

**LJH3 8.3.89**  
**Sophia**

Interviewed in my office. A very attractive, slim blonde woman, wearing make-up and fashionably dressed. Keen to take part in the study to find out what kind of questions we asked. Wanted to know what we were doing with the results, and was happy with the answer. (Feed into sex and health/AIDS ed for young women relevant to their own experience.) Provided a suggestion herself that cervical cancer should be included in sex education in schools, possibly giving a smear (if appropriate) to start young women off on a cycle, so that they were regularly recalled for smears. She has been treated for cervical cancer (she said) herself, as was her sister. Was aware of the recently emerging invasive type which affects younger women. Has been somewhat sexually active and regrets it for reasons of personal control and what is best and safest for her. Is now in a relationship she enjoys (shared, not like some she has had when she thought she was in a relationship and the man did not) of one years standing. She and her boyfriend had the HIV test before engaging in sexual intercourse (both seroneg) she knew him four months before the relationship became sexual in that sense.

Spoke freely, maybe a little hesitantly at times, but this was when she was groping for the words, or, as she put it once, not sure what she was going to say i.e. thinking about it as she went. Spoke about her relationship with her mother and father which was not good. Felt she and all her sisters had not had much love, certainly no physical expressions of caring from them, which led them into running into inappropriate (in her view) relationships with men who offered physical 'love'. She has 2 older sisters, 2 older brothers and one younger sister. The eldest sister (9 years older than her was the trail blazer, went to college). Ma [FACTORY ROLE], pa [SKILLED TRADE], neither interested in education. She thinks her eldest sister had a teacher as role model getting her interested in education, and all the girls in the family have gone for it, (youngest one, 17, still at home) but the boys lived at home until they married a woman like ma to look after them.

Interesting on feminism, and its contradictions, couple of good quotes there, on the gap between theory 'got it all on paper' and practice, when it comes to actually doing something. Sometimes wishes feminism had never been invented, you would do what you were doing without having to question it, and to grapple with the issues.

Also very good on knowing what you should be doing (not from moral perspective, but what is best and safest for you) and being unable to do it when it comes to the crunch. Could not explain why it was, except in her own case, (and referring to her behaviour prior to a traumatic experience (unhappy and inappropriate sexual relationship resulting in pregnancy and abortion, and the discover at the same time that she needed treatment to prevent cervical cancer) which caused her to change her behaviour in sexual relationships), when she used (a) psychological explanation, due to the relationship with the parents; (b) 'It won't happen to me, not part of our own experience, on the tv, over there, not here part of my life' [this is a characterisation of her position, not a quote](c) embarrassment to ask for what you wanted (such as contraception in general or a condom in particular) from someone you did not know. Some men care and share, but others just don't care, it's your own business (contraception, safe sex). I couldn't get across the idea of activities other than penetrative sex as sex again. I have to work on this. Each time they switch into sex as sexual intercourse.

Very much aware of dangers of heterosexual spread of AIDS, had been to [SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRY] and seen an early campaign there, which was in her view

focused on heterosexuals. (The I penetrating the A of AIDS, which she interpreted as being entirely about heterosexual sex.)

She was also interesting on peer group pressure and things becoming the norm. For example she thought drug taking was such a normal event amongst her student contemporaries that she would not have categorised it as 'risk taking' at all. In any case her boyfriend had had bad experiences with drugs and now did not touch them, so this discouraged her from frequent use. None of her circle injected, but her feeling was that some might graduate to it.

She was not clear what she wanted to do in the future, maybe go abroad again, perhaps do an MA, maybe get a job her. Unworked out.

Again an attractive, articulate young woman, who expressed very clearly the contradictions she had lived and was living. Extremely interesting. She has passed on copies of the questionnaire to a couple of friends, one of whom is actually keen to come and I've written to her to make a date.

