

MAN09 Laura
RT 25/5/89

Age 20. ESW, in 2nd year of a maths and physics degree, did science 'A' levels at school. In her year off went to SOUTH ASIA and worked in London, lives in a student house in Manchester with friends, no religion but member of [REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATION AND IMMIGRATION CAMPAIGN], heterosexual.

Appearance: Tall and large - long dark hair. Dressed very casually in a track suit, hair tied back in a ponytail. Confusing attitude in the interview, started talking in great detail about her course and I had real trouble pulling the interview back to issues of sexuality, when I did she was a bit less forthcoming. She wasn't used to talking about these things and it felt more like therapy than interview.

SEX ED: None from parents and a minimal amount from school (sex life of frogs). Didn't learn much from friends either as her friends weren't seen to be that interested in sex as they were in the top stream. Good bit on how intelligence and achievement by girls are labelled as unsexy and unfeminine at school.

KNOWLEDGE:

AIDS: Politically active so knows 'the line' on AIDS but doesn't really perceive it as having any personal effect on herself eg. doesn't consciously practice safe sex. Has used a condom in the past but for pregnancy not HIV. Some interesting discussion of how being an assertive woman doesn't necessarily solve problems of power in an individual relationship.

RELATIONSHIPS: At school she was labelled as not the type to go out with anyone, including by her own mother. This was a traumatic time for her. Felt her virginity to be a great burden. During her year off went to SOUTH ASIA and travelled on her own. The greatest change for her was the disappearance of peer pressure and she was in control for the first time. Lost her virginity in SOUTH ASIA because she wanted to. At University she has had two sexual relationships. One with a man less experience and younger than herself. She felt that this was good for her as she was able to determine which way the rel. progressed sexually and thus able to develop her own sexual identity. Now she is in a relationship with an older man who 'doesn't like foreplay'. She says that she hates herself for being in the relationship but isn't able to stand up to him, and finds it all sort of compelling etc. He is older than her and patronising towards her. We had an interesting chat about the gap between feminist theory and practice.

SEXUALITY: Had some hang ups when younger about her body (overweight) and not being attractive to boys in contrast to her sister who was very popular. Didn't sort out her own sexuality until she was at University, but all this is being eroded by the attitude of present boyfriend.

PEER GROUP: Interesting stuff on m/c bright kids peer group at school - 6th form. Good interview, very long.