issue there.

BEN SILVER: So I think that ties in to the question of how music

GIGI: Yeah.

BEN SILVER: And bisexuality relate to me. Well, they do and they don't.

GIGI: Yes.

BEN SILVER: It's something in terms of lyrics that I can write about. Perhaps my desire for variety in my life could be reflected. I like a variety of styles of music and in terms of people that I'm attracted to there's a large variety as well.

GIGI: Well lately we've been featuring a lot of poets and writers and all kinds of bi artists.

BEN SILVER: I'm glad to hear it.

GIGI: On After Hours. But why don't we listen to one of your songs?

JIMMY CARPER: Please.

BEN SILVER: All right, well, why don't I initially do something that does have to do with bisexuality specifically? And I actually wrote it for a bi conference in 1990. I think it was the first international bi conference.

GIGI: Oh wow.

BEN SILVER: So and this is sort of in, I was a little more in an angry bi phase to some extent. I was feeling much more affected by oppression, both in straight community and in queer community.

GIGI: Yeah

BEN SILVER: As a bi person. And so the song reflected that a lot more. And if I were to have written it today it might-- Funny, I was talking with someone else who was in the studio earlier about whether there are any good bi anthems out there and it's something that I have worked on at different points. And I certainly don't feel in as much of an angry space around it at this point but I think the song still stands.

GIGI: Is there a title to the song?

BEN SILVER: The Ballad of Donny Wells.

GIGI: Ah.

[MUSIC - BEN SILVER, "THE BALLAD OF DONNY WELLS"]

GIGI: Wow very powerful.

JIMMY CARPER: Very powerful. Thank you. That is the Ballad of Donny Wells by--

BEN SILVER: Ben Silver.

JIMMY CARPER: Ben Silver.

BEN SILVER: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: I didn't get your last name. Now, do you have this on the tape or on a CD? Or do you product?

BEN SILVER: I do not yet. I'm in the studio.

JIMMY CARPER: Uh-huh.

BEN SILVER: And there should be something coming out by the end of the year.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh good.

BEN SILVER: So people can email me.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BEN SILVER: Both about that and booking.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

BEN SILVER: And my email address is bensilver@prodigy.net That's P-R-O-D-I-G-Y dot N-E-T.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

GIGI: Great. Well, thank you.

JIMMY CARPER: Thank you very much, Ben.

GIGI: We have another guest with us on this segment. And this is Bobby. We're going to go to another topic here.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

GIGI: It's Bobby Keppel?

BOBBY KEPPEL: Keppel.

GIGI: Keppel. Good, I got it right.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

GIGI: So bad with names sometimes. Anyway, Bobby, how's the conference been for you?

BOBBY KEPPEL: Well it's been absolutely terrific.

GIGI: Oh, wow.

BOBBY KEPPEL: It's just wonderful to be back in Vancouver. But I've never been in Vancouver as an out, bi, senior woman before.

JIMMY CARPER: Wow.

GIGI: Oh wow.

BOBBY KEPPEL: It's been really great. I agree with Ben that there-- choices, choices, choices. There's so many interesting workshops to go to and chance to meet people from all over.

GIGI: Well I've seen Bobby around all over the conference and every so often we'll pass each other in the halls and I just make that eye contact and we get these big smiles and just glad. This has been so wonderful. What would you like to talk about?

BOBBY KEPPEL: I'd like to talk about what it's like to be a senior bi.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, please.

BOBBY KEPPEL: Even at this conference I'm one of probably four people who are in their 60s. I'm one of the two oldest people here.

JIMMY CARPER: Wow.

BOBBY KEPPEL: And that's pretty usual. And it's really difficult, I think, for us, we feel sort of isolated in a lot of ways. That we're so much older and there are so few of us proportionate to other people who turn up at whatever conference we happen to turn up at.

JIMMY CARPER: No, that's true. That's true. It's actually very similar in the bi-- it seems very similar in the bi community as it is in the gay community that it's geared toward the younger folks. And those of us who start aging feel left out lots of times.

BOBBY KEPPEL: Well, I live in Maine, in Southern Maine, and one of the things that I think is particularly isolating for me is that I know a lot of older women, women my age and older, I'm 68, almost 69, who have been married, happily married, had children, are divorced or widowed, and now are partnered up with another woman and they insist that they are lesbian. And they're in a lot of denial about their previous experience of being married, of being attracted to men. They want to be part of the lesbian community. And I feel that they're very oppressive of me and other older bi women. So it's additionally isolating.

GIGI: Oh Wow.

BOBBY KEPPEL: So they may be an older group but it's the worst bigotry, certainly, that I encounter, is with lesbians. And according to a research study that was done by a graduate student in Boston who interviewed bisexual women about their experiences of oppression, it was almost unanimous among the women that she interviewed that their worst experience of oppression had been with lesbians.

JIMMY CARPER: Sure. Same thing with gay men. Bi men, gay men. Same type of thing. And the older you get, the more oppressive, it seems to be. Because I think the older that you get you hang on to those old ideals.

BOBBY KEPPEL: Mhm.

JIMMY CARPER: Why? I don't know why. I have no idea why.

BOBBY KEPPEL: It's an ageist society. So you're dealing with ageism already, and then you're dealing with

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BOBBY KEPPEL: Sexism, bisexuality. And so it's a lot of-- and of course, as a woman, then I have to deal also with the issues about being an older woman. Because, whereas older men are often seen as being distinguished, women are seen as being crones in the worst sense of that word.

JIMMY CARPER: Well, you know, and I have heard that word used in a very proud sense too.

BOBBY KEPPEL: And I use it in a very proud sense. I'm very proud to have been officially croned.

So I really wanted to talk some about health issues, sexual health issues among seniors, because that's something that I'm very involved with currently. I work with a bisexual health project in Boston and I also work with their older BGLT health access project. My group in the population, the older folks are the people with the fastest rising rate of HIV infection in the United States. And our rate is going up at about a percent year or so. We're up to 14% of the HIV cases in the country, but we're in the absolutely worst situation in terms of education. So there's not money to educate older people about how to practice safer sex.

JIMMY CARPER: Is it assumed that either older folks should know this, or older folks shouldn't be having sex?

BOBBY KEPPEL: I think it's mostly assumed that older folks aren't having sex. And the people my age and older certainly were raised at a time where we didn't talk about sex. Wasn't considered to be OK.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BOBBY KEPPEL: Of course there's-- the only sexually transmitted diseases that we knew about were syphilis and gonorrhea.

JIMMY CARPER: Right.

BOBBY KEPPEL: Boy, those were the good old days.

JIMMY CARPER: Tell me about it.

GIGI: Yeah.

BOBBY KEPPEL: And in those good old days, why, actually, they could be cured with antibiotics, which is no longer the case.

JIMMY CARPER: No.

BOBBY KEPPEL: And we don't have any experience with learning how to negotiate about sex either. I mean, you can't talk about it, how on Earth can you negotiate about it?

JIMMY CARPER: Exactly.

JACKIE THORN: The thing that I found--

JIMMY CARPER: Jackie Thorn is here in Houston.

JACKIE THORN: Is the people that talked about it weren't getting any. The people that didn't talk about it were the ones that were getting it.

BOBBY KEPPEL: I'm not sure when I was there when a comment on that or not. Well, I think it couldn't be too careful I think you just got me in a corner here.

JACKIE THORN: But the other thing also, I find it interesting that you made the point about the hostility or animosity between lesbians and bisexual women. Because I know back in the mid 80s when I was first coming out, I used to feel much, much more comfortable, as a transgendered individual, much more comfortable in the lesbian bars and I got hit on numerous times by the women in the lesbian bars once they got to know me and know who I was. Whereas in the male bars and stuff like that, I was just another drag queen.

BOBBY KEPPEL: Mhm. Well.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. Yeah, an old drag queen. OK.

BOBBY KEPPEL: The only thing worse than an old queen?

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: But you're hitting on subjects that are coming to--

BOBBY KEPPEL: Pardon the expression.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. They're coming to the forefront. And it's ageism in the GLBT community. Because we haven't been talking about it because of this youth culture thing.

HOST 2: We're stuck in this idea that-- we're stuck in this idea that the only group-- that the only group that matters are the people between the ages of like 18 and 30.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah well there's a lot more of us out there.

HOST 2: Yeah. And there's a lot more of us who aren't under 30 anymore.

JACKIE THORN: Well, not only the 18 to 30, but within that 18 to 30 group, it's the good looking.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

GIGI: Yeah.

JACKIE THORN: I mean it's not the bears. They don't want to have anything to do with the bears.

HOST 2: No, no, no, no, you're right.

JACKIE THORN: --trolls, and so forth like that.

GIGI: Well we're--

HOST 2: I mean, I don't want to put too much of a point on this but, and you can't see us, but I don't think there's anybody sitting in this studio here who fits the exact example of what all of the advertisements all of this stuff in the community.

JIMMY CARPER: Well, maybe that cute when sitting between the two of you--

HOST 2: He's pretty close. But even he has a few twists and turns that don't make him right.

GIGI: Jim.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

GIGI: We're getting a little short on time for this spot.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, damn. OK. I'd like to do a whole program on ageism, yes.

GIGI: Yeah, we can do a whole program. I'm going to get Bobby's contact information.

JIMMY CARPER: Please do.

GIGI: Call her on another month.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah

GIGI: And do entire show on ageism.

BOBBY KEPPEL: That would really be interesting. That would be-- I like to do that. I think, especially as we're looking at the baby boomers coming along, but the population bump, if you will, is getting older and older--

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BOBBY KEPPEL: And we have little information and little educational work going on.

JACKIE THORN: I admire you as a leader in this cause. I mean to stand in the forefront must be-- It takes a lot of courage.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BOBBY KEPPEL: Well, I've come full circle. I started out, my first job out of college was in preventive medicine and I did all kinds of other jobs and now I'm back in preventive medicine.

JIMMY CARPER: There you go.

BOBBY KEPPEL: I guess I've been going around in circles. Thanks a lot for having me on the program.

JIMMY CARPER: Thanks for being on After Hours.

GIGI: Before you go. You know, in pagan rituals it's kind of-- life is looked at as a completion of a circle. And you know, you're born, you live your life, you die, and then you're reborn. And you just come-- you do this long travel and you come back to square one. And it's really an interesting concept. And I see many parallels.

BOBBY KEPPEL: Yes.

JACKIE THORN: I've always felt like growing older is mandatory. Growing up is not necessarily.

BOBBY KEPPEL: I guess I would say amen to that.

JIMMY CARPER: Works for me.

BOBBY KEPPEL: OK.

HOST 2: Amen.

JIMMY CARPER: Well thank you, Bobby.

GIGI: Thank you for being with us.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, great.

GIGI: We've already got our next guest in here.

JIMMY CARPER: OK, well let's just go right into it.

GIGI: And I'm going to have her introduce herself, I believe, because I lost the note where-- of her name.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

CLAIRE Hi. My name is Claire Rampling and I am here at the Bi-Con. I ran a session called Girl Fags, Guy Dykes, and

RAMPLING: Those Who Want to Find Them.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

JIMMY CARPER: OK. GiGi would fit right into that.

HOST 2: Oh.

GIGI: Jimmy, I tell you this conference has been packed.

JIMMY CARPER: I'll bet.

GIGI: There have been so many wonderful workshops and I haven't hardly gotten to go to any of them because I've been in the national meeting. It's like I'm just tearing my heart out. I've gotten to go to a couple, but what did you want to talk about tonight? But before you do that, what is a highlight for you of the conference?

CLAIRE A highlight for me was going to the session today on male stereotypes.

RAMPLING:

GIGI: Oh Wow.

CLAIRE It's called, Act Like a Man. And the point was looking at just what sort of constructive and conflicting messages

RAMPLING: have been sent to men in our Western culture, and how they impact and constrict male behavior. And just basically looking at it all as a picture once and trying to figure out how do we deal with this, and how have people dealt with it, and how does it affect us? And that really had a big effect on me.

GIGI: Oh, wow.

CLAIRE I thought about it a lot, but not quite in as much detail and that really meant a lot to me to learn about more of

RAMPLING: the more subtle ways that it can affect everybody, not just men, of course.

GIGI: Well what is your topic?

CLAIRE My topic, the title was Girl Fags, Guy Dykes, and Those Who Want to Find Them. What is a girl fag? A girl fag is a

RAMPLING: woman-- excuse me.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, that's from your end.

GIGI: Yeah it's from our end. We're adjusting mics here.

CLAIRE OK. A Girl fag is a woman who likes gay and bi men.

RAMPLING:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh.

CLAIRE And it's kind of a confusing orientation flavor, as I call it. I mean, you've got the basic orientations of gay, straight, and bisexual, but inside of that range of orientations there are various flavors, as I like to see it. Various tastes that people have. And one taste I've been discovering and sort of identifying over the years is that I really like gay and bi men. And what do I do about that as a woman? Because I really appreciate and enjoy gay male culture. I really like gay and bi men. And it's a culture that doesn't really necessarily want to include women. And so I've been kind of exploring that. Also exploring the fact that I'm really not the only one.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, no.

CLAIRE Many years ago I read a thing that said no women ever fantasize about two men together. And that really--

RAMPLING:

JIMMY CARPER: That is so wrong.

CLAIRE Right. So that--

RAMPLING:

JIMMY CARPER: --many lesbians who enjoy male porno.

GIGI: Yeah.

CLAIRE Exactly. That was one of the cool things to find out, was lesbians enjoying gay male sexuality.

RAMPLING:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

CLAIRE That was one of the surprising things for me. As a bisexual woman, it makes sense. It's really, fits obviously more clearly into my orientation, but lesbians, that was really interesting. And I've been wrapping my brain around it and trying to finally understand how that works.

GIGI: Well you know need to meet my partner Jay.

CLAIRE Yeah.

RAMPLING:

GIGI: She feels like she's a-- Oh, what's the term?

JIMMY CARPER: She's certainly a girl fag.

GIGI: Yes.

CLAIRE Excellent.

RAMPLING:

GIGI: She feels like she's a drag queen stuck in a woman's body, how she puts it.

CLAIRE That makes a lot of sense to me. I can understand that.

RAMPLING:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

CLAIRE One of the interesting things, too, is a lot of the bi girl fags also other girl fags.

RAMPLING:

GIGI: I really want to meet her.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

JACKIE THORN: Maybe not-- is it maybe not a possibility, the fact that you like gay males and bisexual males, you found that the non gay and non bisexual males, for the most part, are a bunch of jerks.

[LAUGHTER]

CLAIRE Well, yeah.

RAMPLING:

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

CLAIRE I've also found that the straight men I've been attracted to tend to have qualities that make some other people
RAMPLING: think they're gay. I mean, there's definitely something in me that's drawn to that kind of guy. Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: Wow.

HOST 2: People who would set off the gaydar even if they're not gay.

CLAIRE Exactly. Yeah, exactly.

RAMPLING:

HOST 2: You have to figure-- you have to figure that most women find a soft man to be attractive.

CLAIRE Well, that was the funny thing in high school. I didn't realize that I was the only one watching the male
RAMPLING: cheerleaders while my friends were watching the football players. That all had girlfriends in high school. And I'm like, I kind of-- it seemed obvious to me that these were the attractive men. The gymnasts, and you know.

GIGI: Oh baby.

HOST 2: All those little Bart Connors.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. Oh. Yes.

GIGI: I have a story to tell on Jimmy.

JIMMY CARPER: Uh-oh.

JACKIE THORN: Some of the gymnasts are better athletes than some of the football players.

GIGI: Well, we gathered at his house for the Summer Olympics. I never saw Jimmy go so nutso over the male swimmers.

CLAIRE Oh yeah. Male swimmers.

RAMPLING:

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

CLAIRE And one of the exciting things has been that I created a group on Yahoo groups called Girl Fags, and I kind of was
RAMPLING: hoping maybe I'd find a few other girl fags out there. Maybe the list would get like 30 members and it'd be really exciting to have some other girl fags to talk to. Well, in less than a year it's been going we're over 1,000 members now.

JIMMY CARPER: Whoa.

CLAIRE And it just blows me away. It's so exciting and I keep running into people who are so excited to find out about this concept. And I'm really hoping that the word girl fag and the other-- the sort of corresponding word guy dyke, can be a word that can help gay and bi men and women connect to this concept. Because like I said, the bi men often think, I'll never find a woman who can tolerate my bi side or my gay side, and well, girl fags do more than tolerate it. And so there's so excited. I get these happy testimonials. They write these love letters almost.