

LJH36 15.12.89

17,1; lives with ma, divorced and 18 year old brother; Ma [EDUCATIONAL ROLE], pa retired same; jh36 no work; ESW; no religion; doing French, Italian, History A levels, has 9 GCSE; hetero, one relationship (3 weeks) no intercourse.

Attractive, flowing pre-Raphaelite locks, blonde on top. Dressed in small offwhite knitted, fitted cardigan and beaten about jeans, neat laced boots. Parents separated "as long ago as I can remember" but lived in the same house for some years. This she found very difficult, appreciated the idea, that the children would have easy access to both parents, but the situation was very tense. It was a bit of a relief to her when they decided to get a divorce and he moved out (c 5 years ago). Parents get on well now and pa is often around to visit, but she does not have much of a relationship with him, not much to talk about. When she was younger he drank a lot which made it difficult for her to have a relationship with him. She feels that her brother has more of a problem in his relationship with his father. [We talked for a while after the interview and some of the information here comes from that rather than the transcript. This young woman had given out some questionnaires for us and we talked a bit about the research after she had been interviewed. [REDACTED], so there was some general chat around broader issues.] She gets on OK with her mother, spends a lot of time with her. Has good relationship with her brother, tho it has got closer recently since he has just started doing A levels.

She was willing to be reinterviewed and also keen to try to find some older young women for us. She has had one relationship which she defined as sexual on the questionnaire, but found it more difficult to say why when asked. It was a bit bcs it was a boyfriend/girlfriend relationship, they did some sexual things, but I mentioned these possibilities to her and she said that it was bits of each. This was a tendency she had which we discussed after the interview. She had difficulty as she put it defining things, relationships, etc. would throw the question back to me, what did I mean. I said each time that I was looking for what she thought about whatever it was. But it became clearer when we were talking about her image of herself, and what others thought of her (which she was totally unable to answer) what was going on. She could not give a 'definitive' definition of these things bcs she always seemed to be able to see the alternative, or even the opposite to any statement she might make. So for example in talking about self image, she would say that if you thought of any characteristic you might say she had, she would also have the opposite at some times e.g. shy sometimes and outgoing at others. And she could go through a whole list of potentially opposite characteristics in this way, so she could not pin it down enough to give a definition.

That also operated in terms of other aspects of her life or projecting into the future, I think she talks in high probabilities but feels obliged to point out that the opposite in fact might happen. She does not plan to marry, from her experience does not think much of it, but cannot say for sure that she will not. She would like to have children, but does not envisage it for at least 6 years (live abroad for a year, university). We did have quite a conversation re marriage, and it being almost the only alternative for young women, and needing it for the security (tho of course you could see from the divorce rate that it was not secure). I'm not sure if all of this was whilst recording, or some later. I asked whether it was emotional or financial security she was thinking of. She said of course a bit of both, but mainly having someone there who you could rely/depend on. Tho a piece of paper is no guarantee of that. She asked whether men who left their wives and children were obliged to pay anything to them.

She was interesting and thoughtful about AIDS, but although informed and concerned, not that well informed, for example thinking it passed through blood and sexual

intercourse being the main way that that happened. She had a vague idea about the HIV/AIDS distinction, knew that there was one. She felt absolutely sure that young people did not do anything to protect themselves from AIDS bcs they did not see it as their problem, as having anything to do with them. More information was needed. Early campaigns useless bcs they gave no information. Sex ed at her school was not up to much, tho there seemed to be quite a bit of it. It was not well taught, videos old fashioned, mixed and the boys were immature and made comments, most people felt they knew it by that stage. They did at least try to do something about relationships, but again did not seem relevant to their lives.

She does not take risks in her life she thinks, does not smoke bcs she does not like it tho she has smoked hash. Does not think that is particularly risky. She and none of her friends would go for injectables, tho some have tripped on acid etc. "If you think walking home alone late at night is risky, I do that". I asked of course if she thought it was risky, and she said she did, but what else could you do. Safe sex she saw as non penetrative sex, I almost had to prompt on condoms. She felt she would ask a man to use a condom, would not want to sleep with someone she could not talk to, or come to some agreement on these issues. But recognised in the behaviour and experience of her friends that this might not be easy, and she may not be able to do it. Has a small group of close female friends whom she has had from when she first went to secondary school. Does not have any male friends in that way, tho she knows some of her brother's friends.