

SS101 RT 16/03/1989

INTERVIEWER: First of all can you tell me what you are doing at the moment? You know, you said you were at college and stuff. What are you doing?

INTERVIEWEE: English Literature, Maths and Communication Studies.

INTERVIEWER: Right, and what are you planning to do with it all?

INTERVIEWEE: I want to do a communications degree and then go into advertising.

INTERVIEWER: How come you decided that. How do you know already what you want to do?

INTERVIEWEE: Because I know what I don't want to do.

INTERVIEWER: Which is what?

INTERVIEWEE: Anything else. I did originally want to go into journalism but I decided that it wasn't, it was too exploitive of other people, in a sense where they take somebody who hasn't got the financial resources to sue the newspaper and exploits them. And the chances of me going to work for something like The Guardian or The Independent, a quality newspaper, are slimmer by the minute and I don't want to work for The Sun or The Daily Mail. I couldn't handle that so I thought, well what could I do instead and advertising just appealed to me. It was pretty weird because when I was speaking to my careers officer about communication studies and was it suitable for advertising, she said most ex-journalists go into advertising.

INTERVIEWER: Do they. So the ones that get disillusioned exploiting people end up doing that?

INTERVIEWEE: That's what I thought, if I did it all before....

INTERVIEWER: You'd get a head start on everyone else. So, do you know where you go to do that, do you go to University or the Poly?

INTERVIEWEE: Polytechnic.

INTERVIEWER: Have you applied for anything?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, I got two C's from from [UNIVERSITY].

INTERVIEWER: Do you think you should get those?

INTERVIEWEE: Well if I don't I shouldn't be carrying on.

INTERVIEWER: How is it going at the moment then. Are you enjoying it?

INTERVIEWEE: I do enjoy it, it's just hassle and loads and loads of work. The communications project has got to be handed in after Easter. I've been working on it since last June.

INTERVIEWER: What's it on?

INTERVIEWEE:Well how easy it is to get in..... You have to put it into a form where it's useable for other people. You can't just do a thesis on advertising so I decided to do a careers package because it's the most simple and appropriate thing to do.

INTERVIEWER: So it's also quite helpful to you so you can find out exactly how to get into advertising at the same time?

INTERVIEWEE: Well that's what I did for and I didn't know how so I thought well, if I don't know I might as well do something helpful for other people as well. I started off doing a nutrition one but it became really...disillusioned with that when

people go 'I need to go on a diet, I've got to lose at least a stone'. And you say 'alright then', and I sat down and pulled everything out that was suitable for them,..... their own bodily weight and the next time you see them they'd be hiding behind a cheese burger.

INTERVIEWER: No you're probably not getting much back from doing that.

INTERVIEWEE: Not only that, but the market is swamped with this slimming magazine and that.... so that was one of the main reasons why I decided to do an advertising package because there are not that many of them available. And also they don't tell you what you need to know. They tell you nothing about your lifestyle that you would expect or any tricks that might help you to get in. It's just 'you do this, you do this, you do this, and write to this place'.

INTERVIEWER: Did you get good careers advice at School?

INTERVIEWEE: At school, no.

INTERVIEWER: Did you get any?

INTERVIEWEE: I did but I went to an all girl's school.

INTERVIEWER: Which school did you go to?

INTERVIEWEE: [NAME OF SCHOOL]. And the careers officer we had was brilliant for some girls in a sense that she didn't automatically encourage them to go into secretarial work, but she was over forceful. She didn't agree with women becoming secretaries or nurses or things like that, it had to be doing a man's job, proving it. Without being too stereotypical that's sort of you know, she had a couple of spare..... everywhere. And I just didn't agree with it because she was imposing her views on other people at an age when they are so easily influenced. So I won't be going to see her, I'll do my own careers research. And then when I went to.....I got ALICE and she's brilliant.

INTERVIEWER: That was the careers advisor at.....?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. She also worked from careers at Crown Square. She's one of the main ones in there as well and she tells you what you need to know. She doesn't say, 'well, what about this, or what about that', she tells you how easy it is to get in.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think it was important for you to get a job that wasn't a traditional female job, a secretary or a nurse or something like that?

INTERVIEWEE: Well I'm no good at typing and I am definitely no good at taking orders from other people and I think the National Health Service would close down if I became a nurse so.

INTERVIEWER: Probably before you get there!

INTERVIEWEE: I haven't got the patience and I couldn't be a teacher because I certainly haven't got the patience with children. The little ones that can just about talk and you can teach them properly yes, but I haven't got the patience that our teachers have.

INTERVIEWER: Do you feel the pressure there on you as a young woman to go into those types of things, is it more difficult for you to have a career in something that isn't traditionally female?

INTERVIEWEE: No because I went to an all girl's school and my mum said 'you do what you want'. She didn't say 'well I think you should do this, and I think you should do that and I don't want you to go to University because I think you will

grow up and away from me', and all this lot like one girl at college is having. Her mother is frightened that her daughter is going to grow up, whereas my Mum said, 'I wish you all the luck in the world', because she didn't achieve, so she's not going to hold me back. She doesn't force me to do anything I don't want to do.

INTERVIEWER: That's encouraging, that's really good.

INTERVIEWEE: I get on pretty well with my Mum so.

INTERVIEWER: Do you get on well with your mum?

INTERVIEWEE: I didn't use to but I do now.

INTERVIEWER: Why was that, was it the age difference, growing up a bit and stuff?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, it's trust. She didn't use to trust me for pretty good reasons.

INTERVIEWER: Why was that then?

INTERVIEWEE: Just because I was defying her. Not like in a moral sense, but at school I was really bad. Not bad enough to be put in a home or anything like that but I used to do things without thinking about the consequences of what I was doing. I didn't think it was bad to stay out until half past two in the morning because I knew I was alright. But my mother didn't know. And sometimes I came in too quiet and she didn't know if I had come home at all.

INTERVIEWER: Even more terrifying.

INTERVIEWEE: So there used to be all hassles about that and in like trying to stop her worrying she would say, 'right I want you in by such and such a time'. It was something pretty ridiculous like half past nine. No way. So I wouldn't, I came in when I wanted to, and she finally saw that nothing had happened to me, I'm not stupid, but I did stupid things like accept lifts from strange guys, but.

INTERVIEWER: I've done that too.

INTERVIEWEE: But I mean three o'clock in the morning when you're freezing and you've got no taxi fare and you're walking. Admittedly by a safe route and any help is good.

INTERVIEWER: Is needed, yes. Do you think you don't do, you are less, like putting yourself into situations which might be dangerous, do you do that less now?

INTERVIEWEE: Oh yes, because I know you can't get away with it. When you, when I go out now nobody looks twice because I look about thirteen so it's not so bad. I can get on the bus for 12, I know I could. But the way that I used to dress. I mean, now I always wear long skirts and stuff. I used to wear little skirts, fishnets and everything and I used to get all hassle then. I mean I could be standing at the bus stop and cars would be slowing down and looking and all sorts and you think that's just life. You don't pay no attention, you just feel you're looking good but then a bloke pulled up round the corner and got out the car and started waving to me and I said, 'right, forget it, I'm not taking any more chances'. This was like 3 o'clock in the afternoon so I thought no, I can't do that and my mother was going on so, 'it's the way that you dress, it's sort of encouraging it'. I said, 'I don't care. Why should I be dictated to about my style of dress just because there are perverts abroad'. Then I realised that you can't play the game that way.

INTERVIEWER: It's you against the world and you're quite small against the rest of it.

INTERVIEWEE: I mean I thought, just safer about what I do. I would rather not drink as much and get a taxi home you know, not go out as often and make sure what I am doing things right or always be in company with somebody else because I don't like going out on my own to be quite honest.

INTERVIEWER: Yes. Have you started hanging around with a different group of people since you sort of changed your ideas about that type of thing or is it that your friends have grown up with you in that way?

INTERVIEWEE: Well in a sense I don't know anybody from the school that I went to because they're all at university, different universities and things like that and all my friends are mainly men anyway so that's not an issue. So we just sort of go places. It's not like this is my best friend. You just get to know a lot of people and you all meet up together and you all sort of chat and argue and everything and then you go back home again. It's not a case of this is my best friend, you're going off me and I can't stand..I prefer well, my boyfriend is my best friend so it's not a problem because he wants to be with me and I'm not seeing my friends anymore because he's my friend.

INTERVIEWER: So has it made you not have, you don't spend much time in female company now?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes because ...(?)what's in college.

INTERVIEWER: Right, so you've got it there again when you want it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I mean there's all the girls that I go around with have got their own problems, but they're sensible enough to be able to cope with them. Most of them are in steady relationships so it's not an issue of we'll all have to get together and go out because we could do during the day if we want to. It's just social.

INTERVIEWER: So you have a steady relationship with your boyfriend then?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: How long has that been going on?

INTERVIEWEE: I'm not entirely sure, I think it's a year at the end of this month.

INTERVIEWER: How old are you at the moment?

INTERVIEWEE: Nineteen.

INTERVIEWER: Nineteen. That's quite a long time for...?

INTERVIEWEE: I suppose so but we don't argue so it's lasted.

INTERVIEWER: Before you started seeing this boyfriend did you have different types of relationships or were they much more casual?

INTERVIEWEE: I had one serious relationship before that and one which would have been serious if we hadn't, if he hadn't have been hung up on this girl he'd been seeing for 2 years before, and I couldn't handle it and I knew that he still liked her and it caused us to argue so we broke up because it wasn't working and it wasn't meant to work and because we broke up when we did I am going out with GRAHAM.

INTERVIEWER: So it's positive for you. What do you count as a serious relationship. Is that the difference between sleeping with somebody or not sleeping with them?

INTERVIEWEE: I wouldn't sleep with someone I wasn't serious about.

INTERVIEWER: So what's serious to you?

INTERVIEWEE: Serious for me is knowing that if I did sleep with him I would still see him afterwards.

INTERVIEWER: Knowing he would stay?

INTERVIEWEE: Otherwise what's the point?

INTERVIEWER: Has that happened to you before, sleeping with somebody and not seeing them the next day.

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: You wouldn't put yourself in that position

INTERVIEWEE: No I wouldn't because I felt bad enough the first time I did it and it was like after 4 months. We were both our firsts and I thought, oh no, this is awful and if we had finished then I would have died but, but not only of complete embarrassment but of not knowing what to do and not only that I wouldn't have slept with him if he hadn't have been a virgin. For some reason because it was a case of both going through it together and I didn't want him evaluating me with all the other people he'd slept with, no way.

INTERVIEWER: I don't blame you, so was that, can I ask you a few questions about virginity and what people think about it. When you were at school was it an issue then - who was and who wasn't?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. I was one of three virgins in...

INTERVIEWER: And it was people who were and who weren't?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, the other two were special cases. I was...

INTERVIEWER: Special cases?

INTERVIEWEE: Well one girl was like, she just was literally frightened of getting involved in a relationship because she'd been really protected as a child. She had big brothers that said you can't do this and you can't do that, also her family were a lot older than her. Her eldest sister was, she was sixteen and her sister was 32. So she had seen every single one of her family's marriages break up and that really frightened her so that's what I mean about a special case. Not just because, OLIVIA was, she's brilliant, she's the most adorable girl you could ever wish to meet, but she's fourteen stone and that puts a lot of people off and not only that, she wasn't interested.

INTERVIEWER: Was that probably because of her view of herself?

INTERVIEWEE: Not just that. I mean, she had mad crushes on people but they would always be the wrong people where nothing would ever come of it because the people she adored were very looks orientated.

INTERVIEWER: Right, it always happens that way.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, I know. I felt so sorry for her.

INTERVIEWER: Did you feel a pressure on you then, to lose your virginity, it's something that you had got to get rid of or was that seen as, just in terms of like I mean, say 10 years ago it would have been the opposite way round. If somebody wasn't a virgin that would be a very sort of taboo thing not to be a virgin, it could like destroy a woman's life.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I do admit it has changed considering all of, I wouldn't even say teenage pregnancy, I would say child pregnancy that's going on, I mean

when I was in second year a girl was pregnant, I mean she was thirteen when she gave birth and I'm thinking no way, this can't be happening because I wasn't even thinking about things like that then.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, you don't think of yourself as a woman yet do you?

INTERVIEWEE: I didn't and when I hear about girls of 13 or 14 that are sleeping with blokes of 20, it sickens me, because you are just not old enough to be able to cope with it and it's just horrible. It's like paedophilia as far as I'm concerned. Whereas I suppose when you're that age you think, I've got to be grown up.

INTERVIEWER: And do you think people did it to be grown up, as a sign of maturity?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, I really do think so. I mean, I suppose I'm not average, I was nearly eighteen before I lost my virginity, but in a sense I think that was because of the way I was educated about sex, it was never told to me, 'you can't do it'. My mother said, 'do it if you want to, it's not true you can't get you know, just be careful. Make sure it's somebody that you really care about and if you have got any problems or any questions come and ask', and I always could do. Like she wanted me on the pill from about the age of fourteen for her peace of mind. There just wasn't any need for it. If she'd have told me, 'you can't do that', or put some religious thing on it the more likelihood I have done it.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, as rebellion.

INTERVIEWEE: I mean it's the just the way that I've seen it in other families where the mother gets really strict about it or the father is even worse.

INTERVIEWER: So do you think a lot of the girls who have sex at a young age don't do it because they actually want sex, they've got sexual desires and they want to for that reason or do you think it's external reasons, it's not about their bodies and wanting to do that?

INTERVIEWEE: I think it's a combination. I mean at that age, with me, 12, you start having these strange feelings which you are not really quite sure what do with, I mean it never occurred to me to do it. I mean I was still climbing trees and playing football when I was 12 and 13.. I had boyfriends but they weren't proper boyfriends but you know they weren't anything serious they were just best friends that we kissed sort of thing and then you get like, 'Are you a virgin?', and you have to say 'no'. It's really embarrassing, you get all six girls putting their hands up and they've never even been kissed by a bloke, never mind anything like that.

INTERVIEWER: It's like a stigma isn't it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes it's a stigma because as being a virgin is a sign of, when everybody else is doing it you wonder why you're not. I mean when I was about seventeen I started to wonder is there something wrong with me because it just never even entered my head to do that sort of thing and I did start to like progress to, from just kissing, I was thinking I don't like this.

INTERVIEWER: You weren't happy with it?

INTERVIEWEE: No, well it was because of the person that I was with or the people I'm with, it was all garbage basically. 'I'll never hurt you', and all this lot. And I kept thinking, I don't believe you. The more somebody offered me something the more suspicious I grew. Whereas my little sister, she's the exact opposite, she's sixteen and if a bloke offers her the world, she thinks, oh, you

know, if he said, 'I'll buy you a limo', she'd be expecting one eventually. And she is likely to get hurt.

INTERVIEWER: Do you then trust, say, probably not so much now because you're that much older, but say when you were about sixteen did you trust boys of the same age as you?

INTERVIEWEE: Well to a certain extent yes.

INTERVIEWER: What did you trust them with?

INTERVIEWEE: I trusted them to be faithful to me and if they weren't that was the end of it. If it was like, 'it didn't mean anything', it did to me forget it, because I'm not the sort of person that would go out and follow somebody around. But if I never saw any reason not to trust somebody, then I would do; if that trust was broken then there was no point as far as I was concerned.

INTERVIEWER: When you, you were saying you went to an all girl's school was this a Catholic school?

INTERVIEWEE: No, it's a mixed one.

INTERVIEWER: It's a mixed school. What type of sex education did you get at school?

INTERVIEWEE: In the first year we talked about periods, just like the basic knowledge.

INTERVIEWER: In biology?

INTERVIEWEE: No, it was a special thing. All first years were brought into the hall, it was like you had to have a letter to be excused from it, not to say you could do it, most people turned up and it was really, I mean even when you are 11 or 12 years old you do know about it because it's already started to happen to a lot of girls and then they were saying like it's all about sanitary towels and things like that but they said, 'Oh no, we talk about tampons in the third year dear', and it was pretty well all out of date and they waited until fifth year before they talked about contraception.

INTERVIEWER: By which time?

INTERVIEWEE: By which time the girl who was in second year and had a baby, she had just had her second child so it was a bit late for her. I suppose with it being in keeping with the legal age, you are supposed to be sixteen before you can go on the pill, that's why they do it that way but it shouldn't be like that, it's too late for a lot of girls.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think if they had been given it earlier at school it would have made a difference to those girls do you think..?

INTERVIEWEE: I think so, yes. Because there was a girl in fifth year and she didn't know it had happened to her, that she had slept with her boyfriend until after she actually had done because she just didn't realise what was happening because she had not been really taught about it. She'd been taught about sex, but she didn't think that was what you see on television, but what you see in a biology textbook was what was happening to her. And luckily, you know you can work it out from the date of your last period when you ovulate she had just finished a period so it was alright but I had to do that for her because she was saying, 'oh no, I'm pregnant', 'but when was your last period', she goes, 'it was after that'.

INTERVIEWER: So she didn't even realise that if you have a period after..?

INTERVIEWEE: No she had just finished her period when she slept with her boyfriend and there wasn't enough time for her to know because she hadn't missed a period, but I worked it out and said, 'you should be alright', but you have to wait until you've missed a period because there's not enough hormones in your body until six weeks after you conceive for it to show up on a pregnancy test despite the ones they sell you in the shops.

INTERVIEWER: You seem pretty well versed in this, have you researched this as well then?

INTERVIEWEE: Well yes, because I had seen it happen to other people, and I thought I'm not going to get caught out like that. I mean you get the myths, 'oh you can't get pregnant the first time'. Like she's....

INTERVIEWER: Did people actually say that?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, 'oh you can't do it, you can't get pregnant the first time'. 'Oh, don't be stupid'. The thing has happened, it's not like the first one goes free.

INTERVIEWER: Buy one new and get one free, yes.

INTERVIEWEE: I must admit though, I mean when I was thirteen my period was one and a half weeks late and I didn't know why and the crazy things that were going through my mind, I've not done anything but can you get pregnant from public toilets and things like that. I mean, I knew that I hadn't done anything but you start to wonder, because there's no reason why you shouldn't come on and I was so relieved when I actually did come on. And I told my Mum and she says, 'you've not been doing anything have you', and I said, 'Mum I wouldn't even know what to do'. And she was like, she didn't shout at me or anything like that she just said, 'oh maybe it's just one of those things', but before you could set your watch by it so it as like really unnerving when it did happen and what had happened was I hadn't eaten for two weeks because I was ill.

INTERVIEWER: So when you were in fifth year and you had lessons about contraception, what sort of contraceptives did they tell you about?

INTERVIEWEE: Durex mainly. The different types of pill. She did bring in an IUD but she said it wasn't suitable for girls of our age. I mean, I know what happened to my mother, it wasn't suitable for anybody.

INTERVIEWER: What happened to your mother?

INTERVIEWEE: She was fitted with a Dalkon shield.

INTERVIEWER: Did she get compensation with that?

INTERVIEWEE: She might do. The trials are still going on but I remember watching a programme on it, a documentary type thing, which is where I get most of my information from, and I said, 'Mum, what type of coil were you fitted with?', and she goes, 'Oh a Dalkon shield or something'.

INTERVIEWER: And she didn't know that it was dangerous?

INTERVIEWEE: Not at the time, no. She just thought, she goes, I said, 'what shape was it?', and she said, 'shaped like a fish', she's Pisces, she remembered that. I said, 'you had better watch this programme', and it was about six women in America who had died from it, and I remember my Mum having to go for an operation when I was about six and she nearly died from it and it was because of this IUD.

INTERVIEWER: And was it still there. Did she keep it afterwards?

INTERVIEWER: No. It wasn't that it had come out but all the scar tissue, it left loads of scar tissue when it came out and that caused an infection, it caused cysts on her fallopian tubes. They had to cut them out and they had been left that long she got used to having heavy periods, and she was off for about 6 weeks and then she thought I have got to go and see about this because they were getting longer and longer.

INTERVIEWER: The same thing happened to my Mum. She got thyroids from her coil but she knew what to do about it.

INTERVIEWEE: My Mum didn't; she ended up having her fallopian tubes cut out then she got an infection in her fallopian tubes which made it even worse and like I was the same as my Mum, we just thought everything just dangled, there wasn't anything there like keeping it in place and the infection, where they had been. She didn't realise there was all the stuff around it and neither did I because they don't show it on television. So that was about 3 years ago, she got..... neck of her womb so she had to have a cone biopsy for that, and this is all because of the Dalkon shield.

INTERVIEWER: So you're now quite suspicious, you're going to find out about contraception before you use it.

INTERVIEWEE: Well, I would have done anyway because I don't like the idea of something being inserted inside me and being left there. I would rather take the pill because they've been tested more.

INTERVIEWER: Do you know about the risks of the pill, I mean did they talk to you about that when they....?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, my doctor was really good about that.

INTERVIEWER: And what did they tell you. He, she?

INTERVIEWEE: He. What did he do, he didn't just say yes or no, he asked me how old I was, he said, 'are you actually sleeping with anyone', and I said 'no', so he said, 'you do realise that once you've slept with somebody it's a lot more emotional, and if you do break up you will go through a much harder time'. That's the sort of doctor my doctor is though, and he said, 'I don't like giving it because it causes lots of emotional hang-ups, you can get depressed on it, it can make you put on weight but it should be just temporary'. He goes, 'if you have antibiotics or anything like that, you'll have to remind me that you're on the pill because I might forget', and he just warned me about, he gave me a lecture, well not a lecture but a talk on VD and things like that.

INTERVIEWER: Had you been told about that before?

INTERVIEWEE: Well, whenever a word that I didn't understand came up I would look it up. Say like sexually transmitted disease, so I would get the medical encyclopedia out and read up on it just because I don't like not knowing about things.

INTERVIEWER: So, they didn't tell you that in your lesson about contraception?

INTERVIEWEE: She did mention it but by this time the AIDS thing was sort of like only just beginning. I mean I had heard the word, but I didn't know, I thought it was like a slimming tablet. Then I thought no, it can't be because why would people be so worried about it, then I realised how it was spelt and I looked it up

and even then it was quite old, I think 1984. And in the encyclopedia there was a big column on it, because I didn't think there would be much on it because I looked it up again recently and it's got quite a lot on it even though it's a pretty old book.

INTERVIEWER: Did they talk to you at school about AIDS in particular?

INTERVIEWEE: When it became a big issue.

INTERVIEWER: Which was when, when did they talk to you about it?

INTERVIEWEE: Just before the Government leaflets came out.

INTERVIEWER: Right and what did they tell you?

INTERVIEWEE: Well it was still amongst, when they weren't quite sure exactly how infectious it was, like the categories have all been sorted out now. Things like they knew you couldn't get it from anything other than passing bodily fluid, but it wasn't made exactly that clear because you can catch other diseases like hepatitis and stuff like that from food and cups and things like that. I wasn't exactly sure so I asked and they explained it, but I don't think it had really been explained to them. I mean that was a difficult time because nobody was really quite sure, but I think it would be better now.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think people were confused by the information they were given?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, then, but this was like three years ago. So..

INTERVIEWER: Can you think back to the time it first came out, you obviously found out quite a lot about it but think about your friends and people you were at school with, what was they're sort of view on it?

INTERVIEWEE: I think they thought you could catch it from walking next to somebody who had AIDS. In the end all the girls said we have got to get this sorted out one way or the other so if anybody had like an encyclopedia at home we brought them all in, and we read through them and we noted all the similarities and we believed the similarities and disregarded the differences. And that was it, but I don't think many girls would do that because they're not that interested but we made it an issue.

INTERVIEWER: Can you tell me what they actually told you at school. The things they went through about how it's passed.

INTERVIEWEE: It was just the way you can't get it. You can't get it through drinking cups or toilets or by shaking hands.

INTERVIEWER: Did they talk about sexual transmission of it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes but it embarrassed a lot of the girls so it was kept short. Especially because we had a large Asian community at school, so it did seem pretty irrelevant to a large part of the school because they just weren't doing things like that. There aren't any known drug abusers at school so it wasn't a case of that, they mentioned it anyway that you can get it from, well they said taking drugs and I said, 'what do you mean?' and they said, 'by borrowing needles', and they don't like talking about it because they believe it can encourage it.

INTERVIEWER: Yes but the thing is you don't have to be injecting drugs to have slept with someone who's slept with someone who injected drugs. I mean that's the idea.

INTERVIEWEE: That's what came out later that they said don't sleep with any people who are junkies and things and people who have got AIDS, it was later when that programme, that really humorous programme, I've forgotten what it was called, First Aid Kit or something, when that came out I believe that helped a lot.

INTERVIEWER: Did you watch that then?

INTERVIEWEE: I watched some of it, not all of it because it was always on when people our age would be out.

INTERVIEWER: Not very good was it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, I mean if you don't show it on a Sunday afternoon when there's nothing else on or early evening, they showed it like when everyone who's likely to come across AIDS would be out.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, coming across it probably as well.

INTERVIEWEE: Exactly.

INTERVIEWER: Did you think that the way they dealt with it in that programme was good?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. Because like with a male, not knowing how to put it on, I hate the word condom, Durex, and like when it fell off, will I get AIDS. I thought that was brilliant. Because, like when I missed the pill it suddenly occurred to me that I didn't know what you did with one, and come to think of it neither did my boyfriend at the time. And he was convinced you had to blow them up and I said I'm really sure that you don't because how would you get it on, and he said, 'but I saw a programme where they were showing all these and they were blowing them up', so I said, 'it still doesn't seem right' and anyway, so we just thought we would have to leave it until it's safe again but I was convinced that you didn't and he was convinced that you did, but because he was a bloke I thought he would know more about it. I believed him and now I know that I was right and he was wrong.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think programmes like that will make condoms more acceptable to people?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I do.

INTERVIEWER: I mean,...

INTERVIEWEE: Before it was a taboo word, you just didn't say it. I mean a lot of nicknames have disappeared. I mean I can't remember the last time I heard words like, well I can't even remember the names for them.

INTERVIEWER: Jonny, and things like that?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, French letter, I always thought a French letter was literally a French letter. Because like it was always Durex in our house.

INTERVIEWER: Did your Mum talk to you about things like that, protecting yourself from AIDS. Did she talk to you about contraception, did she talk to you about AIDS?

INTERVIEWEE: No. I told my Mum about it. Well she wasn't sure because like she doesn't watch many news programmes and things like that. She read the leaflet, but she thought it wasn't really saying it. She said, 'do you know anything about this?', and I said, 'I know a bit, there's quite a bit in the encyclopedia'. She said, 'Is there? But that's ancient'. I said, 'but it's been around a long time', and

we sat down and discussed it all. And she watched the first AIDS programme and she was laughing her face off all the way through. And she goes, 'you should have seen it, it was brilliant', and she like she knew all about Durex and the diaphragm and everything about that but she knew very little about sexually transmitted diseases because she hadn't come across them so. Like she and my father were pretty monogamous, well she was anyway, so she like had never come across them, like she didn't need to know, but she does now.

INTERVIEWER: So you had informed her?

INTERVIEWEE: Like she saw me becoming interested in things like that and it wasn't, 'Oh that's a dirty book', or anything, or 'you shouldn't be looking up things like that, you're not old enough to know about that'. There was never anything like that.

INTERVIEWER: So you never had a negative view of your body in that way?

INTERVIEWEE: No, it was deliberately done so I wouldn't. My mother and father were hippies though at heart, they wouldn't admit it, but they believe in like everything being natural and growing up without inhibitions. I mean I didn't realise exactly how much thought they had put into bringing us up until about a year ago when I thought all the things they had done compared to all the things that other people's parents have done.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think you are untypical then?

INTERVIEWEE: I think I am untypical because I didn't lose my virginity at an early age and I was never told it was wrong. I wanted to know about contraception whereas other people were told, but I do think that I would represent 10% of most girls because, I don't know, I think a lot of people are really confused, especially people about 13 or 14.

INTERVIEWER: I mean, I think they are given sex education so late as well that once you've gone past that stage and haven't done anything about it, it's quite a dangerous thing to do. When you're actually being sexually active and you don't know and you don't look for the information, it sets a trend in the way you're going to behave anyway.

INTERVIEWEE: Well it is, because, how can I put this, a lot of girls I know who had sex when they were 13 or 14 are not at all together now, they are sort of really mixed up because they have gone from one relationship which they weren't emotionally mature for to another, and things have just got worse and they had a big spat at school set off between me and RENEE because I had just gone on the pill and RENEE had been on it for like 2 years because she was like sort of, she had an AIDS test, her and her boyfriend did just to be safe because like they were in a long term relationship now, but he said, 'if we're going to get serious about this and before we sleep with each other I want to know'. So they both had an AIDS test and I thought, Christ, that's one thing I don't know if I would be able to do that, ask someone to have an AIDS test before I slept with them.

INTERVIEWER: Why. What do you think it means?

INTERVIEWEE: Because I would be pretty shocked if somebody asked me to have one because I'm careful. You can get around it though.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think it's saying something about somebody then?

INTERVIEWEE: I think it is. I would be more likely to ask somebody to use Durex than ask them for an AIDS test. But there's ways around it. As long as you can tell whether somebody is lying or not. Because you can ask then how many people they've slept with.

INTERVIEWER: Would that make a difference to you now. Would you sort of take on the thing that perhaps sleep with less people and you'll be safer?

INTERVIEWEE: Well I agree with that, but I'd rather not sleep with anyone.

INTERVIEWER: It's not a bad thing to be.

INTERVIEWEE: Well it's just because there's too many users out there, both male and female.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think as far as you are concerned that's the biggest risk then, coming from people using drugs?

INTERVIEWEE: No, not drug users. I mean emotional users. Drug users as well. I think that's the most stupid thing in the world you can do. And I'm lucky that I'm frightened to death of needles. That's one reason why I could never do it, because the sight of a needle and I'm running but the thought that, I don't believe in abusing my body in that way at all. But I can understand why people do it. If you was questioned..... it's as simple as that because you never have a chance to sort of like have a reasonably in depth discussion about sex and I believe you should know somebody before you do it.

INTERVIEWER: You and your boyfriend, did you talk a lot before you had sex with him, did you talk a lot about it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes because AIDS was an issue. It wasn't just, he didn't say could you have got AIDS from anybody, it was, he'd been in a relationship for 4 years from the age of 14 and he was completely, I mean he had only slept with 2 people before he met me and I had only slept with two people before I met him and our first partners were virgins so we had a lot in common. And that's how it came about to discuss it because we had a lot in common. I am not afraid of talking about sex and he was. He was really embarrassed because he comes from a really strict Catholic family where they really daren't talk about it. And I think that's one of the biggest mistakes you can make because he lost his virginity when he was 14 which was very young.

INTERVIEWER: I mean, it's different for boys.

INTERVIEWEE: Well he admits that he was too young and he didn't know what he was doing. I mean, I think the first time he ever did it and he actually had an orgasm, he thought he'd broken it because he wasn't that sure, because he said it's different from doing it yourself. He said it just feels totally different and it really frightened him and he said he was too young, but in a way he was glad he went through it because he's not as at all. He gets more worked up than I do about things being sexist.

INTERVIEWER: That's nice.

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know. I get fed up with things like that making things awkward to say, just so it includes women. I don't see the point. I mean I do see the point but somethings are just too extreme. I mean it's all Ms. I mean I put my name just Miss because I don't like being associated with those type of people, because I know some real extremists the once a day people. I just I mean

understand them and sympathise with them but I don't agree with them.

INTERVIEWER: What does feminism mean to you?

INTERVIEWEE: Feminism? I agree with feminism but I also agree with the wife's choice of being able to do what she wants to do. There's enough pressure from men without pressure being put on a woman by another woman. If a woman wants to stay at home, have children and be a housewife then it's perfectly up to her because if that's what she wants to do then that's what she's going to do no matter what anybody else says.

INTERVIEWER: Do you feel you're pressured to achieve?

INTERVIEWEE: I'm not pressured to achieve because I want to achieve anyway. I mean I wanted to be a mechanic when I was 5. And that's just because there weren't any girls my age, all my friends were little boys so, I mean that was just the way I was brought up. I haven't got any brothers. It might have been different if I had brothers but I was the eldest child and my father adores me, he still does, so he was sort of like, so he made sure that you know like he taught me like, when he found out I got battered at school.

INTERVIEWER: Did you get bullied at school?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes but that was only because I didn't believe in fighting. I don't know I just never did because we were a peaceful family.

(break in recording)

INTERVIEWER: Can I carry on asking you about your relationship with your boyfriend. Before you had sex with him you talked openly about what you both wanted out of it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Is it that type relationship that your pleasure in terms of sex is important and you talk about that. You want pleasure out of it as well?

INTERVIEWEE: Well as far as I'm concerned there's no point otherwise. If he's not, basically the way I look at it if he's not interested in my wishes and my demands as a sexual partner then he can do it himself, but a lot of women can't do that. There is still an element of like, think of England, and you're doing it because.....

End of first side of tape.

INTERVIEWER:If a bloke did finish with you....?

INTERVIEWEE: Well he wasn't worth it because he wasn't interested in the sort of relationship that I wanted. I mean even from the age of about 14, I had lads finish with me because I wouldn't sleep with them, and to me that was justification of not going out with them.

INTERVIEWER: That's fair enough.

INTERVIEWEE: But I saw a lot of girls give in. I didn't think they were wrong and I don't think that girls who do have an active sex life, sleep with a lot of people are necessarily slags, they may just like sex a lot. I mean, I'm not a virgin.

INTERVIEWER: Was that the case at school, when people who did sleep with a lot of people were seen as having a bad reputation, called things like slags.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Was that by the girls as well as boys?

INTERVIEWEE: Well yes. I mean I had the opposite, I was called a slag by a bloke. He was one of my best friends, he was like 3 years older than me and he kept calling me a slag because I was a virgin. It was a joke, it was like calling somebody who was 3ft nothing, lofty, but the problem arose when other people didn't realise it was a joke and he ended up standing up and saying, 'this is a virgin'.

INTERVIEWER: Did you feel worried about getting a reputation, was that always like a danger?

INTERVIEWEE: Well no because things like that don't bother me personally.

INTERVIEWER: But for other people?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, I mean it didn't both me because I've always been taught as long as you know you're alright nothing else matters, but it comes to a point when it does. I mean I was never one that thought popularity was a major issue, basically because I didn't have many anyway. But there was a lot of girls who were shy or didn't get on with people as well as I do because, I tend not to do anything to get anybody's back up, not deliberately, thinking I'd rather not talk to people who I know I'm not going to get on with and these days I make it quite clear that I don't like them. I say, 'will you please leave me alone', because I only sort of like try and get on with people that I know I really do not like, and there's very few people that I don't get on with, I will only be sort of like two-faced towards them if I've got something to gain, or something to lose by that situation.

INTERVIEWER: Do you mean that being comfortable in yourself is important?

INTERVIEWEE: Well yes. I hate people being dishonest with me, so I'm always honest with other people, I mean it's a case of treating others how you would like to be treated yourself and all that.

INTERVIEWER: But you think that's not common with most girls your age, they don't have that confidence that they can realise those things?

INTERVIEWEE: No I don't think they do, otherwise there wouldn't be so many people that have got a lot of problems. I mean not only that, I can look at things that are happening to me from an objective point of view. Most people can't.

INTERVIEWER: So do you think that AIDS, I mean, when you started thinking about having sex was AIDS already there?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: So it always been part of what you think about sex, AIDS has been involved in that.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes definitely. I mean I was lucky in that sense because I was sexually active after it had all been blown up and everybody was frightened of it and the rest of it and then as it died down more facts came through rather than the moral hype that had been promoted by it, then you could take a step back and say, this is safe and this isn't and anybody who goes out with a junkie anyway is wasting their time and I have always felt that.

INTERVIEWER: So you know you were talking about that you would be suspicious of having too many relationships with people. Do you think that's to do with AIDS or to do with just what you want?

INTERVIEWEE: It's just what I wanted but AIDS helps it. I think AIDS will eventually make people more monogamous because they're daft if they don't.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that's a good thing?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: In terms of having a trusting relationship rather than not doing things that you want to do?

INTERVIEWEE: Telling people you can't have sex use Durex is stupid. It really is. There is no need for me to use Durex unless I forget my pill. Because there is no way that JAMES could have got AIDS because the first person he slept with was a virgin, and the second one was as careful as I am. And I make a point of making sure that, I not only know how many people, like when I slept with CALVIN before I started going out with JAMES, I knew that he had been going out with ANITA for 2 years and he had been faithful to her and he didn't touch her for 18 months. I mean that indicates what sort of person he is. And I also know all the girls that he slept with and what sort of girls they are. If I didn't then I would be more cautious.

INTERVIEWER: So having this relationship with JAMES at the moment going well, but if you start to become unhappy with it or whatever, would knowing about AIDS and knowing the risks about AIDS make your choice more difficult about what to do. Would you feel pressured to remain in that relationship just because it's safe?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't feel pressured to remain in a relationship that I wasn't happy with but it would mean, basically, I don't want another sexual relationship with anybody else, not for a long time. If me and JAMES split up tomorrow, I would not jump into bed with the next person who took an interest in me because sex to me is special. It is something that two people who are about each other do, not two strangers that happen to be blind drunk do. I know others do it, I know how things like that can happen, I was in a situation once when I could have done it because I was drunk, but I never got that drunk. That's one of the reasons why I never get drunk.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that drinking is a dangerous thing in that respect?

INTERVIEWEE: Well it's not just sex, anything can happen when you're drunk because you just don't know what you're doing. I mean, a bloke that I know, he's what, 32 now, and when he was 26 he got absolutely out of his space, stoned out of his head and ended up bumping into two pushers who, what did they give him, they injected barbiturates into him and that was before AIDS and luckily he hasn't got it, but he said, 'I was so stupid'. Another thing that has made me more aware of things, is that I don't just have friends in my own age group, so all my closest friends are 48 years old and that to me has made a difference because, like my father's friends are my friends, he's not as old as that but I get on with people and I always have got on with people older than me. My best friend when I was 14 was 19. That comes from living in an area where there weren't many girls, so.

INTERVIEWER: You had to look for friends in other places.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. Where we lived this girl was older than me, 1 year older than me, she's got two kids now and her life is so completely different to mine. I

mean when she was my age she already had her first son and I just cannot imagine being in her situation at all.

INTERVIEWER: Do you plan to have kids?

INTERVIEWEE: Not until I know I could cope, because it's not fair. I mean, my Mum got pregnant with me when she was 19 and we suffered because of it. Because there was never enough money for things like, I mean we made do because we had to, but it really used to annoy me. Things like, 'I really want that, I'd really like it', and I'd have to save and take me 6 months to buy it, and you'd get people who'd either, whose parents had planned or get to a stage where they could provide for their children in the sense of luxuries. I mean, my first computer, I saved up for 2 years to get it. I had to plan what I wanted and I would say to someone I really want this and next week their parents would have bought it for them. And I don't want my children to ever be in that situation. Not to be, I don't want to spoil them. I mean there's a girl I know, she's got a £300,000 house but she gets £4 pocket money and anything else she works for her parents for, and she is so down to earth and she is level headed because her parents have brought her up well. Her elder brother is really spoilt, he's not got a brain cell between his ears, and all his girlfriends are complete and utter bimbos, and worse than he is and the sort of girls that go, 'oh hi', the English version of Miss America and I feel so sorry for those girls, but they're happy so that's all that counts. There is no way I would sit down and preach to them about being a feminist and they've got to do this and you shouldn't let men treat you like that, because if they're happy that's all that matters.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think because of what's happened with AIDS, has stopped you from doing things or exploring your sexuality in the ways that you want to?

INTERVIEWEE: No I mean I'm just careful about who I sleep with, I'm not the sort of person who does that anyway. I mean, I'm impulsive with some things but it's usually chocolate.

INTERVIEWER: A lot safer?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, well it's not but I understand priorities. I mean, I got hurt enough before I had sex and I saw people who got hurt even more while they were having a sexual relationship with somebody and I thought if I'm just about coping with breaking up with somebody now I don't think I could cope with breaking up with somebody I had sex with. And it is, it's a lot more emotional. Now, I'm capable of dealing with it, and that's because I'm about 4 years older. And at the moment I'm blessed with an almost perfect relationship. I mean he makes a point of not arguing..... say, if I'm upset or in a bad mood it worries him, and we just make a point of never arguing.

INTERVIEWER: That sounds really nice. That's great. As far as you know then, from what you know about the risks of AIDS, is it that you would use a condom then?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Do you know things like if oral sex is dangerous?

INTERVIEWEE: No it's not, as long as you don't, well.....but I wouldn't advise.....because it's not very good for you anyway.

INTERVIEWER: It's not very nice either.

INTERVIEWEE: No it's not but, like there's nothing wrong with it. I mean it's perfectly natural, it comes in the natural order of things if you're that way inclined, and a lot of people are. I mean some girls go, 'ooh, you don't', and there's other girls that go, 'well, why not'.

INTERVIEWER: So I mean do you have oral sex with your boyfriend?

INTERVIEWEE: When I want to.

INTERVIEWER: When you want to, right.

INTERVIEWEE: I mean it's not regarded as something like hand in hand with every time, I mean it is for him but..

INTERVIEWER: He's prepared to make it equal anyway?

INTERVIEWEE: He makes it more than equal, but when me and JAMES first started sleeping with each other he had a lot of problems with regard to sex. Not sexual hang-ups, physical problems, in the sense that, how can I put this? It's a good job he's not here, he'd kill me.

INTERVIEWER: Any way you like.

INTERVIEWEE: What happened was when he slept with LAURA, the girl he was going out with before me, he got a bit too carried away and his foreskin split and he was really frightened of it happening again, so when we first did start to have a sexual relationship he couldn't keep an erection and because I was so understanding about it, and I said, 'look it's going to take time, you've not done it for 5 months'.

INTERVIEWER: And the last time he did it, it was a big trauma.

INTERVIEWEE: It was. I mean it was because she was inexperienced as well and I mean, like he still has problems now, if we get too passionate shall we say. The best thing to do with that, it happens if we leave it too long. So if say we've been too busy and we've left it for about a week or so, we use Durex so it's sort of like there's no stigma about using Durex.

INTERVIEWER: He doesn't have a thing like, it stops him feeling anything and you know the sort of typical line you get about?

INTERVIEWEE: Well no because he still enjoys it, he may not enjoy it as much, but he never doesn't. And it doesn't matter because he's never had to use them for more than 7 days anyway. That's another thing a lot of girls believe, that it's 2 weeks if you miss a pill and it's not, it's 7 days.

INTERVIEWER: I'm not on the pill anymore so I don't really know.

INTERVIEWEE: It's a new one, what is it now, 7 days if you miss it and the first 2 weeks. But if you miss the pill in the last week of your course then you carry on and you don't have a break and then it's still 7 days, but if you have your week break then it's 2 weeks.

INTERVIEWER: You're a mine of information. I'll come to you next time I have a query.

INTERVIEWEE: That's from the family planning clinic.

INTERVIEWER: Do you go to the family planning clinic?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. They're brilliant there.

INTERVIEWER: Have they given you a lot of information?

INTERVIEWEE: Well only when I ask for it. I mean it's sort of like, I've got a very special doctor, he's one in a million. He doesn't just hand you over a prescription every time you go there, he believes if you don't need one, he won't give you one. And he is prepared to spend more than 5 minutes in a consultation if that's what you need. But he's a rarity. So I used to get a lot of my information about the pill and stuff from him. He insisted that I saw the woman doctor in the surgery when I had a smear. I said, 'why can't you do it?'. He goes, 'because', so I said, 'because what?', I said, 'I trust you, why can't you do it?', he goes, 'I don't want to'. He said he just doesn't like doing it because it's so uncomfortable. Not for him, but for the women and he said, 'I'll make you an appointment for you to go and have your smear', and I went to see the woman doctor and she said, 'are you having sex?', and I said 'no', so she said, 'well come back next time when you get your new prescription because I'm not giving you a smear if you're not sexually active, because it will be embarrassing for you. It will be uncomfortable and it will hurt because of the embarrassment'. She said, 'when you get more used to the idea of sex you become less embarrassed about it, opening up your body to people, then I'll do it'.

INTERVIEWER: That's nice of her.

INTERVIEWEE: And she was brilliant. And like I'd never heard of that before.

INTERVIEWER: You usually don't know anything about it until they've done it.

INTERVIEWEE: I mean I don't like them. I think it's the strangest thing in the world. INTERVIEWER: Having an internal?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. Once when I had one, I've only had two, the woman cut my cervix with a clamp, and I was in agony.

INTERVIEWER: Oh don't. That's horrible.

INTERVIEWEE: It is, but it's not going to stop me from having another one.

INTERVIEWER: When you've been up there what type of advice did they give you. Did it depend on what you asked?

INTERVIEWEE: The first time I went there was because, it was horrible. I missed my pill so we used a Durex. The Durex split and I panicked like mad. I phoned up....., I said, 'what can I do?', and she said, 'when that happened to me I took more than my usual dosage of pill'.

INTERVIEWER: Was that a friend?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, so I said alright. I do that and I took too many and I was throwing up everywhere. So I went down to the family planning with KATE, a girl, she sort of has periods like twice a year because she is so incredibly underweight but she can't put weight on, so like she's always forgetting her pill and she's not really bothered about it because she has periods so infrequently it's really difficult for her to get pregnant but she's careful in a sense that she won't sleep with just anybody and I'm always going down to the family planning clinic when she thinks she's pregnant because she never knows when to expect a period and she came down with me because I just didn't know at all. And we went in and it was brilliant. She was fantastic this woman, I had to give all this information to the woman on reception who was completely and utterly She was horrible. She wanted a reason why I had to see the doctor and why it was so urgent. I didn't want to tell her but I told her anyway because I wouldn't

get anywhere without it and I walked in and the doctor said, 'I hear you've been popping pills like Smarties', and that put me completely at ease. That's how good they are.

INTERVIEWER: What did they give you, the morning after pill?

INTERVIEWEE: No there was no need because.

INTERVIEWER: You'd already given yourself a dose?

INTERVIEWEE: She gave me a leaflet on the morning after pill. She said, 'what you did was pretty stupid', so I said, 'I know that, I've been throwing up'. 'Well don't worry about that, it's quite normal. You won't come on because you've put too much hormone in your system so don't be surprised if you don't, and I think there's a one in two billion chance that you're pregnant', she said, 'but if you don't come on, come back and we will sort something out then'. But I came on, so.

INTERVIEWER: What would you do if you were pregnant?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know. I'd have to face it when it came. I don't know if I could have an abortion because I don't think it's fair. In my situation I would be prepared to give up what I want to do for a child because JAMES is adopted and he could have been aborted. That's probably the only reason and I would rather wreck my life and do the best that I can for that kid rather than destroy it because it could be the next Einstein. But I don't disagree with women who do have abortions because it's not right for every girl. We had this big debate on abortion like it was the students against the David Alton Bill and a woman from Christian Union came up and she had a photograph of this thing that vaguely resembled a fetus and she was showing it to people.

INTERVIEWER: Yes I know the type.

INTERVIEWEE: And I stood up and I really slagged her off. She was one of those really timid women and she said, 'well, how would you like it if you could have been aborted?', and I've got a friend who was adopted and his parents didn't tell him until... JAMES has known since he was a baby. He went to a Catholic school where they say you've got two mothers, your mother and Mary Mother of God and all this lot and he said, 'I've got three'. And he's always known that he's adopted. But this lad found out when he was 19 that he was adopted and it really wrecked his life. He didn't just slash his wrists he slashed his artery. He has 51 stitches in his arm, so he was really serious about what he was going to do. And that's because he wasn't told when he was little that he was adopted. Now that's something that people don't think about when they say you should have it adopted if you don't want to keep it, because you don't know how people will deal with it. I mean that's probably an isolated case but what if it's not... JAMES handles being adopted really well, because he's got no intentions of finding his mother, his natural mother, because his real mother, well she'sabsolutely crazy. His sister found out because she works in a psychiatric ward and she said that schizophrenics live in a perfect world where everybody else is trying to create one. And she treats people at hospital who aren't as bad as his mother, and he deals with it all really well. She nags him like hell because he's not conventional and she hates him, well she doesn't hate him for it, but she can't understand it, she thinks he's trying to impress somebody.

INTERVIEWER: In what way is he unconventional. In the way that he dresses or?

INTERVIEWEE: In the way that he dresses, in his attitudes, in the fact that he loves music and he likes playing the guitar and all he ever used to live for was being in a band. Just because he used to dye his hair and things like that, and it just wasn't part of her world. She made a far bigger issue of it than my parents did.

INTERVIEWER: Did your parents never get angry with you about looking different?

INTERVIEWEE: They did but I always used to use it to my advantage. My mother hates pink hair and if I ever wanted to do anything as regards my appearance I used to dye my hair pink first. But she's proud of me because I'm an individual, a lot of mothers would probably insist that I walked behind them in the street and not be seen with me, but she's really proud because I'm not the sort of person who would get dragged along with the rest of society and that's because of the way she's brought me up and she sees it as being a sign that she's brought me up well.

INTERVIEWER: I think it is probably very true.

INTERVIEWEE: It is. I believe it is anyway.

END OF RECORDING.