

TST02 (RT)

INTERVIEWER: What are you doing at the moment?

INTERVIEWEE: The Teacher Training course.

INTERVIEWER: Have you always wanted to be a teacher?

INTERVIEWEE: I've always wanted to be a teacher. I took the interview depending on my results and I failed my O Level maths for the third time but they kept my place open for me.

INTERVIEWER: That's crazy isn't it. I suppose you won't want to be a maths teacher.

INTERVIEWEE: Infants.

INTERVIEWER: Doesn't it appeal to you, secondary school teaching?

INTERVIEWEE: Not really, I don't think I would be able to cope, maybe later on but going in at 20 I don't think I will be able to cope.

INTERVIEWER: Terrifying completely.

INTERVIEWEE: Maybe in the end.

INTERVIEWER: I think everyone remembers what a hard time you used to give your teachers.

INTERVIEWEE: It's enough to put you off.

INTERVIEWER: So you should be qualified reasonably soon then and go straight into the square. Within your course do they give you any training on AIDS and Sex Education?

INTERVIEWEE: No it's all the academic subjects and it's like all schools based.

INTERVIEWER: Right but in terms of people who are going to be in secondary schools might have to..?

INTERVIEWEE: Well the secondary school is in a different building so we don't mix with them. Ours is just primary.

INTERVIEWER: So are you thinking of staying in Manchester then?

INTERVIEWEE: Hopefully yes.

INTERVIEWER: If we go back a bit and tell me about when you were at school, first of all what school did you go to?

INTERVIEWEE: I went to an all girls' grammar school.

INTERVIEWER: Is that one round here?

INTERVIEWEE: Oldham it was.

INTERVIEWER: Is that still a grammar School now or is it?

INTERVIEWEE: No it's still a grammar school yes. It was all one boys' school and then they split it and half is for girls and half is for boys.

INTERVIEWER: So was there were boys around then?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: So it wasn't really like being isolated or anything. Did you enjoy school?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes apart from the sixth form but I think that was because of the form teacher that we had I didn't get on with her. I enjoyed my subjects but not my teacher.

INTERVIEWER: In what way?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know I just didn't like her, I didn't get along with her. She was on my back all the time and you know I think it was a personality clash really. Apart from that it was alright.

INTERVIEWER: I suppose you haven't been to a mixed school, do you think it's better being at an all girls' school, do you think it's easier, less complicated?

INTERVIEWEE: I suppose it's less competition obviously between boys and girls but in other ways more like the social things; if you're quite shy and you're not at school with boys, then it's quite difficult to get to know them apart from the people you already know. That's what I think anyway.

INTERVIEWER: Absolutely, it makes you think there is something more important than they are. Was there mixing between boys and girls in the different schools?

INTERVIEWEE: No, there was a debating society for the sixth formers and that was mixed but that was it.

INTERVIEWER: Was it people at school that were likely to be going out with boys from your school rather than people say from a comprehensive?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know.

INTERVIEWER: You don't think it made a big difference in terms of most people around the age of 15 start having boyfriends, did it make it difficult?

INTERVIEWEE: Most people in the class didn't, I don't think. There were a few that did but whether other people it was just because of the school or whether it was the kind of people, I don't know. I never had a boyfriend from school.

INTERVIEWER: You didn't, so that was quite common?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: It probably makes it a lot easier to study as well, less distracting, because a lot of people spend their whole time at school thinking about boys and gossiping about boys.

INTERVIEWEE: My friend, she went to a comprehensive school and that was mixed. At [NAME OF SCHOOL] and I mean it just sounds as if they had more fun. Whether it was because it was a comprehensive school and it wasn't as strict as ours because we had very strict rules like one staircase for going up and one for going down and other things. I suppose that had a lot to do with it. Some of the tales she came home with.

INTERVIEWER: Yes we were there, it's probably true. You were saying that the school was strict, was it strict in terms of just rules and regulations, I mean did you get any sex education?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes we did.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me about what you can remember of it?

INTERVIEWEE: I think we were in third year. The first lesson we had was with a teacher and she had only just qualified and she was quite new to the school and I think she was really embarrassed about talking to us. We had a book and it was just pregnancy and how fertilization takes place in animals and then in humans.

INTERVIEWER: Sort of edge along to humans. Did they talk to you about things like contraception?

INTERVIEWEE: Not a great deal it was all from the book. It wasn't really personal.

INTERVIEWER: Did anyone get a chance to ask questions about personal things?

INTERVIEWEE: I suppose you could have done but it wasn't the kind of lesson where you would feel at ease to ask things like that being in a big group. I suppose in a way it was easier to be in an all girl group to ask questions, we did ask questions but not anything about their own worries.

INTERVIEWER: Did they tell you anything about sexually transmitted diseases?

INTERVIEWEE: Only what was in the books.

INTERVIEWER: So if it was in the book it didn't mean about anyone in particular?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: At the time you did that sex education at school was it useful to you at the time, was it new information?

INTERVIEWEE: I suppose most people knew about the birds and the bees. I suppose some of it was actually what happened to the eggs and things like that. Things in detail that we didn't know. That was all new. And about the diseases like that, because that's not something which most people know about.

INTERVIEWER: So what sort of diseases did they tell you about, was it about syphilis and gonorrhoea?

INTERVIEWEE: I can't remember.

INTERVIEWER: They just said you could catch things?

INTERVIEWEE: They just said about the diseases and that to be safe.

INTERVIEWER: Did they tell you anything about AIDS at school or was it too early?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: When you said they told you to be safe what did they mean?

INTERVIEWEE: About the condoms were mentioned because that can stop diseases and obviously about not sleeping around and things like that.

INTERVIEWER: Did they give you any sort of moral view of how they felt you ought to behave or was it completely left up to you what you did with that information?

INTERVIEWEE: I think it was left up to you, she didn't say this is my view, this is what you should do.

INTERVIEWER: So no one felt, well generally they case it in some moral framework, saying that you shouldn't need to know about this bit or whatever?

INTERVIEWEE: Well they didn't tell us about homosexuals.

INTERVIEWER: Nothing like that.

INTERVIEWEE: I suppose that was because you shouldn't really do that. At the time you didn't really think about it.

INTERVIEWER: At the time they were talking about it you didn't think at that point you needed to know anything more than they were tell you? Were there any things you wanted to know about for later on?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: Did you chat to your mum and dad or anything, you know sit you down and telling you about things?

INTERVIEWEE: My mum sat me down and told me about periods when I started my periods because I didn't really know and I was quite alarmed when it happened and my mum explained what it was she said you will have to be careful because if you have a boyfriend you could get pregnant and do you know about things like that.

INTERVIEWER: Yes and oh god, what is growing up about!

INTERVIEWEE: Yes she was a bit embarrassed but she is really easy to talk to my mum. Like when I started to go out with MARK.

INTERVIEWER: This is your present boyfriend?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. We decided we were going to sleep together and I went on the pill because we decided that would be the best thing. But I could say to my mum, this is what we have decided.

INTERVIEWER: Right so you could talk to her about that?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. But I didn't tell my dad straight away but eventually we told my dad and he said, 'oh it's not as if you have just met each other sort of thing and I think it's the best thing to do'.

INTERVIEWER: Was that important to you for them to know?

INTERVIEWEE: I think so yes, otherwise I would have felt deceitful and like as if I am doing this I'm sneaking around, it's not right. But whereas it's all in the open.

INTERVIEWER: Yes I suppose if it feels right to you, you want it to be accepted. So have they always been quite liberal then about these sort of things?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: On the other side of things, did your mum and dad bring you up with any idea of what they expected from you? Things like did they expect you to get married and to have kids and settle down. Even if they never said to you straight, this is what you are going to do young lady, things like that, is there anything you have been brought up to expect?

INTERVIEWEE: Well I think they would like us to get married and have a family but it's totally up to us. She said, 'obviously we would like you to be married but these days people don't seem to place much importance to it'. But in the end it is up to us and what we want to do.

INTERVIEWER: And what do feel about it, have you grown up wanting to get married?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes well I grew up thinking you've got to be married.

INTERVIEWER: Why do you think that came from?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know really it was just something I was brought up with, you can't have sex unless you are married and you have got to be married before you have a baby. That was how I felt but I suppose it's just growing up and experience and you think well that's not right. But now I would like to get married and me and MARK will probably eventually live together. MARK is one of those people who don't place that much importance on getting married and I think although it would be nice and I would eventually like it but it's not my top priority, I think you have got to live with someone and know what they are like.

INTERVIEWER: But is the relationship with him the top priority to you, I mean if getting married isn't. Is having a steady relationship, a long-term relationship top priority to you? What I am trying to get at really is the way some people get to the age you are and they don't expect to settle down to a steady relationship, that's the last thing they want, they think they should be having lots of relationships and then some other people think that they want steady relationships and I am quite interested why different people decide those things?

INTERVIEWEE: I have been going out with MARK for four years now and I have always known him, he only lives across the back so we have grown up knowing each other. But before I started going out with MARK I had a few boyfriends, nothing serious just going to the pictures that kind of thing and when I started going out with MARK it didn't start off serious, I didn't think this was it, I didn't think, 'well I've got to this age'.

INTERVIEWER: So you didn't make the decision that this was going to be..?

INTERVIEWEE: No it just happened I don't think any of us thought.. It's not something that we have got to work at. We were friends first and friendship is a lot of it between us.

INTERVIEWER: Was he the first person you slept with, that you had sex with?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: So you had a sexual relationship before?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: What are your opinions about what part sex should play in your relationships in terms of seeing people. When do think it's appropriate to sleep with somebody?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know I suppose it all depends on the individual. I had had a few boyfriends and nothing like that had ever taken place. And when I started seeing this one lad I thought he was the bees knees and we just decided we would sleep together. We didn't see each other for that long, it was a matter of six months or so, and it only happened a couple of times then it just sizzled out.

INTERVIEWER: You didn't feel disappointed about that because you had slept with someone. Did it make the relationship more serious?

INTERVIEWEE: No it didn't really because I thought I wasn't all that impressed. You know, is that it. And then MARK was the last person I expected to get involved with but when we decided that was the kind of relationship we would want to have then I regretted it then.

INTERVIEWER: What, with having slept with someone else?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes because I thought when I was going out with this other lad I thought he was wonderful and he made me feel really nice but then afterwards I thought, well it wasn't, I didn't really love him and then I thought I wish I had waited for MARK.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think it is important to love the person you have sex with?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't think I could go out and have a one-night stand and just sleep with them, I mean that's just me and other people have different views. At the time I thought I really loved him but having said that if I hadn't had that experience with him then it might not have been as easy with MARK, I don't know.

INTERVIEWER: Is it a better sexual relationship now that you are having with MARK than the boy before, I mean were you really disappointed before?

INTERVIEWEE: Oh yes. Well I mean he used to say sweet things to you and I used to think I suppose it's because it's the first person you really, although you've had other boyfriends it's never been serious and it's the first person and you think this is it and afterwards you realise well it wasn't there is more to it than that.

INTERVIEWER: If we just go back a little bit can you can remember the first time you heard anything about AIDS?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know, I suppose it's what you heard on the news and what you read in the papers.

INTERVIEWER: So it would have been a couple of years ago that you first heard about it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Has your attitude and ideas about it changed from when you first heard about it to now or is it the same?

INTERVIEWEE: At first I thought it's a gay disease but then when you learn about it and you read these leaflets that came, you think it is a serious problem and it could happen to anyone.

INTERVIEWER: Would you think then it is not just gay people that are a risk from it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I mean you have got to be careful. If I wasn't in the kind of relationship I am, as it is it has not really affected me because of the way I am with MARK. I suppose if I didn't have a steady relationship then I think I would have to be careful and take precautions. I think it would have changed the way I was if the circumstances had been different.

INTERVIEWER: In terms of the relationships you have had you don't feel at any risk from them?

INTERVIEWEE No when I slept with my first boyfriend I hadn't heard anything about it. And like I say with MARK, I know where he has come from.

INTERVIEWER: Are you his first sexual partner?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: I suppose that makes it safer for you. So you haven't got any worries about that?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: The way that you have planned your future with your relationship, do you expect you are going to be with him for quite a long time, so you are not actually thinking at the moment about what you would do in another situation.

INTERVIEWEE: Well we are thinking that we are going to settle down. Well obviously not yet because I'm at college but I can't see the situation changing.

INTERVIEWER: Does being faithful in your relationship, is that an important part of the relationship that you have?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: So you are not thinking, I mean some people have relationships where both partners can have relationships with others?

INTERVIEWEE: No it's nothing like that. Neither of us would, well it's not something we have said but I know that I wouldn't want to be unfaithful to him and I know he wouldn't and I don't think he would be able to forgive me if I was, he's that kind of person. I suppose we are compatible in that way, you know that's it, no-one else should be included.

INTERVIEWER: So you think therefore that you are not at risk and he's not at risk, what sort of people do you think are at risk?

INTERVIEWEE: Well it's the kind of people you were telling me about. Like people who don't take precautions and sleep around and a lot of sexual partners and drugs.

INTERVIEWER: What do think is the most important thing, is it sleeping around, having a lot of sexual partners or is it actually what you do with your sexual partner?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know, I have not really thought about it.

INTERVIEWER: What would you say were the ways to protect yourself?

INTERVIEWEE: Well they say to wear a condom. I think if you don't sleep with a lot of people then you are pretty low risk. I would have thought so.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think men are more likely or women are more likely whether, for instance whether women are more likely to have it at the moment?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes it affects women as well as men.

INTERVIEWER: I am not testing you on this because quite often people are confused about the same information. Would you know what the difference between HIV and AIDs was? You have heard of HIV?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. Is that the virus that causes it and you can have the virus without catching it, but it's when the virus blows up that AIDS develops.

INTERVIEWER: If somebody was HIV Positive would you be able to have unprotected sex with them and would you be at risk of catching it?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know, I would of thought so but I don't know.

INTERVIEWER: Yes you are. I think for a lot of people that's the sort of, because there is an area of doubt there a lot of people say, 'no, I don't think you are'. They would rather that you weren't. Would you be able to tell the way someone looked if they had it?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: Have you any idea if you get the virus how long it takes before you actually get AIDS?

INTERVIEWEE: No. I thought it doesn't necessarily mean that you are going to have it and you can have it without catching it.

INTERVIEWER: I mean generally it's between five and seven years. It can be hidden for a long time. So all those things can make it a difficult disease to actually identify and for people to recognise it. Have you ever worried about it before you were seeing MARK had you worried about it?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: So you have not been in the situation where you had to think about it?

INTERVIEWEE: The only time I was worried about it was when I go and give blood when it first came up, I thought what happens if they use a needle, but then they explained it and the things that they use. But that worried me a little bit because you heard about them catching it from blood transfusions. But I don't worry about that anymore because now you can't.

INTERVIEWER: So it's something you would think about if something did trigger up a situation?

INTERVIEWEE: I think so yes.

INTERVIEWER: Do you know if any of your friends who are single or who are having relationships, do any of them mention it or are worried about it at all?

INTERVIEWEE: No it's not something you talk about. Presumably they don't worry. I suppose it's one of the things you think, it will never happen to me.

INTERVIEWER: It's a dangerous way of thinking though.

INTERVIEWEE: I think it's what a lot of people do think. Is like a lot of other awful things that happen.

INTERVIEWER: Just a couple of last things. You say that you went on to the pill, were you using a condom before that or had you not started sleeping with him before that?

INTERVIEWEE: I think we slept together once before I decided to go on the pill and then we used a condom. We just decided it would be more easier or more safe if I was on the pill. I don't know what decided us.

INTERVIEWER: Did you find having sex with a condom was a problem for you?

INTERVIEWEE: No not really. Not a problem but I don't like them. That was what put me off really. Having said that, if I was not on the pill I would not have unprotected sex.

INTERVIEWER: You would never take a risk like that?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that the condom and the pill are used for different types of relationships. If you're having a steady relationship it is better to use the pill or if you are older you're more likely to use the pill? Do you see condoms as something to do with being younger and having a different type of relationships or do you see them as basically two different types of contraceptives?

INTERVIEWEE: It depends on the individual, it's what suits you. I mean some women with all the scares about the pill, some women whatever their age might decide they don't want to do that or they might take it and find out that they can't. I don't think your age matters, you have got to find out what suits you.

INTERVIEWER: So you don't feel that often in the past there has been a lot of stigma attached to using condoms or that they are something that you only use when you're a teenager or you only use for casual sex, all these sort of weird ideas you don't see in that way?

INTERVIEWEE: No I don't see why. I don't think there is an age limit.

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