

Transcription of a conversation between Rachel Thomson (researcher) and a group of young women and youth workers at an LGBT young women's group at The Proud Trust, Manchester for the Reanimating data project.

This conversation took place in December 2019 as part of the Reanimating data project.

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Transcribed by: Type out outsourcing typing service.

Key:

In bold: Rachel Thomson (researcher and Reanimating data project team member)

Not in bold: Group participant (youth worker / young woman at The Proud Trust)

AR – Ali Ronan (former youth worker and member of the Reanimating data project team)

YW – Youth worker

The name of all youth women and youth workers who participated in this group have been changed and are in CAPS. All names in CAPS refer to young women in the group, unless otherwise indicated.

1 **I thought I would show you some photographs of me when I was 23, the age that I was doing the**
2 **study. This is me and my mates, it's like 1980-**

3 I've got to identify you?

4 This bottom one I've got that as well.

5 **No.**

6 No!

7 That one with the red hair? This one?

8 Your face isn't up properly, we can't tell.

9 **I'll pass it round. Then this is the research team; that was probably the time. This is in**
10 **Manchester.**

11 You were quite pretty when you were young.

12 **This is the whole of the research team, I was the young one. I thought you would like to see.**

13 The hair, oh my God the hair!

14 **That was before I came to Manchester that's when I lived down, where I live now actually.**

15 Not in London?

16 **No, on the south coast, Brighton.**

17 I have a friend who lives in Seaford. Where do you live?

18 **Lewes, it's just up the road.**

19 Lewes castle, none of it is there but it's still gorgeous.

20 **I thought you might find these just interesting, these are just things from the archive, from the**
21 **time that we're doing the research. This is for HIV and Aids which were-**

22 I know what I think, there's a lot more resources then than there is now.

23 45% of people now don't know that HIV can be transmitted between heterosexual sex.

24 **I think you talked about Section 28 before as a thing that happened, it's very similar to the No**
25 **Outsiders thing at the moment but back to front, so you know with the No Outsiders that in the**
26 **school they are teaching equality to be in line with the Equalities Act 2010, so they're teaching**
27 **books where there are same sex parents as a matter of course and that's the cause of the**
28 **controversy, whereas in Section 28 it was the same thing, same kind of book, but it was not the**
29 **state that was doing it, it was those teachers, so it's kind of weirdly reversed. But this is a lovely**
30 **image of young people in Manchester campaigning. So when the march happened, I think 20,000**
31 **people marched first time ever they had been there. There had been a march about LGBT, I guess**
32 **there had been like the Gay Liberation Front, but nothing of the same kind; this is one similar,**
33 **same year from the Olden Bill which is about abortion, so feminism was really happening.**

34 **This one is interesting just in terms of, so this is like an advert for condoms where you would have**
35 **to send away mail order to get your condoms.**

36 What they were doing at Pride though, they were giving away packs in the pubs and stuff, in the
37 bathrooms they were giving away packs.

38 **Could you imagine a time when you couldn't get them, I just think in terms of the really different**
39 **moments.**

40 I remember this bookshop.

41 **There's lots about nightclubs and things like that you might be interested in some of them but**
42 **just to take us back, which is partly because I thought you might just want to ask some questions**
43 **and try to take us back there a bit to get the feeling of it. On any Wednesday there would be about**
44 **10-15 groups going on in Manchester meeting about politics or censorship or feminism or**
45 **vegetarianism or whatever and I don't know, I can't believe it's like that, it was full of, the city**
46 **was full of politics.**

47 This is where I'm going to end up one day.

48 What, classified?

49 That was just a random, I would actually be the (inaudible; over-talking 00:06:12) sexy male.

50 Oh weird.

51 **What's that?**

52 It's Wales.

53 **Is it in Wales? There you go. I think that march of 20,000 people was a really historic moment**
54 **because I don't think anybody had any clue that that many people would come out together to do**
55 **it, it was 1988, it was a complete shock to the establishment. So they had done this policy which**
56 **was supposed to be really repressive and actually (inaudible; over-talking 00:07:00).**

57 What does BSI stand for?

58 **It's like the kite mark, actually it's the kite mark we call now, it's been tested, it has no holes in**
59 **it. It's what we call now Clause 28, so it was a law that basically made it illegal for local authorities**
60 **to promote homosexuality as a pretended family unit. Which is now illegal to not do that. It was**
61 **for years and it got bigger and bigger and bigger, but Manchester was when the first march**
62 **happened, so it was a really important city for that.**

63 AR: It was only fairly recently appealed?

64 YW: I think about 15 years ago.

65 **There's quite nice things like nightclubs as well. Anyway, I just thought you might want to ask**
66 **me questions; I know you've been looking at some of the interviews, is that right, from back then?**
67 **I'm really happy to answer any questions or have a conversation about-**

68 AR: So what have you thought about the interviews that we've been looking at?

69 YW: Okay, I think the idea of the interviews obviously back in the day were fantastic. I think the idea
70 was wonderful, I think the idea of re-visiting them 30 years later is really , really, good but, and there
71 is a but, I think I know they done it in different groups and this young woman's group is a really political,
72 really forward, really vocal and I think for me it would have been helpful to have some proper guiding
73 on how we looked at it and how we compared. So we've done some really interesting things, we've had
74 some really good discussions, we've looked at some of the interviews, we've discussed them and we've
75 picked things out, but I think having some structure in it just to compare like for like, literally this is the
76 interview or pulling specific things out of the original ones and then covering them again now, I think
77 would have been more constructive so you had something positive, tangible that you could compare
78 them.

79 AR: We tried last week, didn't we, to look at some of the questions, how you might ask the questions
80 now, but in a way that didn't work because the questions only relate to the interview. So if you start
81 with the question the minute somebody gives you a different answer you're going down a different...
82 For me it's been interesting because we've tried lots of different things like chopping them up, doing
83 random stuff, the first week not quite acting them out but looking at it. Perhaps I was trying really hard
84 not to give a structure to see what happened. What do you feel?

85 I don't know how this was meant to play out, but I think if they'd actually been (inaudible 00:11:45)
86 because that's what I thought was going to happen going in, not just looking up the interviews. The
87 (inaudible 00:11:57) compared it to ourselves and then someone had all the interview questions and
88 they asked us individually those questions and then maybe recorded it all.

89 **That would be really good to do.**

90 That's something I would really like to do. Just looking at interviews, say for example sex education,
91 it's the same, you don't learn anything or, for me when I was at school, I didn't learn anything
92 whatsoever, I needed people there. And for example I'm a Bengali woman and my experience was
93 completely different from a lot of the people that were there.

94 **So you mean more diversity in the group of women. One of the things we really learnt by doing**
95 **the re-visiting is how Manchester has changed in terms of, interesting- I had a conversation about**
96 **religion because when we first did this study here we did part of it in London and that was really**
97 **different, it was much more diverse, the group. But the majority of young women we talked to**
98 **when we did the work in Manchester 30 years ago were white British but probably mostly**
99 **Catholic as well, and being Catholic *then* really mattered, I don't know if it mattered to what**
100 **people's beliefs were but it really mattered to things like attitude towards abortion, whether they**
101 **got any sex-ed at school, because at a Catholic school probably didn't. Whether they could talk**
102 **to their parents and whether their parents expected them to get married, so all those things were**
103 **still shaped largely by religion 30 years ago in a way that maybe aren't now. I would say maybe**
104 **for different groups, so people from maybe Asian backgrounds, South Asian backgrounds, that's**
105 **still the expectation, the expectation will be that you will be married and there will be an**
106 **expectation that you will be a virgin and virgin meaning a very particular thing is still the case**
107 **for large groups of young people now, but maybe different groups than it was in the past.**

108 **A lot of the groups where we've done the research this time or shared the research we've been**
109 **worried that the research is too much about sex; it feels like it's really explicit about sex.**

110 (Inaudible 00:14:39)-

111 **I think there's quite different interviews as well in terms of what it was possible to talk about.**

112 I didn't feel we were properly looking at the interviews, it was like the interview was there and we were
113 asked to look for something specific rather than compare it to our environment and experiences.

114 **What we could do, I'm really happy to, one of the things we did the other day with another group**
115 **is they chose some questions from the original interview that they would have liked to have to**
116 **themselves and they did a bit of work around that and then I came up and interviewed them**
117 **starting with the question they had chosen, so it was a way in using the original material and then**
118 **asked them why they chose that one, what that meant for them, and that went really well and it**
119 **was a really nice thing to do.**

120 Mostly we were asking each other, not a selection of interviews or anything, we were told to use what
121 was already on the page and ask those same questions, but those questions were personalised to the
122 interviewee, so you sort of had to change it a bit if you could. The questions already were a bit hard and
123 you're not an interviewer and are not used to doing that. (Inaudible 00:16:05).

124 **And that would be something that it would be more comfortable to do one to one rather than in**
125 **a group?**

126 I think so. Some people might say (inaudible 00:16:19).

127 **I actually did 15 interviews in one evening last time I was up here, they were kind of amazing in**
128 **a weird way, just each one was about 5 minutes but in that 5 minutes we kind of talked almost**
129 **about everything, because they had been working with the material in groups a bit like you have,**
130 **and then they'd chosen something that meant a lot to them and so we just like re-voiced it and**
131 **then we talked about why they had chosen that and it was really condensed, so people told their**
132 **stories in the way they wanted to really quickly but it felt okay, like normally I would be really**
133 **worried about doing something, wouldn't feel safe to do something so fast if you see what I mean,**
134 **but it did actually feel okay doing it in that way. But we can do that. I don't know if you want to**
135 **do that this evening, I don't know what your thoughts are on plans.**

136 YW: What's anybody else got to say on thoughts about what we've done, how it went?

137 Is it like an academic project?

138 **It is. It's funded by the Research Council and it's really funded as much as anything else around**
139 **the method, so we're proposing that the idea of taking an old study and bringing it into the present**
140 **and engaging with young people is a way of researching social change, so it's like an experiment**
141 **in a method but it's researched.**

142 You know the original study that you did, do you think that's had any sort of impact, not just on the
143 young women but on the whole world, kind of thing?

144 **I think it partly did because when I finished the ... so I was at Manchester University studying**
145 **sociology and I got the job. When I was finishing my degree I did a project on women and HIV,**
146 **partly because my sister was HIV positive, which in 1988 was like a terminal diagnosis, and she**
147 **set up a self-help group for women who are HIV positive and as part of my dissertation I**
148 **interviewed the women from the group which was amazing, you know when something big**
149 **happens in your life, you're like, "I'll just interview everybody, that will make it better." And**
150 **that was my dissertation. And then I got invited to be the research assistant on this project because**

151 they got the funding from it. So the study then happened and at the end of it I went to London
152 afterwards and got a job at somewhere called the Sex Education Forum, which still runs, it had
153 just been set up then, so I kind of saw my job was to do exactly that - tried to put it into action, so
154 I did like 10 years' work with them, lobbying and making resources and things like that, a lot of
155 it based on that research, really that was the rocket underneath me.

156 One of the findings of the research project was it's not really just information that people need,
157 they need the chance to talk about power and inequality and question ideas about what's natural
158 and all those kind of difficult things that you need to talk about in detail.

159 AR: In 1988 I was working with a group of girls like this and for me, those pamphlets, they were
160 published, the research papers were published as little purple pamphlets, I think I brought some the first
161 day, and for me they were the first time I had read other people doing work around the kind of things
162 the women were talking about, so particularly there was one you did about negotiating and about
163 pleasure and about people enjoying sex. Most girls are told, "Don't do it, it's awful, you're going to
164 die," or whatever. So for me this was really liberating because it was what I was doing anyway, but
165 then somebody else ... you know it kind of legitimised what I was doing, I suppose that's the word, so
166 for me these pamphlets were really extraordinary at the time because there was nothing around saying
167 that kind of thing it was all very -

168 Also was a very right-wing Conservative government, so they'd done Section 28. Sexual politics
169 were exciting, (inaudible; background noise 00:21:36) and there was a big gap between what
170 young people or political people thought and what the official establishment thought. It made
171 lobbying and activism fun around it.

172 Because I worry about that as a young person going into academia, how I can make it impactful and
173 how I can make it actually have some sort of, like, bridging that gap if you like, between the academic
174 world (inaudible; background noise 00:22:07)-

175 Mostly it's you, it's kind of you, you'll be the thing and if you join up different bits of the world
176 that you care about then I feel like there's a whole agenda in universities now about impact, but
177 that's the worst possible thing, it's like that's become part of the business. But the reality is if you
178 really care then you will make something happen about it.

179 AR: But you've done some really interesting work here with the interviews LUCY [youth worker]
180 around, you know there's been some interesting stuff come up, I know you feel that we could have used
181 them in different ways which is really helpful but do other people feel that there have been things that
182 have been interesting?

183 Definitely. I like reading the interviews and I don't know if this is related to you or not, but we have,
184 like, zines put out on the table and stuff and I thought it was really interesting looking at them because
185 it sort of portrayed how much radical feminism has sort of progressed over the years, like, it's quite
186 different now to how it was and I don't know whether that's a good or bad thing to be honest, but it was
187 amazing to see how women were lobbying for change.

188 **Do you identify as feminists?**

189 Yes, definitely.

190 **Do you think other people do; is that unusual?**

191 I think it's changed quite a lot, especially over the past 5 years or so, and I think I personally, and this
192 is quite a controversial opinion, but I personally think it's lost its meaning a little bit. I think what
193 women were fighting for back then is a lot more important than what people are fighting for now, and
194 that is a controversial opinion and I'm so aware of that.

195 **I was just reading an interview with a girl that I did 30 years ago before I came up here actually,**
196 **some things I lose and then I just found it, and she was talking about, because the time of AIDs it**
197 **was really seen as a closing down and she was saying, "We've only just got the chance to be able**
198 **to do what we want to do and have fun as women," because I guess it's always the first generation**
199 **after the expectation that you would be married early, this is for a particular group of women,**
200 **working class, probably Catholic, young women in Manchester. And she says, "And now this**
201 **happens, now this disease is there." I think there was a real view at the time that HIV was going**
202 **to, you know there was James Anderton, do you remember James Anderton, he was the Police**
203 **Chief who basically said, "This is divine retribution. This is God's way of punishing the**
204 **homosexuals and the feminists for getting uppity." And there was that real sense where it felt like**
205 **it was the end of everything actually, but weirdly now if you look back at it you think actually it**
206 **was the beginning of everything.**

207 **Feminism is complicated isn't it, there's different kinds, it's almost like a badge or a style.**

208 It's really complicated, I think there needs to be more emphasis on equality and there's not; I think
209 sexual politics is quite important and that's not talked about enough. We as women, some feminists are
210 making us quite sheltered and I don't believe that's the right way to go about it.

211 **Give me an example.**

212 I don't know, I think there's quite a lot in feminism at the moment on sex workers and if they are good
213 or bad, and the majority feel like sex work is a bad thing and it shouldn't be allowed and it's derogatory
214 for women, but I feel like actually ... I've read some stuff in the zines that says, actually, this is not the
215 case.

216 **But this was the issue in the 80s: pornography, women divided really massively over porn, like**
217 **whether a pleasure, and also around sex work, so there was the pro-sex feminists who were alright**
218 **with porn and solidarity with sex workers and maybe mixed a bit more, sort of more queer, what**
219 **we would think of as queer, and then there was a more kind of politically correct version that was**
220 **more separatist.**

221 Political correctness has sort of infiltrated feminism to the point where it's sort of lost its meaning. I
222 think the world now, we've got a divide now where people are either really politically correct or really
223 forthright and I don't think that's okay.

224 **I would agree.**

225 It's like feminism has become very, very radical where people just assume feminism means women are
226 better and women are superior and women deserve everything better than men, but for me it's about
227 gender equality, including every single gender, and that's what feminism is. When women came out
228 first it was just women were being a lot more lower than men were but as the world has gone on we've
229 realised male and female are not the only genders and it's about all gender equality, and that's what
230 feminism is and that's what I call myself for; if I am going to call myself a feminist it's because I want
231 equality for all genders, not just women to be superior, because no-one's superior, we are all the same.

232 My mum, she doesn't call herself a feminist and I asked her why and she said, "I'm not all about that."
233 I could tell she's not a radical feminist, she believes that we're all ... actually it's a bit more complicated
234 because I've got my whole culture coming into the gender stereotypes and everything, but feminism is
235 about equality, people keep forgetting.

236 **But you're also saying different genders, which one of the issues I think with a 70s-80s feminism**
237 **at the moment is that some of it is pretty transphobic or not able to extend the argument in the**
238 **way that you're describing, so that's a real big issue at the moment it feels like, generationally.**

239 And also, how GEMMA was saying how it would change and it's, like, it should continue passing
240 forward, interview people now, but in this table circle I feel like we already have 3 different generations.
241 So even if you ask all of us my answers might be different from AMY's answers because AMY'S still
242 in school, but I was in school quite a few years ago so your sex education was a bit different from mine
243 probably, but my little sister's sex education already seems very different from mine and she's only,
244 like, 6 years younger than me. I think it would be worth to ask my generation these questions again and
245 then I feel like there still won't be much difference and that still shows that nothing has been done, and
246 that's where the change comes. But then you do it again with a different generation and I still feel like
247 you still will see no difference.

248 **So what do you feel the issues are at the moment around unfairness or where the problems are?**

249 I think relationship education in general isn't equal, like between those who are heterosexual, those who
250 identify as a different sexuality and for those who identify as a different gender than they were assigned
251 at birth. I, today actually, had a tutorial session at college and it was about relationships and every single
252 thing was like: do you think your boyfriend should have control of you? Images were of a man and a
253 woman holding hands and I was sat there, like, not talking because this doesn't apply to me one bit.
254 Even it's 2019, that's my college, that's a brand new PowerPoint created this year for us.

255 **Did anyone challenge it?**

256 I was, like, I'm going to doodle, this is nothing to do with me. She ignored me and I started doodling
257 for the next 45 minutes.

258 **Did any of the other students challenge that or the assumed heterosexuality?**

259 There was, from obviously what I know there was me and (inaudible 00:31:33) lesbian, there was this
260 other girl and she identifies as bisexual and then the only lad in the class identifies as gay, so for those
261 2 the terms of just 'boyfriend' still correlated with the way they experience relationships, so I was the
262 only one that I know of who was like, 'what?'.
263

263 You can easily change things but you're not.

264 And then just being ignored when I go, "Nothing to do with me. Bye. I'm distracted now." The stuff
265 that they were talking about, because they were talking about things like controlling and sexual abuse
266 and emotional, different sorts of abuse that can happen in relationships and that's still relevant to me
267 massively, but because they use that term, because my identity was not even considered and when I
268 voiced my concern it wasn't recognised, I was like, "Whatever then, I'm not listening," I should have
269 still listened probably, but it just made me feel segregated and made me feel like I'm not important
270 enough to teach this sort of thing too.

271 It's hard to identify with what's being said. I'm never going to have a boyfriend.

272 I had a boyfriend when I was 7 – never again!

273 In high school the closest I got to sex education was: dick go in vagina, that's it, that's how you make
274 a baby. I left high school last year and we got no education on anything even remotely queer, but the
275 first half of the documentary, twice, maybe three times actually, of homophobia against gay men in
276 football; homophobia against gay men in football is much different to just the casual homophobia
277 because there was genuinely straight as a stick, under that was a banana, I did not relate to any of my
278 peers.

279 **Do you think schools are a space for ... I mean one of the interesting questions is about how much**
280 **schools are ever going to be able to do in this area?**

281 It's never going to change and I don't know how.

282 **I suppose it's sometimes are schools safe enough spaces to do proper work in?**

283 There's also a lot of problem with the society around it. Education is really important but it's not
284 delivered very well, or not delivered so I could relate or I could understand what was being said, or
285 even that I would remember because most of the stuff I know is from random things. So, school could
286 definitely be a lot better but there's also so much societal things that can't be changed immediately or
287 through a construction like school, but it could be more awareness, I guess.

288 AR: I suppose what I'm interested in having been involved in this project a little bit is whether you
289 think looking at the interviews made you think about these things or not?

290 Reminded me.

291 AR: I've been working with a few other projects and that's what they've all said, the things that are
292 raised in the interviews more or less, I know we haven't looked at them all but they resonate with you
293 because it's like, 'oh yes, this was my experience as well'.

294 I knew it hadn't changed because of a conversation with my mum but this (inaudible; background noise
295 00:36:42). My mum is a lesbian so I say we're an open house, I don't think we are, she represents as an
296 open house but I don't agree with it. I forgot what I was going to say then.

297 **To make your generation change.**

298 My mum went to an all Catholic school and I went to an all-girls school; where we had conversations
299 about it, it linked up, but with these interviews I didn't notice until when we were doing the interviews.

300 **I wonder whether one of the things that has changed most in this period is technology, if you think**
301 **about the dramatic changes in 30 years. I see 2 dramatic changes: 1) is, and we were talking about**
302 **this earlier on, when I went to college there was 8%-9% of young people went to university and**
303 **now it's almost 50% and a lot of that increase is girls as well, so that's one big change. And then**
304 **the other one is the internet, you were saying you learn about sexuality, any question you might**
305 **have, you ask the internet or community you will find on the internet.**

306 (Inaudible 00:38:25) because mum really told me about it before I could find out anything, so I wasn't
307 (inaudible; background noise 00:38:29) learning too much, seeing too much and was too much for me,
308 so I think that's where the whole parental guidance, it's like you need to start acknowledging that
309 sexualities exist, more than just male and female, that all of this still exists. You need guidance. No
310 matter what, they can't stop you from asking the internet, like, eventually you can find a way around it,

311 it's easy to get to the internet. If you try and stop the child from going and finding the stuff out, they're
312 going to find out, and they're finding out too much for them, or the wrong thing. So if you guide them
313 and actually accept the fact that they're going to find out anyway, and if you guide them and help them
314 through it then they know (inaudible; background noise 00:39:51) so it's just acknowledging that exists.

315 **The school could do that, or pastoral system in school could do that. The problem with schools is**
316 **they have a real problem with the internet, don't they? The most blocked place that exists is the**
317 **school, you can almost get access to nothing in terms of online at school because they're terrified.**

318 Me and my friend were doing, in high school we were doing a cooking lesson so we had to plan a lesson
319 and basically take pictures, we typed in butter knife, the butter knife was blocked; we wanted to get a
320 picture of a butter knife, we couldn't get a picture of a butter knife. We had to get it emailed and we
321 had to copy and paste it.

322 **If you think, then, that everybody has got access to the internet and no-one is really taking**
323 **responsibility for supporting them in relation to that infinite knowledge.**

324 When I was at school it was gradually getting blocked as years went past.

325 **I think it's now almost entirely, which is kind of crazy.**

326 Like, in Year 7 you could go on Facebook at my school but now you can't. Loads of people created
327 their Facebook account in Year 7.

328 You shouldn't have Facebook in Year 7 so that's fine that is blocked; you've got to be 13 to have
329 Facebook, you're only 11 in Year 7.

330 But they were lying about their age.

331 Before Facebook was allowed.

332 **Can you tell me a bit more about learning too much, what that means, or finding out too much or**
333 **being overwhelmed, because that's really interesting?**

334 I can't personally remember, but for example a young kid, if they search up maybe a few words they
335 might be presented with porn and that's way too much for a young person on the internet. Or just maybe
336 things they're not ready for, I can't think of an example, but there are things that you find too much
337 about.

338 One time I looked up this cartoon that I was really into at the time on a school computer, with filters,
339 and on the top bar, right to the left, one of the characters, a child, was literally child porn of this
340 character. I really, really, didn't want to see that.

341 But did you look anyway because you're a child and you're curious?

342 I looked at it but I did not want to. Basically, I researched hoping that the filters would just re-set the
343 thing and I was like, thank God.

344 **So sex education is still an issue basically.**

345 AR: Everywhere I've been I've heard exactly the same thing. I naively think it's 2019, everyone is
346 learning wonderful things, but they're not. I just assume, in fact I think probably 40 years ago we had
347 more sex education in a way, it's as though people have become more-

348 But we can discuss it now anyway, you don't need to tell them.

349 AR: Your point about people can look up sex education, but you don't know what they're getting, do
350 you?

351 **One of the other things we've noticed going round is that because teenage pregnancy is not such**
352 **a problem now in that there's less numbers-**

353 I think social media has a part to play in that because you can date someone from across the world and
354 still talk to them, you can date someone and actually, like, only see them once a month.

355 Someone. Are we talking about bestiality here?

356 No.

357 I think social media (inaudible; multiple speakers 00:44:40) the levels of teenage pregnancies we see
358 because of the way in which the people can communicate from miles away or from right next door and
359 not actually have to talk to each other.

360 **One of the things I wonder when I'm looking at this and all these groups and people hanging out**
361 **and nightclubs, people hanging out, is there less actual face-to-face contact now than there used**
362 **to be 30 years ago?**

363 I think that's really interesting. I used to think that however, I've met loads of people through social
364 media and then met up with them, so I think it can be like a way to do that, more accessible, like for
365 example I met my current partner online.

366 I've also noticed that especially my age group, I'm 17, almost 18, and some of my mates turn 18 and
367 they don't go out drinking, we don't go out partying, we don't go out drinking; once a year we might
368 have a house party and get drunk together and that's, like, it but most of us go out, if we do leave the
369 house we go and have a coffee or something so we don't put ourselves in a position as often from my
370 friendship group and the people that I'm friends with and I know and stuff, not just autistic people,
371 neurotypical people as well, we don't do the whole 'go out drinking, get drunk and put ourselves in a
372 vulnerable position' as often as previous generations might have.

373 **Is there a generational divide here?**

374 I used to do that but I don't like alcohol that much.

375 I think there are more people my age going out, getting drunk, going clubbing and stuff like that than
376 there are people in their 20s.

377 **And your age is?**

378 16.

379 I'm 17 and I turn 18 end of January, that's the thing though, like, my birthday is on a Monday so I'll be
380 coming here and then one or two of the older ones, like ALICE mainly, is going to take me out for my
381 first adult drink and we're going to have one and then go home. And then my birthday party with my
382 family we're going to a pizza place and then we're going to the pub for a drink and then going home,
383 I'm not going out binge drinking.

384 **Maybe it's really uneven so there will be some young people who will be doing a lot of intense**
385 **partying – your crew – and then there may be other young people who aren't drinking at all or**
386 **it's much more online and networks or something.**

387 I think I do it to compensate for something because obviously I spent a lot of my high school years in
388 hospital, and locked away, so now I'm out of hospital I've gone a bit mad.

389 But then at the same time I spent a lot of my high school years in hospital, a lot of my high school years
390 segregated and I just feel like, for example I'm friends with 3 neurotypical people the same age as me
391 and when we talk about alcohol everyone's like, "Whatever." Going out and stuff like that and they've
392 not had any additional problems than I have had, but it's still a bit of a culture of 'alcohol, sort of, makes
393 you lose yourself'.

394 I think that's just tit for tat isn't it, because when I was young I wasn't a drinker but all my other friends
395 were, I think that's just about personality because there will be schools in other area where a lot of the
396 kids at 16 are drinking.

397 And how young your parents introduce alcohol.

398 I found with my friends, what I found from the people that I know-

399 **Your survey of your friends.**

400 Of the 200 people that I've met who are around my age I think there's more of a culture of, like, adults
401 introducing alcohol in tiny amounts at a younger age, cos, like, my parents when I was 11-12, my dad
402 would let me have a sip of his wine on a Saturday night and now I just don't care, it makes me go all
403 rough and stuff.

404 The more times you have bad experiences with alcohol you kind of want to do it less. There are
405 repercussions the day after and you don't feel good. I'm okay having a relaxing drink but when people
406 go out and want to die it's like, "No, it's okay." It's not nice.

407 (Inaudible 00:49:45) contribution to the amount of alcohol a young person drinks is because it's clear
408 to see the news; young people have access to the news, young people have access to other people and
409 their experiences and it affects you obviously, because if your mate has gone out, got drunk like in
410 Manchester, been roofied and then been date raped or something like that, and then you're just like,
411 "Okay, I'm never getting drunk ever," it's a bit like that, because you've got access to other people your
412 age who have experienced bad things and you don't have to experience them yourself to be like, "I ain't
413 doing that, thank you."

414 It puts you in a very vulnerable position.

415 I think that's why maturity comes into play though because I consider myself quite mature but I've had
416 quite a few bad experiences when I've gone out drinking and it's not gone quite to plan, but I would
417 still, if somebody offered, I would still go out with them 100% and I think that's where our maturity
418 differs a bit, because you're mature enough to know I'm vulnerable, I'm putting myself in a position
419 there where I know something could go wrong, whereas I don't think like that. I think I'm a bit more
420 immature in that sense.

421 I don't think it's about being immature because I would be the same.

422 **If I ask a question about sex, because one of the things I wonder sometimes, is sex less important**
423 **these days than it used to be?**

424 (Inaudible; multiple speakers 00:51:14)-

425 Who cares?

426 Who cares about what?

427 Sex! Some people.

428 **Is it something you care about more as you get older maybe, or you understand more as you get**
429 **older?**

430 Personally I feel like there are loads of different ways how you can have kids now, but I personally
431 think that it didn't matter too much about sex because there are many different ways how to have a kid,
432 you can have your own-

433 YW: So are you just equating sex with children, because that is a bit concerning?

434 That's one of the things that I noticed in one of the youth things was sex was shown to have children.

435 Sex is fun but also-

436 It also puts you in a vulnerable position.

437 It also puts you in a vulnerable position, you've also got to be confident with yourself. Another thing
438 that is going on in the world is a mental health crisis and lots of young people do not have the confidence
439 in themselves or stuff like that to be able to, sort of, expose themselves in that way to another person.

440 YW: Also, young people are so insecure that they haven't got the skills to say no, so it's kind of like a
441 double-edged sword.

442 I think casual sex is a lot more okay now than it might have been in the 80s or whatever.

443 **In terms of acceptable? What does okay mean?**

444 Acceptable, but it's still very male orientated, like, if a man goes out and has loads of sex and shags a
445 load of girls that's alright but as soon as a girl does it, or as soon as a girl speaks out about her pleasure,
446 she's considered a slut.

447 **It's interesting, I talked to some students the other week and they said in their halls of residence**
448 **there's a chart, like a star chart, a shag-o-meter, but that the girls and the boys both play the**
449 **chart so it's equal in terms of girls and boys both playing. So it's a chart, it's a competition, so the**
450 **girls can be involved in the game too but the game is the game and what they were saying is-**

451 What's the game?

452 **The game is having as many sexual partners as possible.**

453 Different sexual partners rather than the times you have sex?

454 **I'm not quite sure, I didn't ask the detail there, but you know. I think it's like conquests. What**
455 **she said is that casual sex is kind of assumed and easy at some level but actually having a**

456 **relationship is more and more difficult, it was really interesting what she was explaining, which**
457 **was it's a really weird landscape where somehow this doesn't matter at all and then it matters**
458 **more and more so that the actual relationship matters more and more and that it's too difficult.**

459 So sex is just for pleasure; relationship sex is like, "We're going to see each other after this so I hope
460 it's good."

461 **How do you get from one to the other?**

462 YW: I think as well, when I was growing up in the 80s, when I was young, sex was harder to get than
463 it is now, so when you're 18 in the 80s you kind of, like, go out and meet someone, even if you cop off
464 on a one-night stand you've got to be physically out. Now I could just go on the internet and have
465 someone come to my house, I don't need to leave the house to find someone to have casual sex with,
466 it's that easy. I'm not saying that I do, Ali! So it's easier to get casual sex now but I think because of
467 social media people are not quite sure what a relationship is, because there is so much that they should
468 be doing or they should know that it's just a minefield of 'what is a relationship'.

469 I am saying more for, like, the women I'm around, especially 'cos of, like, romantic films that are so
470 unrealistic, it's only when you don't get that you're like 'my relationship isn't good', do you know what
471 I mean, like, when you don't get that like that movie.

472 Yeah, they text me first thing in the morning - aww! If they haven't text me, they don't love me, it's
473 that sort of concept.

474 The conversation we're having about casual sex, it's really different here because my mum and
475 (inaudible 00:56:51) went to China for a holiday and there was a conversation about sex and they said
476 that they don't have (sl. one night stands 00:57:05).

477 **In China?**

478 Yes. There's a lot of them.

479 I wouldn't go round going, "Oh mum, dad, I had a shag last night."

480 **One of the other things that we talked about the other day which I thought was really interesting**
481 **and didn't seem to change since the 80s was how you learn about pleasure and whether it's**
482 **possible to learn about pleasure any other way than doing it, like learning from experience. And**
483 **then one of the real problems is often young people, they may not be heterosexual but often their**
484 **first sexual experiences, early sexual experiences are heterosexual, that they are learning sex or**
485 **the lucky ones who are wise, but then there's a whole process of not really learning about your**
486 **whole body that goes on, so learning about somebody else's body and how do people learn about**
487 **pleasure?**

488 Masturbation.

489 But that's so frowned upon for girls, you can't do that. You never see girls doing that, it's always lads
490 doing it, it's something that lads do, it's never something girls do.

491 Masturbate?

492 Yeah.

493 And if you do see it in films it's either 4 men or it's like a funny thing.

494 When I've always seen it it's always been a big thing and romantic thing. The more (inaudible 00:59:32)
495 about casual sex-

496 I was talking about masturbating.

497 What you were saying about casual sex is interesting because it feels like it never will be an option for
498 me to have casual sex; I was like (inaudible 00:59:48) never talked to in your life and stuff like that, I
499 couldn't meet up with someone online and I've never seen them before and I'm not 100% sure that
500 they're the person they're saying they are, so stuff like Tinder and stuff like that wouldn't be an option,
501 so I would have to go out.

502 I've met a few people online and me and my mum talked about it, which I'm really lucky I can talk to
503 her about stuff, but it's like, "You tell me where you're going, what you're doing, what time you're
504 getting there and what time you're leaving. Meet in a public place," and these safety steps that make it
505 accessible for you to meet people who are like, "You're cool, I probably talk to you on Instagram, I
506 would like to meet up but let's do it in a safe way for both of us."

507 I feel like for me personally, my mum, if I mentioned the fact that I was meeting someone from online
508 she would say no, so I wouldn't even be able to go with, "I'm going to be here at this time, I will call
509 you at this time." I would have to actually secretly do it so because I'm already secretly doing it, I'm
510 already in danger and the fact that it's someone I don't even know anyway and stuff like that. Not even
511 for myself because I'm older now, I'm mature and I understand, but even for my younger sister she's
512 going to have loads of things she wants to do but even my younger sister she's not really allowed any
513 social media, she can only WhatsApp from my mum's phone so our household is quite strict and strict
514 on that kind of stuff and that, but there is also the fear that what if she ends up trying to do something
515 because she wants to go and experience what other kids experience? Because there's a whole, like,
516 alcohol talk and going out, I've never done that, and personally I would like to experience that but I
517 also know how bad it can get, so I've never experienced it and I'm lucky that I haven't ever experienced
518 anything so bad but there is still the curiosity about what if I go and do it? I want to try.

519 I'll come out with you, I'll be your mum friend.

520 No, don't go out with her.

521 I would be so uncomfortable going out with someone that is younger than me; I have 3 younger siblings,
522 I am responsible for all of them, when someone is younger than me I instantly feel responsible.

523 I think there's this concept of age that always confuses the hell out of me because age, the way I see it,
524 I've always been quite mature, I've always got on with people older than me, one of my closest friends
525 is 58, I'm not even joking, we go shopping and we have lunch together and it's so lovely-

526 YW: Why is a 58 year old hanging out with a 17 year old? I would question that.

527 No, she's a secretary from my primary school-

528 YW: That's even more worrying!

529 She's also a family friend; she's known my family for about 20 years but I've always been friends with
530 her and then as I've got older, I call her my adoptive aunt but I've always got on with people much
531 older than me, so I think age for me is something that's a massive social construction because obviously

532 there's a number, there's how many years you've been alive which is then linked with all these laws
533 and legislation, but it's also about that individual and their cognitive ability, their understanding, which
534 shows their maturity and I feel like when people are like, nothing against you obviously because that's
535 how you feel, but when someone's like, "Oh, I couldn't hang out with someone who is a year younger
536 than me, they're such a child." I'm like, "But it depends on their maturity."

537 YW: It's not always about maturity is it, because? I know you're mature but I couldn't hang out with
538 you, not because you're not mature, because that age difference, our life experiences are different so
539 we can sit there and have a chat but actually what have I got in common with you apart from a few
540 things?

541 **If you think about the 80s that was the time when age differences were less critically looked at**
542 **than now, so there's examples in this study where there's maybe a 16 year old young woman and**
543 **a very mature man and now we'd look at that and we would think "Oh!" But then we might have**
544 **thought, "Oh!" but we didn't necessarily ... something changed.**

545 In 1977-ish, my nanna was 17, my grandad was 27, they had a kid together and it was just, like, go and
546 get a house, go and live wherever. But now I'm 17, if I dated a 27 year old and we went and moved out
547 and got a house, the law would be like, "Oh my God, what's going on? We need to protect this child."

548 **I think a lot of it gets called grooming now, so that's a new word really. When I was younger that**
549 **phenomena has always existed of older men and younger women, older men would drink and**
550 **have money and young women wouldn't have either, but it didn't have that name.**

551 YW: When I were young we used to walk past a house and go, "That's where Pervy Pete lives," or
552 whatever, we didn't know but it was just rumours, now you would know where your local paedophiles
553 are because you find them on the internet, but back in the day a person could have been innocent but
554 you'd be like, "No, he has kids in," or whatever.

555 What you said about age gap, the thing is I feel like between 16 and 21, maybe 25, there's so many
556 generations within that one little age thing because me talking to a 16 year old, I can't relate to that,
557 they experience things completely different to me, even the way they talk, that's a big generalisation.
558 I'm 20 but, just, my sister is 14 so she's part of that age gap but already there's a big massive age gap
559 between us even though it's only 6 years so I couldn't hang around with people younger than me
560 because I'm at that age where I'm sort of just getting (inaudible 01:06:02) a bit.

561 So could you hang around with someone who was 26?

562 I feel like I could.

563 Would you not think they're thinking, "I'm hanging around with a kid?"

564 That's the thing, someone older than me will still think that about me.

565 I think that's an individual argument.

566 The way I was brought up was to look after people younger than you and I'm like the oldest amongst
567 many people.

568 I think it's different people's mind-sets as well because for example my brother is 14, there is 3 years
569 difference between us and as we've grown up together I've been through a lot of shit. We're literally
570 friends now, there's still 3 years between us, even me and my cousin, she's like 10, we get on really

571 well. I've been through so much in my life already, I'm only 17 but these past 7 years the difference
572 between me and her treated me so badly that I can understand her position and then I can also understand
573 positions of people who are in their 30s or whatever, and it all depends on the individual themselves
574 because me and my cousin are going Christmas shopping and we can have a lovely day.

575 I can understand where my sister is coming from sometimes because I've been through that and I know
576 your parents because they're my parents, I know what you're going through because I've been through
577 that same thing, it sucks and I know that, and I can help in that time. But I don't want to hang around
578 with a person younger than me that's still in school and listen about school, I want to hang around with
579 someone that's not in school and has a different life.

580 YW: It's really interesting about that age thing because there comes a point in your life where you just
581 don't, age doesn't matter. On Saturday night I was counselling someone who wanted to commit suicide,
582 they were 29 with 4 kids, it didn't matter that age gap, I'm old enough to be their mum, it didn't matter.
583 I wasn't looking at her as, "Bloody hell, you're just a kid." I was thinking, "This grownup woman needs
584 my support." So there was a big age gap, it didn't matter.

585 I think it's different in the fact that you're trying to-

586 No, I would anyway because she's a grown up woman and she's got a kid same age as me.

587 In the context of more of a hanging out thing but if it was talking to someone and helping them-

588 YW: I would go out for a drink with her because I see her as another adult. I don't see her as, "You're
589 only 29, God." I just see her as a grown up adult so I think you get to an age where age doesn't matter
590 because you're adults and there's shared experiences. When you're young 4 or 5 years does feel like a
591 long time.

592 I don't feel like it does at all.

593 So you would hang out with 12 year olds and think you were connected fine?

594 Yeah.

595 That would piss me off, sorry.

596 No because I feel like if you've got, obviously I wouldn't go and date a 12 year old, that's disgusting,
597 but in the sense of friendship if you've got something in common, if you get on well, if you're friends,
598 like, it doesn't matter if you're 50 or 12 or 10, like me and my cousin, she's 10, we're friends, we're
599 not cousins, we're not just like, "You're blood I have to tolerate you," it's we're mates, we hang out,
600 we talk about different things. I explained to her about what LGBT stuff because she asked me and we
601 have that proper friendship; 7 years between us, almost 8 years between us but she's just another person,
602 she's had less experiences than me.

603 What do you actually think a friendship is? To me that would feel like I am just helping that person and
604 it feels like I'm more of a mentor.

605 **Maybe that's because you had family responsibilities.**

606 I do think it's cultural upbringing is my belief.

607 **You're responsible.**

608 I've always grown up with 'respect your elders' kind of thing and that's a big part of my background
609 and culture and stuff like that. Age plays such a big thing in culture, like in my everyday life.

610 I think it's really interesting that you're saying this because when I've been out and stuff, I make it seem
611 like I go out a lot more than I do. When I go out and stuff there's been times when I first started going
612 out where I wouldn't tell people my age because obviously if you're somewhere and you're drinking
613 you don't want to be like, "I'm 16. I'm 15. I'm underage." Actually I've got on fine with 20-26 year
614 olds, 24 year olds, 30 year olds because they would be under the impression I'm 18 but if I told them I
615 was 16 they would immediately get this view like this is really weird, like I shouldn't be talking to them
616 because they're looking up to me. I think if you didn't know my age and this might be different or if
617 you didn't like AMY's age I think maybe it would be a bit different.

618 Definitely. I think once you find out it's like wait, hang on; but sometimes I can also tell anyway just
619 from how they act.

620 When I meet new people, like, I don't ask their age, I go, "Oh, hi." If I'm, like, creating a friendship
621 with someone I'm just, like, "You're cool," we like the same sort of thing we get on well.

622 If I met someone and had lots in similar and then they told me they were like 16 I would be like, "Oh
623 wow."

624 Would you (inaudible; background noise 01:11:51)?

625 No because then I've already established that friendship; if I already knew I would be like this is a bit
626 uncomfortable for me, I don't know how to go about it, but if I've already got the friendship, like it's
627 not in real life kind of friendship but I have talked on Instagram and had things in common, when you
628 find out the age they would be so much younger than you and you would be like 'whoa', but I wouldn't
629 stop talking to them then.

630 **So this has all happened in the last 30 years as well, the whole age of consent being, you know,**
631 **codified and made equal, really criminalised as well when they made the age of consent equal**
632 **which was a bit of a historic moment and made it not just about heterosexual penetration, because**
633 **it used to be that it was very unequal in how it's imagined, let alone for men and women or you're**
634 **gay or straight. But they also did a big job around criminalising, breaking it, as well, whereas it**
635 **was kind of, very rarely would anyone be prosecuted for having a sexual relationship with**
636 **someone younger-**

637 AR: For instance, the age of consent in Spain is 12. It doesn't mean people are having sex.

638 I watched a film-

639 The age of consent in Japan being 13, it's more province based almost, so different areas have different
640 sub-governments which each have their own laws surrounding sexual contact with minors and the age
641 of consent. The average is about 16.

642 Some places don't even have an age limit.

643 I think there's like 3 countries.

644 Some countries will be like 'no sex before marriage'.

645 AR: I think the whole thing about criminalising it is really interesting.

646 **But also the relationships between a youth worker or as a teacher and a pupil in the past; certainly**
647 **when I went to school I remember there were always teachers who were going out with students,**
648 **that was always known, but now that would be completely wrong and you would be sacked and**
649 **possibly prosecuted, so that's a really significant change.**

650 I can relate to creating friendships with people younger than you and older than you because my sister's
651 4 years older than me, she's 28 and I'm 24, so there's nobody younger in my family anymore. I have to
652 relate if I'm talking to someone who is younger than me because I've been through some shit too, so if
653 you talked like a 12 year old, "Wanna buy this Minecraft skin?" I play Minecraft but it's not very often.
654 But the mannerisms seem to be very hyper and loud.

655 **I guess online people make relationships across age boundaries.**

656 The whole 'going through so much shit' because I feel like I've been through a lot, so I think the
657 protective in me comes out with kids. I'm like, "Why are you so serious, you should be more immature
658 and have fun?" I always tell my sister, "You should not worry about this; go and have fun." Because
659 I've been through so much shit I'm like, "You shouldn't need to..."

660 I think that's being the oldest as well of siblings.

661 **Can I just ask another question which is related, but then you say your answer which is, what**
662 **makes you grown up now? Because back in the 80's it was: job, house etc.**

663 My cousin, I'm going back to her because she's the one who is closest to my age; my other cousins are
664 7, 6 and 5, they can hardly talk, let alone communicate with me so I don't get on with them that well,
665 but she's had struggles at school, we're pretty sure she's also on the spectrum, like she's 10 and she's
666 been through a lot of shit already just like I had at 10, and obviously I've been through more than her
667 but I don't feel like I need to protect her because I'm like, "I'll give you a bit of advice, love, but I'm
668 hopeless at it as well. Let's just go and have fun together, let's just get on well."

669 Pain changes you.

670 **It's very interesting about what makes you age. So what makes you grown up?**

671 I feel like for me I'm 22.

672 **Ancient, then.**

673 I think in your head you never really feel grown up but I think for me, I guess what you could say could
674 classify as being grown up because I'm never going to own a house any time soon, I'm never going to
675 afford it, but I think for me it will be having more of a full control over your life and the decisions you
676 make, I think that's, like, the biggest one, because obviously when you're younger there are other people
677 like your parents, your carers, whatever, making the decisions for you; tell you what to do, what you
678 wear, whatever, so getting more grown up is when you start making those decisions for yourself and
679 taking responsibility for them I guess, like being more responsible about what you're doing and actively
680 seeking out to do those things because you want to do them.

681 If we're talking about it in that sense then I've always had the most control in my household, it might
682 be an autism thing but I've always controlled what I've worn since I've probably turned 14, controlled
683 what I've worn, what I've done. I make decisions for myself and I've always been super-independent;
684 obviously being autistic and also having other conditions put a limit on the stuff you can do for yourself,

685 like, massively. But I feel quite grown up; I probably do sound like a baby but I'm 17 and I do all these
686 amazing things, like I've made the decision for myself to come to youth groups and be in a safe space,
687 I've made decisions for myself to do youth combined authority stuff, to get into politics, to do climate
688 change stuff. I've done so much in the past 2 years that was all my choice, I took the responsibility,
689 things have gone tits up, things have gone awful but it's never been anyone else's fault, it's been within
690 my control.

691 I feel as well, you would feel more mature if you work more because the stresses of a job, it's a lot to
692 take on and then the ways that you have to (inaudible 01:19:26).

693 There's also an accessibility thing though because I have Tourette's, I couldn't get a job, I've tried to
694 get a job.

695 It's only one aspect.

696 I've got Tourette's syndrome and the second you say anything like autism or Tourette's or something,
697 I've gone for interviews and I've been given trial shifts and then I've been given the job and then once
698 I've got the job, "Oh by the way, I've got Tourette's syndrome and autism." And they're like, "Okay,"
699 and then I've been given no shifts, which is against the law.

700 The thing as well you're only 17 so it's not like this has happened, in 5 years' time you'll be confident.

701 **You could be running the country in 5 years' time, I wouldn't worry about it. I have no doubt.**

702 If the revolution hurries up it will be faster than that.

703 **What will the revolution be like?**

704 We just go to all of the (sl. bourgeoisie 01:20:33) and we eat them; we eat the rich.

705 When I was 15 I thought I knew it all, and in my head I thought I am grown up and forgetting my
706 parents, I'm not going to listen to them because I know best and it's only now, as an adult I look back
707 and I think, oh my God, it was naivety that made me feel like that.

708 YW: Absolutely, I think when you leave school at 16, you're 16, you've left school, I know it all, but I
709 knew diddly-squat.

710 When I look back like some of the things like, you know, drinking, doing things you shouldn't be doing,
711 I think I was a child, I should not have been doing that, but at the time I'm like, "No, I'm an adult."
712 Whereas it's only when you look back as an adult you think oh my good God.

713 YW: If only my parents knew how vulnerable I made myself.

714 I said I'm independent but then I ask my mum about everything, like I would double-check and I'm
715 like, "Okay, so, this has happened. I'm planning on doing this. Is this okay?" And she's like, "Yeah, go
716 for it, that's what I would do." And I think it's because I've learnt her way of looking at things and her
717 maturity – she's 41 years old but I've learnt how she does it and that's made me more mature. She
718 doesn't drink when she goes out, well she does, but she more drinks in the house, I always looked up
719 to her for how-

720 YW: Let's have an evaluation.

721 **Thank you very much.**

722 YW: Let's do the evaluation: whilst we've been together, one thing we have learnt from the past 5
723 weeks doing this project, one thing we've learnt that we're going to take away with us? I'm going to
724 start with AMY.

725 I have learnt that sadly things haven't changed as much as they have in the last 30 years; I think there
726 was a lot of restrictions put on by Section 28 and the fact that it didn't get abolished until the noughties,
727 so I think that massively had an impact on how we haven't been able to evolve as much as we needed
728 to. It's sad for me to see that the era that my mum grew up in had very similar circumstances, similar
729 education than the one that I've grown up in and I'm still growing up in.

730 GEMMA?

731 Yeah, I'd agree, like, I've learnt that the issues that women faced then are sort of the same now but I
732 think I've also learnt that it can actually be quite powerful and empowering to talk with people who are
733 in a similar position to yourself as a young woman, because I feel like we've talked about some really
734 deep things over the last few weeks and that's been really nice to sort of know that you're not on your
735 own with these things if that makes sense, I feel like that in itself can be quite empowering.

736 I've learnt that in some ways living in the 80s was really bad, especially as a young woman with
737 lesbianism, who are gay and bisexual, but I've also learnt that in some ways it was better than it is now.

738 **Can I just say from just the conversation with you guys today I feel like I've learnt loads that I**
739 **would like you to think about and especially the conversation about age actually, I think is really,**
740 **really interesting, and experience, maturity, and I think there is something profoundly different**
741 **about this world in the 80s and now, and it's quite hard, it's quite intangible to try and work out**
742 **what it is, but I thought what you described was really interesting and I will think about it a lot**
743 **and work on it.**

744 YW: I've learnt that I loved growing up in the 80s and I know nothing's changed because I've been
745 through all those other decades since and I know nothing's changed, but it will, some things will change.

746 To be fair you did have George Michael, like what could be better?

747 Today I did learn about how Manchester was just so big and protesting against Section 28, but yeah,
748 I've really enjoyed looking at the articles from a long time ago from when I was born.

749 I learnt a lot; I don't retain information very well, I have the memory of a goldfish. It's just been nice
750 to be here even if I haven't retained all of it.

751 YW: Even if you retained some that's alright. Thank you.

752 I have confirmed that nothing has changed and I've also learnt that I actually have quite a lot to say on
753 a lot of things.

754 I've also learned not much has changed which is bad because 2020 is in a few weeks, and we still
755 haven't got flying cars and teleportation.

756 AR: On my final note I would like to say I've learnt loads; I like coming here on a Monday so I'll
757 probably just keep turning up. And without sounding really sentimental I think coming here just makes
758 me feel-

759 Young?

760 AR: No, it doesn't make me feel young, it makes me feel hopeful. It makes me feel hopeful because I
761 think you're all so interesting and thoughtful and thinking about things and I just think, "Wow, that's
762 it, the human beings are just going to carry on."

763 YW: They're a lovely group.

764 Thank you.

765 YW: Thank you for coming; thank you for bearing with us for the past 5 weeks



