

'Out of the Pan' Broadcast 27-Jun-2021

'Bi+ gets BOLDER'

Content warnings: mention of partner death

[Podcast Intro] Thanks for downloading a 3CR podcast. 3CR is an independent community radio station based in Melbourne, Australia. We need your financial support to keep going. Go to [www.3CR.org.au](http://www.3CR.org.au) for more information and to donate online. Now, stay tuned for your 3CR podcast.

[Show Intro: Opening music plays. Speaker: Sally Goldner]

Panoply, panorama, panpipe, pansy? Aha! Pansexual! Knowing no boundaries of sex or gender. Sound interesting? Then join Sally on Sundays at noon for 'Out of the Pan'. All those gender questions making you think too hard? Whether it's transgender, bisexual, polyamorous, or beyond, we'll throw those questions into the pan and cook up the answers for you. So go on, push that gender envelope, only on 3CR 855AM digital and 3CR.org.au.

[Snippet of 'Let's Cook' by Mental as Anything]

[Song: 'Celebration' by Dragon]

3CR, 855AM. 3CR Digital, 3CR.org.au, and 3CR On Demand, 'Out of the Pan' with Sally, first broadcasting noon through one every Sunday afternoon. Thanks for your company. 3CR broadcasts from the lands of the Kulin nation, at the boundaries, if you like, or overlap of the Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung peoples, and we pay respect to elders past present and emerging and welcome any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people listening in, or for that matter any First Nations people all over planet Earth, and acknowledge that all the lands on this large island and those smaller islands around were stolen and never ceded.

'Out of the Pan' is a show covering pansexual issues, knowing no boundaries of sex or gender, and there's lots of ways to get in touch with the show. You can look for posts on Facebook, on my page, Sally Goldner, or on 'Out of the Pan' 3CR 855AM Melbourne. You can email [outofthepan855@gmail.com](mailto:outofthepan855@gmail.com); you can SMS +61 45 675 1215; you can

tweet @salgoldsaidso and remember that's the bottom line and also—yeah, we've got it all and also remembering that any opinions on the show are my own personal opinions and not those of any organisation with which I am or have been associated.

Well, we opened up with Dragon's version of Kool & the Gang's 'Celebration', because 'Out of the Pan' has to do a little celebration. But really, it's the—you, the listeners who celebrate because 'Out of the Pan' has achieved our Radiothon target! We have gone over the \$1350 mark, and just to mention a few people: Divita put in \$20, Divita from Richmond, since last week; Kate from Sunshine North has put in \$20; not sure if we got Kristen last week who put in \$30; Hillary put in \$50; Juniper put in \$50; Maria put in \$30. Thank you all so much. Gab put in \$20, so lots of people, Tom put in \$60, Tom from Dandenong. Thank you all so much for your support of the show. The station still has yet to get its target as a whole, so please support a show. I mean to quote the—to adapt an old Australian saying to a very Melbourne version, that is, 'all coffee's good but some is better than others'. Well, you can support any show on 3CR because all shows are good and some are better than others or something like that. But I'd like you to support, if you could, my Sunday afternoon neighbours, 'Freedom of Species' and 'Queering the Air' who I particularly love and they haven't got their targets yet. So please direct donations to them, so we can all get over the line.

Another reason to play Kool & the Gang's 'Celebration'. Well, it's a—it is in a way of—didn't start out as a celebration, but it's become a very important event on the rainbow calendars, and that is, of course, we're in Stonewall week. And remember on Tuesday night Radical Women<sup>1</sup> have their Zoom event for Stonewall on feminism and intersections and things. But I think the spirit of Stonewall is that they would have wanted everyone of every intersection to be lifted and brought along with kindness, and it's in that spirit that I welcome a guest on the Zooms today. From well, thousands—not so much thousands, but at least hundreds of kilometres away. Welcome or welcome *back* to the 3CR Airwaves, Neen Chapman. Hey, Neen how you going and two things if I can, if it's okay to ask: can I check in with which pronouns you use if any, and which lands are you on and would you like to acknowledge?

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] Hi Sally, good to see you this afternoon on Zoom. My pronouns are they/them, and I am speaking to you from the Dharug country and these lands were never ceded, they were stolen. And I pay my respects to elders past, and

present... and emerging. Excuse me for the pause; my cat Jasper decided to join the action.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] That was—in typical fashion, that was a pun, excuse me for the puns, which I suppose that's a slight radio host bonus that I get to see your cat. But very seriously, thank you for acknowledging those lands. Now, of course, it is the First Nations name that is relevant, but some people might not know, sometimes it can help us to connect to land to know where that is. So in the language used today, let's say, where does that place you?

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] That places me in the Hawkesbury. So northwest of Sydney city, of Sydney itself and I'm apparently part of the lower Blue Mountains.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] The lower Blue Mountains, so in the west of Sydney. So yeah, look for—I think we've got to say before we delve into queer issues or any rainbow issues, all the best to those in Sydney, greater Sydney, all of Greater Sydney, sort of metropolitan region in particular, but all of New South Wales, and we really, *really* feel for you. It's not easy but you can do this, you've got onto it as quickly as you can and sending all the caffeinated vibes from down here on Naarm.

But we do want a—on a show called 'Out of the Pan', I do want to do one thing, thanks to the crew from 'Out of the Blue' diving deep for marine news as they do every Sunday. And yes, be careful, ask your local fish and chip shop about what is really in your flake, because it might not be. But coming into 'Out of the Pan', you're on the show, lots of things we could talk about. I'm not sure we're going to get to play any other music today. But we want to start, as we said, we want to make sure that all of our communities are supported. And yes, there's common issues across all of the proverbial rainbow. But sometimes there are niches and each need special attention. And the exciting news is that you've announced back at the Better Together conference—which we also want to talk about—the start of an exciting new group to just make sure that we have all the dots of the intersection covered. I'll leave it to you to tell us a bit more about it.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] Sally, thank you. So the group is, it's a Meetup group, it's called BOLDER. And BOLDER is for those of us that are 40+, and there is a little bit of wiggle room for those, and it's for bisexual, bi+, pansexual, omnisexual, multi-gender

attracted queer people who would like to have a chat with other people around their own age group. Our communities are fantastic, and they're beautiful, and all the different groups that come together and that are establishing and emerging across the continent. But sometimes we've got some other issues that we'd like to delve a little bit deeper into with regard to aging and technology and resilience and the struggles so far and et cetera. So, it's the first Sunday of every month and it starts next weekend. We launched it last weekend at Better Together and we'll have our first meet up next Sunday the fourth of July at one pm.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] So that's one pm Eastern. So 'Out of the Pan' listeners will have to quickly change their device settings from radio over to Zoom, which is really exciting and look, with tongue in cheek, I declare either—I'm not sure if it's compatibility of interest or conflict of interest or something. But as someone who very much fits that demographic, as someone whose labels for sexual and romantic attraction come under bi and pan and who is 55 and two thirds, I'm, you know, it's just, I've got to say that I am personally am overjoyed at this getting underway. It's going to be a quick race out of the studio next Sunday to join in and there might be some multitasking as I prepare the podcast. But that's another story only for me. I mean, it might sound incredibly obvious in a way, but I will ask, you know, sort of how did this, you know, sort of the need for the group come about and what sort of brought it on?

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] The need for the group. I'm very, very fortunate and I absolutely acknowledge how fortunate I am. I've had, I have had a very supportive significant other in my life since I was around about 30 and he supported me and taught me language and took me, you know, all sorts of showed me all sorts of parts of—paths of the queer road, bisexuality being one of them. So that was fantastic. And unfortunately, I lost that support in 2018 and I was really lost. And for a few months, I wandered around very, very lost. But I found a fantastic group here in Sydney called Sydney Bi+ Network<sup>ii</sup> as well. And within that group, I spent a couple of years and I'm still with them, absolutely, and I just recognised the differences in generations, the difference in conversations that we have, the connecting with other older 40-plus people in Melbourne and across New South Wales. And I knew of other bis and pans and multi-gender attracted people in my life. And it was actually a matter of—and we'll talk about this a bit later—but the Stand Bi Us conference<sup>iii</sup> last year that gave me the impetus, the idea to actually hold a bit of a chat, have a bit of a chat meetup group. So we did an

event last September and since then there's been a great deal of interest for me to set it up again and get it going. And it's taken a little bit of time, but I wanted to make sure that I had all my, you know, what is it, Ts dotted and eyes crossed to make sure that it was going to work and work for everybody at a good time. So that's where it all sort of started. It originated from a wanting to speak to other people of like mind and like generation. Nothing untoward, no casting aspersions on any other generation conversation. But there is something about, I realised there was something about speaking to people of your own age group, around your own age group. So the commonality was the thing that actually drove it and the fact that it wasn't, I couldn't find it, it wasn't there. So we did it for Stand Bi Us last year.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Absolutely. Look, there's a few points that come out of that. First of all, all the bi vibes on the loss of your long-standing support. I know that's incredibly difficult when you've had someone who's been such a connection and for some reason they fall out of your life. So huge, you know, bi and pan vibes there. Also want to mention that you mentioned Sydney Bi+ Network. We have sort of groups now in a large range of the states and territories: Bi+ South Australia<sup>iv</sup>, Bi+ community of Perth<sup>v</sup>. There's a Brisbane Bi Network<sup>vi</sup>, we have a contact in the Northern Territory, we have contacts in Tasmania, and of course in Victoria there's Bi Alliance Victoria<sup>vii</sup> of which I'm a committee member and Melbourne Bi Network<sup>viii</sup> and lots of other things. And, of course, Marina Starr down here started the bi—the in-person 40-plus meet up and we have contacts in Tasmania. So please get in touch with the show if you want to know more about those groups wherever you are around this nation, as it is now.

But I totally agree with you on the middle cohort and that, you know, I think that's something for everyone in life. There's yes, the young people can be vulnerable in lots of ways and older people can be if we—however we are defining that, whether it's 55, 60, or 65+. But for queer people, particularly, I think bi and trans in the middle cohort, which I'll define roughly as, you know, I mean, it could be anywhere between, say, 25 and 60. With, as you say, we're going to be non-binary on our age band tree so to speak. I think there's a real lack of support. And I'd also say, parallel for what it's worth, there's a real need I think for this for the trans community as well. There's great trans youth groups like Ygender<sup>ix</sup> here in Melbourne and Minus 18<sup>x</sup> which covers all of the rainbow, and there's networks for seniors. But the middle cohort is still a gap and we've still got lots of people for both of the B and the T, so to speak, coming out. So I think this

is a huge, huge sort of breakthrough. And so you've started the group and let's have that name again, and then sort of tell us a little, drill into detail a bit. Tell us a bit about the group and how it's all just going to happen?

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] Sure. It's BOLDER, capital BOLDER, which of course is a little play on Bi+ Older. It didn't actually take a lot to come up with that one last year but I do like it. I think BOLDER says a lot about our generation, the generations either side. So if you look for us, what I'll do is I'll send Sally the link and we can pop it on 3CR 'Out of the Pan' so you can go directly to it. Basically at the moment, being of my age group, I am not so technically advanced. So basically, I've created a Facebook group and you can search on it, you can get to it from a few other pages as well. And just going back to that not being so technologically advanced, there are probably a few settings I need to do a double check with someone who is better at it than I am to make it a little bit more visible. But basically, we're on Facebook; you will—if you sign up to the group, it is a, it's a public group but a private members, it's got a privacy on the members so you can search it, but you can't actually, people can't actually see who is also in the group. And that's just for people's protection, because this space really needs to be needs to be really, really safe.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Yep.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] That's my utmost priority, having safe spaces to talk and chat and discuss whatever we want to discuss and also express our ideas and concepts and opinions and things like that. The idea of the group I suppose, Sally, is that you know it goes back to that open forum to be able to talk about what's going on with our lives, as we are in midlife, in this particular section of living. Because as you say, there are some and amazing and well-needed youth groups. And there are beginning to be some good support, I wouldn't say it's at full strength yet for older rainbow people humans, but the mid-section is, was just really lacking. So some of that has come from personal struggles of mine with regard to getting medical help and talking to different government departments. But also, it's come from a joy of speaking to other people who are in my age range, and the commonality of our frustrations, you know, I don't want to focus on negative but the commonality and laughs that we have over our frustrations. Sometimes there is a little bit of venting that goes on, but with that venting I do find

within the bi, pansexual, omnisexual, multi-gender attracted community, we're actually very caring of each other.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Indeed.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] And we're not running another group down. We're not being nasty to any other group, but we're talking about it amongst ourselves and trying to find solutions and help each other. So, in the majority, the couple of hours that I've set aside once a month on a Sunday is to give people the opportunity to meet other people of our generation, of our age groups, in this midlife category. I suppose. None of us like to be categorised, I have to say that. But within those connections we can have some really funny, fantastic conversations; we can also address some stuff that's really under our skin. So hopefully it's an opportunity for us to have some fun as well as address some real issues and offer up solutions.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Well, in the spirit of all that. I've got to say one thing with dry humour, you have frustrations with government departments; well, about 26 million Australians could probably empathise with that. Well, maybe, you know, less the people who work in the government departments, but we'll debate that and also we, you know, look in my best Doctor Phil voice, 'we do need to release our feelings somehow,' lest they bottle up. So I think this is good and we need a safe space too. But, as you say, not to drag anyone down—to get it out of our system, clear our minds psychologically and say, how do we move things to a higher place? So I'm all for that and I think, yeah, safe, a safe and warm space is so important for people of any particular, we'll say group, or sub-grouping, cross-grouping, whatever we want to call it. And we do have particular needs.

And I mean, I'll self-disclose here. I mean, as someone who, you know, the first thing I started looking at, at 29 and a bit, was trans and that got under way. Then I realised I was bi, but I'm still sorting out my gender for another few years and then settled on that. And so there's a sense of coming, you know, to use that phrase coming out late. And of course, there's been—we have had bi erasure, we haven't found like people and there's things about, well, where do, you know, where do we find people who are supportive of us, whether we are bi people who are just to put one aspect of intersectionality/diversity, and whether we're cis or whether we're trans.

Trans people are worried about will people accept us because if we don't fit a gender box and we don't—oh, you're not man, you're not woman, I'm not sure I'm attracted to you—and I have overwhelmingly found bi people in terms of just, you know, less concerned about gender maybe than even other people and I think that's really important. So there's a huge sense of hope and connection, but we come out late. And then we're worried will we, you know, if we are wanting to find someone to be with, will we find a partner? Not that this is necessary, by any means, you know, this is what this group is for, it's just to connect. But if two people go off afterwards and well, fall in love, we'll be the first to join the online relationship celebration.

Seriously, it's very, very welcome. And I think we need these spaces and, you know, it will be online. So that means, you know, the thing is of course and this podcast goes all over the planet and if anyone is, to be safe, anyone is on Mars or Venus or Pluto and has an internet signal, well, you can join in too, just let us know how you do it. We'd love to know. But seriously, you know, the thing is that, you know, if you're able to join in your time zone wherever you are so one p.m. Australian Eastern, 12:30 Central and—at the moment before daylight savings—and then ten am Western for the zones in, as I say, in this nation, that's fine. Or if you want to join earlier from New Zealand, what is it, two hours? So that'll be, got to go the other way, two pm.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] Three o'clock.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] 3 pm. Beg your pardon, I was on 'Out of the Pan' time there for a second. So this is really, really exciting and I have to say, I personally feel a part of me coming together and it's really, really awesome to see. Which segues me, Sally segue here, talking of coming together. You were lucky enough to be in person at the Better Together conference in Adelaide last week and I haven't really heard anything yet. I must have been a been a bit distracted by some personal issues and lost track of it. So, what sort of things for the point of view of 'Out of the Pan' listeners, particularly we'll say, bi, trans, poly, knowing no boundaries of sex, gender, or genre, anything that came out of that that you'd like to subjectively or objectively report back on?

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] Sure thing. It was Better Together 2021<sup>xi</sup>, held at majority at the Adelaide Convention Centre, and not a plug for them necessarily, but it was a great

single space to be able to have a conference. The Equality Project do an amazing job putting this together, because there aren't very many of them who actually do the organisation at the conference. And it was brilliant this year. There were over 600 people who attended in person and another 200 plus who were livestreaming and who attended online, which is great for accessibility. A lot of that was due to the Melbourne lockdown, which was a little bit sad for me to not be able to see all the Melbourne bis and pans, but the conference overall was great.

I think that my takeaways from the conference, there was a range of sessions. The day before the conference, we have a lot of caucuses. And this year, I was, I helped Misia Julia run the bisexual caucus, which was absolutely fabulous and that was at Diverse-City in Adelaide. Shout out to them, they did a great job. And then in the afternoon was the trans, gender-diverse, and non-binary caucus. So for those—I mean, that's my focus, I'm non-binary, they/them, you know, pansexual, bisexual, multi-gender attracted—so that particular day, as these events often are, is a huge emotional day, but I also got a lot out of it. A lot of self-understanding, a lot of support, met some new people and made some new friends and quite often that's why I go to these conferences is to actually connect in a network. Not the business type of network but just like people network, you know.

The rest of the conference, I have to say, that every single plenary that was run, I didn't go to the youth plenary—I did go to the youth plenary actually, on the second day—but every single plenary was fantastic. And for me, personally, I got the most out of the First Nations plenary, which was the afternoon of the first day. Learnt so many things. Highly emotive. And I do see my privilege. And I do understand, I'm learning and I'm understanding and taking on a lot of what is really, really needed to support, assist, and lift up First Nations people. So that was an incredible two hours. It was actually quite a really strong plenary in that it had a large panel, I think it was about 10 people, and answering different questions from different points of view. Some of the work that I learnt that people were doing was really incredible and inspiring. And then at some point, we switched it around, they switched it around, and the panel was asking the audience questions. And they were confronting, and so they should be confronting and it was incredible, it was magnificent to see power in the room. So I was really, really moved by that and not just moved but a real direction to do more.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Yep.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] To actually take action.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Yeah, a paradigm shift.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] Yeah, yeah. So the sessions were mixed, but it's interesting, the overall kind of theme for Better Together was actually aging. LGBTIQ+ aging. So yeah, fantastic.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Before we, you know, I really want to drill into that last bit. I mean, was there anything, you know, specific, any specifics in terms of what you learnt, what work we can do, how, you know, sort of non-Aboriginal people can be better allies to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people? Any sort of light bulb moments, notes taken et cetera?

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] Well, look, I suppose I have, I come from, my origin is far western Queensland on a sheep station, that's where I grew up. And I grew up with lots of stories of all sorts of happenings from the 1880s right through until 19—I think it was 1987, when my parents sold the property. And it has always made me feel as a human being really, not just uncomfortable, that's such an innocuous word, but it's always grated with me, grated on me, I suppose. And I've spent a lot of time prior to getting into the activism and advocacy I'm doing later on in life trying to include and find voices and talk to people and listen to people of First Nations people. So I just want to say that first of all. I'm not doing enough is what I want to say also. The thing that I learned specifically from that particular plenary and I hear this term often used within our communities, 'nothing about us without us'.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Yep.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] And as community groups, and volunteer groups we're all, most of us are volunteer, none of us get paid and we self-fund all sorts of things. And it is on our agenda, it's very high up on our agenda to make sure that, you know, First Nations people are always acknowledged, that we want to include them in whatever activities that we're doing. But you know what, sometimes we trip over our own feet. We

put obstacles in our own way. And there was just something about this very, very strong emotive, intelligent life experience of the entire panel that when they were really talking about nothing about us without us that there was just this click in me. I just went, of course. Yes. I know, I hear that term all the time, but of course. So I made comment, I mean after the panel, what can one person do? But one person, this person, just got contact details for people and I've started having conversations in the week following. They're just very burgeoning conversations at this point to make sure that if anything that I do, BOLDER included, any of the groups that—or events that we have in the future, we don't just invite First Nations people along or we don't just seek some information from them or we don't just—

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Mmmm-hmmm.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] There's all of that sort of surface stuff. I want it to be real and I want it to be meaningful. It needs—it's not what *I* want, it *needs* to be real and it needs to be meaningful. So yeah, Sally I hope you can hear my passion—

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Yes.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] —for that. You know it's just we do get in our own way sometimes. And it's well-meaning, but we get in our own way. We need to get out of our own way and actually push First Nations and lift First Nations peoples up.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Yeah, it makes me think about, you know, who do we have First Nations people in on the grass, the organising from the day dot in a conference or something because they—I'm sure there are different perspectives that we just would be obviously unaware of and have unconscious bias. So, how do we get that into our thinking? It is really something that you've got to have a range of people in the organising and not just have, you know, non-Aboriginal people going 'let's have an Aboriginal panel' or abled people 'let's have a disability caucus' whatever else, so I think that is something that we do somehow need to keep on with, upon which we need to keep checking in on.

You mentioned that you grew up on a sheep station in far western Queensland. And I wanted to sort of touch on that. I mean, you know, that sort of upbringing, I mean, you

know, for, you know, we're, well, I mean, whatever ages we are, you know, we're in that era where there was a lot of isolation. You know, we wouldn't be on Zoom if we were doing this when we were growing up, because there was no Zoom and no internet. But, you know, how did that, you know, sort of affect you? How did you begin to have some inkling of 'I'm not a cisgender heterosexual', you know, at that time? In other words, tell us a bit about if you're okay for it, to tell us a bit about the Neen Chapman story.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] Absolutely. Okay. Absolutely. Sorry, I'm laughing, because when you say questioning yourself, the thing that first comes to mind my family, my siblings and niblings are a bit spread out, so there are three above me and there's six years between the youngest of them and me, and then six years between me and my younger sister. And so I kind of grew up on my own anyway. And when we talk about well, how did you realise you were different? The dogs were my friends. We have a lot of working dogs and animals were my friends and, you know, I had one dog who was my best friend. So I just have to think, well, I was pretty different right from day dot.

But for seriously, seriously, I think it might have been when I was, I don't know. I was a six-year-old little person in the middle of summer and this is down when living, living in Brisbane from time to time when we weren't on the property, sitting on the back stairs of my family home which these red, red brick and the heat was just radiating out of them. Sitting down there one afternoon midsummer, thinking maybe we're all just an experiment in a jar. I don't know if that's necessarily, you know, what a six-year-old—what's a standard six-year-old thought? I don't really know because I didn't think I had them. So I often think about that moment going well, I just don't fit in here. I think what my brain was actually doing was, maybe I don't fit in with everything else that everybody else fits in with?

And then I think it was about, I think I might have been about eight and I saw—and I know this is a bit of a story that a few people tell. It's a bit of a moment, a few people have, but I wasn't allowed to watch Countdown. So hopefully everybody knows what Countdown was with Molly Meldrum.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Do yourself a favour and find out.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] Yeah, yeah, I wasn't allowed to watch. It was very naughty, but I snuck into the living room and I was eight, and my brother and older sister—older brother and older sister—were watching Countdown. And Queen's 'I Want to Break Free' came on, and I sat there in between my older siblings and watched it with great interest and love the song and love the music anyway. And then I turned around to my brother and I said 'why are all those men wearing dresses?' And I have to say thank you to my big brother because even at the age of 20 or so, he's 12 years older than me, he said to me, 'well, little one, you know, sometimes boys love boys, and girls love girls, and boys love girls, and sometimes they love other people, and they can dress however they like and be whoever they like because whoever they love is what's important'.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Wow.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] Now, this is 1978.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Yeah.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] And my brother was just at university studying psychology and I didn't realise what a revolutionary moment that was until maybe I was 40 and I thought back. It was a very, it's just a really clear image. So I knew I was different from a very, very early age.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Yeah, it clicked in, and you didn't exactly have words, but you had open-mindedness, you had ideas that were beyond heterosexual and cisgender or gender normative ideas and it was like, oh, and you've got some, you know, sort of, well, even if your brother didn't know it, you got some affirmation, which was really—which of course is so vital. So that's it a huge thing for, you know, around 1980 or something. It's quite huge. Yeah, that's huge. But of course that was affirming. But you know, had you sort of really connected anymore with yourself and community? Where, what, how did that come about?

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] That didn't come about for a really long time, probably... because I think the thing was, growing up, being a teenager in the 80s and the HIV/AIDS epidemic put it all in your face and I had numerous different friends, drama friends who were, you know, who were, who were gay and lesbian and this is outside of

school, of course, and then some of their older friends began dying. So that's in my teenage years. So there was—something about me, Sally, that I'm not—when I'm presented with something, I want to go and find out what it's about. I want to investigate; I want to understand.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Yeah.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] Which can be a blessing and a curse.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Of course.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] But basically, in my teenage years, I had words for gay, I had words for lesbian, I didn't really have any idea about bisexual. And I knew I didn't fit into 'lesbian', but I knew I didn't fit into 'straight' either, but it took until my late 20s for me to... doing all the investigation, and because it wasn't the internet to be honest, I'm reading Encyclopedia Britannica.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] I remember that. Yeah. See, there's a BOLDER hint.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] Remember those 30-odd books that used to fill up a shelf?

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Yes.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] So didn't and I don't think it's actually [unclear]. But I read an amazing book, which was about Alexander the Great. And there is, it's a beautiful, beautiful book and I've still got it actually. And it tells, I guess in a way a histrionic but fictionalised part of description of his life, and it talks about him being with men and being with women, and I went 'oh that's me, and I've seen it in print now. Oh, but that was, you know, a long time ago, does that still exist?' So as I read more in my late 20s and I, you know, for all sorts of reasons, I started to hear different words and have different languages. So I really do think that I would have been 27, 28 before I latched onto the term bisexual, still wasn't really sure about it, but that certainly changed when I got into my 30s.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Yeah. So 27, 28 and so you got a term but, you know, if I'm getting the time framing right here, we're up at just around the turn of the century I think now, and so you've got a term, but did you find any sense of groups or community for bi+, multi-gender attracted?

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] Not a one. So this is, this is in Brisbane, and nothing against Brisbane. It's a beautiful city.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Absolutely.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] I almost said something wrong then. It's a beautiful city. I grew up there, so to me it's a town. But it's a beautiful city, and I think there is a lot more happening now. But certainly in the 70s, the 80s and the late 90s and even early 2000s, zero as far as any kind of bisexual, pansexual support group, or community or network. I was just very, very fortunate to meet someone in 2000 who was only a couple of years older than me, but just was much more worldly and brought me into the queer scene and brought me into the LGBTIQ world. And from that moment on—I wasn't out, this is the thing. So I might have found a few words and a few terms and this particular person, but I was definitely still closeted. I wasn't, I didn't have bi-erasure of myself so to speak but I could see the consequences for others.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Yep.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] And I thought that, already in sort of in my 20s and 30s, I went off and did a career, chose a career in building, carpentry and building and being a construction manager, that was pretty interesting for at that time, you know, cis woman, appearing that way, still struggling with my gender diversity. I didn't have any words for it—for that then either.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Mmmm.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] But, but yeah, really, really, misogynistic, very sexist work areas and I just, I know very, very shut mouth, very clamped tight lips, didn't actually reveal anything about my personal life to anyone. And interestingly, as much as this, my

significant other Wayne introduced me to the queer world, he was also closeted. We were both closeted until gosh, we were nearly, I think both of us were nearly 40.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Yep. Understandable at the time and look again, personally can relate, empathise, affirm, because whilst my family of origin was all originally Melbourne, two had gone up to the Gold Coast, one—or if we add in brother-in-law, two—to Brisbane. And so when I affirmed my gender identity in 1998, there was no support for—or barely any support for trans, I should say, let alone family members in Brisbane and Gold Coast areas. It's a lot. It's on the, you know, up now though, still distance to travel. So I get that variation. I mean, there wasn't a lot of bi support in, now this supposedly progressive city of Melbourne, it was also 'gay and lesbian, gay and lesbian' which is, again, that's what it was but there's that sense of feeling erased or unaffirmed or whatever we want to call it. So you eventually tracked in. And then of course things came to a big boost, a big take off in 2018 if I remember rightly.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] Yeah. Yeah, yeah. 2018 itself was a pretty tough year, but by the January of 2019, I had made—I knew that I was on my own and I needed, this sounds a bit dramatic but I needed outside network community to actually save me, because I was really, really struggling. Wayne, my partner, died in 2018. And I had spent months and months on the internet looking for bi sites and I could see stuff in America and I could see the odd bit and piece in the UK. But I just happened to trip over and Anthony's probably gonna kill me, but trip over Melbourne Bisexual Network. So I went 'right but that's Melbourne. I wonder if I just call them, they might know of something in Sydney, if there's something in Sydney'. So I emailed Anthony Lekkas from MBN, and Anthony rang me and put me in touch with Amber Loomis from Sydney Bi+ Network, which had coincidentally just launched. They had just established themselves in September 2018 and just launched Better Together in January of 2019. Gosh Amber, I hope I've got that right.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] [laughs]

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] So from that January on I've been part of SBN. And Amber and Anthony—and I've told them both this personally—have saved my life. They really saved my life at that period. So finding a voice, finding others, being easy and relaxed in a room, talking about the things that matter has been life-changing the last three years.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Yeah, look, just to remind people that if anything in this conversation is rightly upsetting, you have Switchboard on 1800 184 527—or sorry QLife, I should say, including Switchboard in Victoria and Tasmania, 1800 184 527 around the country. And yeah, gotta give a big shout-out to Bridget, Bridget and the Brisbane Bi+ Network, and also Amber and Sydney Bi+ Network, and yeah Anthony in Melbourne. It just shows that value of connection, I've got to say that for me, I can parallel to that, that was a great strengthener at that conference, at the first Better Together conference, in January 2018. It was well-timed; we'd got marriage equality at long last but it never really, for me in my personal opinion, was a huge bi and trans priority. Where do we go next? And we started building and full credit to Jason and the crew there.

And of course, the last thing we'd better mention before we run out of time is something of course that happened last year, in the midst of the dramas of last year. There was a wonderful conference that brought lots of bi people from, well, at least all over this large island and the smaller one to the south, and to some extent islands to the southeast together. And that was the first Stand Bi Us conference, which I felt, I have to say personally, I've said it before too, was the most, you know, solid I felt in my bi, bi/pan identity. And of course, we've got to mention that for lots of reasons because we can now announce there'll be one again this year.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] Absolutely!

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Woohoo! Bi-five!

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] We've been working on in the background for a little while, but most definitely the last few weeks, the last four weeks or so, we've started promoting Stand Bi Us 2021 Community Forum<sup>xii</sup>. It will run from the 23rd of September to the 26th of September. And it's a combination of, if possible, in-person events and also making sure that there is accessibility and availability online. There'll also be online sessions like we did last year.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Yep. So last year was pretty damn huge. We ended up with what was it, 37 sessions over nine days, which was wonderful but busy, and the

Melbourne caffeine supply ran down a bit, suffice to say. But this year a bit shorter, but of course, starting on Celebrate Bisexuality Day on the 23rd of September. So yeah, get in touch. You're tagged on the Facebook post today and you can, people can get in touch with me or look for Stand Bi Us, S-t-a-n-d B-i Us, and people can find out all about this conference and get involved, put up ideas and you know, or just join into the various online events. Last year, there were, you know, sort of informal events such as bi and cooking, bi and pets, and there were more we'll say advocacy panels like, well, bi experience of the postal survey and things like that. And so, it's lots of wide range of events. And if there isn't something for you, well, here's your chance to make it something for everyone. Yeah, we'll just so long as the events in broad terms are safe, inclusive, respectful. Watch and listen to these various spaces for more announcements over the next month or so as goo-ests get locked in.

Neen, we're just about at the end of the show. The CD players have had a rest today because it's just been so wonderful to chat with you and hear about your experiences, hear about how you are now just so much more settled and you know, you're shining in yourself and shining outward, which is, you know, just wonderful to hear, but I suppose any, you know, sort of summary type of—that is, summary as in with an **A**ry as opposed to **E**ry which we're in Southern Hemisphere here in the middle of winter, but and also just to mention BOLDER and I'm going to have to do this: what did the little bi rock want to be when they grew up<sup>xiii</sup>? A little BOLDER. I'm sorry, I had to.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] [laughs]

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] That was terrible. But I don't really care. [laughs] And seriously, once again, let's just mention BOLDER but any, you know, take away thoughts you'd have? Any, you know, any thoughts on everything, advocacy, being yourself, and all the rest of it, just pop them in.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] That's a huge invitation. Thank you, Sally, for giving me the time and space and opportunity to be listened to and to be here on the program and to promote all of these wonderful community events that we're doing. But please, if you want to join BOLDER, have a look at the links that I'll send through to Sally from this program and also on Eventbrite and Facebook. Thanks very much, everyone.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] We'll pop all of those into the links for the podcast and all that sort of thing, and under the posts, etc, etc, so people can spread them far and wide and as we say, if you're sort of in the, you know, around 40s, we're not going to be age-binary on anything like that, you know, and wherever you are on the planet. If you can make it in the time zone as I say this, first one this time or just coming up to this time next week, a week and seven minutes away. So I'll be racing—I have to admit, dear listeners, I might be late next week, I might be racing out of the studio. But actually I said I would have lunch with my guest afterwards, so I might have to be multitasking. I'll work that one out. Seriously, it's really exciting, Neen. Thanks for all your initiative, for all your advocacy, for all your strength. And just, I'll get you to hang on just on the Zoom for a second while I close the show, and then we'll wrap up offline.

[Speaker: Neen Chapman] Bye everyone.

[Speaker: Sally Goldner] Neen Chapman there on 3CR, talking about all things bi+, pan, multi-gender attracted, regardless of your label, whether you are sexually and/or emotionally attracted to people of more than one gender over the course of your lifetime.

I'd better get out of here and make way for 'Freedom of Species'. Once again, thanks to all the people who've donated to 'Out of the Pan's radiothon show and helped us get to our target, but the station still needs your support. So please support 'Freedom of Species' and also 'Queering the Air', but any show that you really like. we've got to get to \$250 grand overall and we're about \$200 grand. So my maths is madly working and says that's 80% but no Pareto principle here, we need all 100% to keep 3CR running at full strength.

On that note, I'll leave it there and take it out with the Wet Spots and 'George' who is bi-curious. Thanks for tuning in to 'Out of the Pan'. I'm Sally Goldner, catch you next week.

[Song: 'George' by the Wet Spots]

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.radicalwomen.org/Melbourne.shtml>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://sydneybiplusnetwork.org/>

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.standbius.com/>

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- iv <https://www.facebook.com/groups/biplusa/>
  - v <https://www.facebook.com/groups/bicommp Perth/>
  - vi <https://www.facebook.com/BrisbaneBiNetwork/>
  - vii <https://www.bi-alliance.org/>
  - viii <https://www.melbournebisexualnetwork.com/>
  - ix <https://www.ygender.org.au/>
  - x <https://www.minus18.org.au/>
  - xi <https://www.theequalityproject.org.au/better-together-conference-2021>
  - xii <https://www.standbius.com/>