

LJH10 18.4.1989

Hailey

Q: ... information. I - I notice actually that your birthday's exactly the same birthday as mine.

A: Is it? Ah.

Q: A few years between us... quite interested in that. One of the things that we're interested in in this study that I'm doing is asking young women about relationships - how they think, what they think about them, how they feel about them, and so I was going to ask you which relationships or relationship is the most important to you?

A: What, do you mean like say if you're going out with a boy?

Q: Well any kind - what would be an important relationship to you?

A: Having one with your mum is important but having one with your boyfriend which you know is gonna last I think is really important. 'Cos it shows how much you love each other and you can bring out your feelings more and everything, and if you know that you're gonna be with him for a long time then you can show how much you love each other.

Q: How would you know that you're gonna be with somebody for a long time?

A: Well you don't really know, because like I'm going out with this boy, I've been going out with him for a year and three months, but I thought that it was just gonna be a short relationship but we just took it day by day and we're still together.

Q: Mm. How do you enjoy that relationship?

A: I love him.

Q: Yeah? Still okay after all this time?

A: Yeah. We have had little arguments but he's still there.

Q: How did you meet him?

A: At LYNN's party.

Q: Yeah?

A: Yeah. This was in '87, New Year's Eve party. I was coming -'cos the party was just finished and we was coming out with my friend and he was out on the wall and he tripped me up but I turned around and I - I swore at him, and that was it.

Q: Well, if that's what you did.

A: I go, what you fucking doing, and I just walked off, and then he called my friend the next night and he goes... friends... and he told me to phone him and everything, so I phoned him the next day, it just went on from there.

Q: Have you had other relationships before this one?

A: Yeah, but not - not so intimate, just sort of like short ones really.

Q: When you say "intimate", intimate personally or intimate physically or both?

A: Both.

Q: Both.

A: Both.

Q: Yeah.

A: So like the other boyfriend I went out with, you know when you're in primary school, things like that, immature little things, sort of things like that.

Q: Mm, yeah. Is - is he older than you or the same age?

A: Yeah, he's nineteen.

Q: Just a bit older. And the relationship - does it include sex?

A: Yeah.

Q: How did you decide - or did you decide that it would -

A: It took ten months, ten months - he wasn't pressuring me or anything 'cos I didn't really want to, but if - you know, he was just gonna leave it at that and if I decide it's up to me. He's not gonna force me or do anything against my will or anything like that. By the tenth month -

Q: - you decided.

A: Yeah.

Q: Was - was that the first relationship that you've had?

A: Yeah.

Q: How did you feel about it?

A: On top of the world.

Q: Yeah?

A: Yeah.

Q: You enjoyed it.

A: Yeah.

Q: Do you still?

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: These are difficult things to talk about, I know. I'm asking you difficult questions. Did you - when you - when you first started making love, did you use contraception?

A: No.

Q: Do you now?

A: No.

Q: No?

A: Nothing.

Q: What makes you decide not to?

A: We do talk about it sometimes, we did talk about it, but he goes that - 'cos it's a bit too much hassle, 'cos he thinks it's too much hassle and everything, and he thinks that it's got more - more chance of the condom bursting or something like that, that's what he thinks so he goes no. 'Cos he goes he knows when he's coming so therefore he can come out of me.

Q: Mm. What, are you - are you happy with that or -

A: I trust him so -

Q: Mm. It's a little bit risky that method though, isn't it?

A: I know. But he goes that if it did come to the point he'd rather prefer me to go on the pill or something but I don't wanna go on the pill.

Q: Mm. Why's that, are you worried about it?

A: Yeah. And I think it causes health risks and things like that...

Q: What about other things, you could put a barrier inside, couldn't you, you could put a cap in.

A: Mm. I haven't really thought about that. What, would I go to the family planning and -?

Q: Yeah, you could go to family planning, you could go to Brook Advisory, and they would fix you with whatever form of contraception you wanted. I mean if you're worried about it -

A: Yeah.

Q: 'Cos I mean - when you say you're worried about it, are you worried getting pregnant presumably?

A: Yeah. 'Cos I've spoken to my mum about it, she was talking to me about it, she goes that she'd rather me go on the pill than me getting pregnant... (bell)

Q: ... what methods are available and what might be suitable for you and which wouldn't. If you're worried about the pill... 'cos it is a bit chancy, isn't it?

A: Yeah.

Q: I mean do you want to have children in general?

A: Yeah. But not now.

Q: Right.

A: Career first.

Q: What are you thinking of for your career?

A: I want to be a doctor.

Q: Yeah?

A: Yeah.

Q: What are you doing at school to –

A: Physics and chemistry, but I should be taking biology in college, things like that, but I think I'm changing my mind, I'm going for the media or something.

Q: Yeah?... Not quite certain. But the ambition to be a doctor, how long have you had that?

A: Since I was little.

Q: Yeah. What's making you change your mind,... media?

A: Well 'cos when I - been speaking to people and teachers and that and mostly my grades in English have been better, and when I compare them to my science grades they're a lot better, things like that. Still hard competition though in both careers like.

Q: Yeah, definitely.

A: I'll just have to see how my grades go, make up my mind then.

Q: And there's a lot of training involved in being a doctor.

A: Yeah.

Q: So what you're waiting - when are you taking exams?

A: May.

Q: Then what?

A: If I get into college I'll do some A-levels.

Q: Which college are you going to?

A: Well, I've applied to about four, but I'd like to go to Westminster or Vauxhall college.

Q: And, depending on your grades, do either science or -

A: Yeah

Q: - English, yeah. It is difficult to sort of think ahead, isn't it?

A: Yeah.

Q: Long term plans. One of the other things we're interested in in this study is to find out what you think about the kind of sex education -

A: Yeah

Q: - that you were getting in school... think about it, what - what did you think...

A: Basically we just learnt about a pregnant - we did, learn about contraception, but it was just simple - simple things, like Miss just showed us the methods there were, the things there were, we didn't really go into it into depth. Mostly we learnt about pregnancy, we watched a lot of videos on it, we did some quizzes and that, but it was mostly about contraception and pregnancy.

Q: Mm. So you didn't do much about homosexuality or anything like that?

A: We did, just little things, then we just skipped onto something else. We did about transmitted diseases.

Q: Was there much about AIDS then?

A: Quite a - quite a bit. We did about venereal diseases and things like that.

Q: Mm, yeah. Where do you think you first learned, or found out about AIDS, from?

A: The media and television and that.

Q: Yeah. Did you see much stuff on telly?

A: Yes and no. But then I went to a health clinic, I got some leaflets and that and I read them - read things on it sort of thing, to get more information. 'Cos like on telly like all you heard was how many people had got it and what the symptoms were and things like that, so I just read more on it.

Q: What - how do you feel about what you know about it, I mean what do you know about it?

A: It's a killing disease, killer disease. That anyone can get it.

Q: How do you get it?

A: You have sex without using a contraceptive, like using a condom, and like if you take drugs, like sharing needles, blood - blood transfusions.

Q: What about what it is itself? When you said it's a killer disease, what kind of disease?

A: I'm not sure, I'm not sure.

Q: What about - have you heard about HIV, HIV virus?

A: Yeah...

Q: ... How does that relate?

A: Is that when that you've got the signs of it, of having AIDS?

Q: Well I think what it is is that the virus - you - what you get is the virus -

A: Yeah

Q: - and then that weakens your immune system and you catch other sorts of diseases. And there are quite a lot of diseases that you can catch -

A: What, like pneumonia and things like that.

Q: Yeah, pneumonia and certain kinds of cancer and things like that, and it's that that kills you rather than the virus itself. But I mean the virus you can have for quite a long time without having the symptoms.

A: Yeah.

Q: Did you see - there have been some advertisements in the papers recently I notice, which shows a very beautiful young woman and -

A: Yeah, and...

Q: ... you turn over and this is what she looks like in five years' time, she looks identical. What did you think about that?

A: It did - it did get me thinking about it 'cos like there could be people that you know and they'd really look normal to you, but inside - but it does make you stop and think.

Q: Do you think that many of your friends are aware of it?

A: Some of them, yeah, some - some of them but there's one I - no, yeah, there's one I'm worried about.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah.

Q: What, a girlfriend or a boyfriend?

A: It's a girl.

Q: What, do you think she may have been putting herself at risk?

A: She's on the pill, though...

Q: But I mean - the pill's not gonna do much good if it's -

A: But you can't really talk to her because she feels that she's doing the right thing -

Q: Yeah.

A: Did LYNN mention her to you?

Q: She didn't mention her, no.

A: Oh, I thought she might have.

Q: What, you think she's - that there's somebody that she's seeing who might be problematic, or ... it's more...

A: Well she caught - she caught a venereal disease off someone.

Q: She did?

A: Yeah. This was a couple of months ago, but she skips in and out of relationships, I think she's confused, that's all.

Q: Yeah, yeah. Are there many of your friends like that?

A: No, not really. Most - most do go out with boys on the rebound though... really most of them have got long-lasting relationships sort of thing.

Q: Do you think there are sort of - one of the young women I was talking to suggested, you know, there's sort of some groups at school where the girls were, you know, spending a lot of time in relationships, sexual relationships with boys, and then there were other groups who didn't have any relationships at all sort of, do you find that that happens here as well?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah? ... sort of midway group, the ones in - is it?

A: Yeah.

Q: Well which one would you put yourself in, let me not put you in a group.

A: Well most - most people that I hang around with are going out with someone actually, it's - there's only about two of us maybe that's not going out with someone, and then there's another lot that they're not going out with no one.

Q: Mm. So - but the people that you mainly spend time with, your friends and so forth -

A: Yeah.

Q: - do similar sorts of things to you, it's like... you're not going round with a group who aren't seeing anybody.

A: No.

Q: I think it's - it's sort of - that's the way things work out, that you find groups doing things... One of the - one of the questions that we've been asking - I mean when you're making love with your boyfriend, and you're not taking any contraceptive precautions, but you do see that as a bit risky probably -

A: Yeah.

Q: - do you think there's anything else in your life that you do that might be a bit risky? Any other area of your life at all.

A: I don't know.

Q: For example, some people think smoking and drinking is risky.

A: No, not really. No. Before I did used to smoke and I thought, yeah, that was a bit risky

-

Q: Yeah. What about drugs, things like that?

A: No, I wouldn't touch them.

Q: Are any of your friends involved in -

A: What, like heroin, cocaine?

Q: Any sorts of drugs at all.

A: No. Not that I know of anyway.

Q: Yeah.

A: But I know - I do know certain boys that are on coke and things like that, but they come - they're trying to come off it.

Q: But how do you feel about that?

A: Just - just awful, people shouldn't be doing them sort of things. Horrible taking drugs, 'cos it ruins you. Like I know - it wasn't drugs exactly, but this boy I knew,..., he died last year through sniffing Tippex and that.

Q: Did he?

A: Yeah. [REDACTED].

Q: How old was he?

A: A year older than me.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah.

Q: But how - I mean that must have been terribly upsetting for you -

A: Yeah. But I just knew him 'cos I knew him when I used to go a play centre, and when I picked up the paper - 'cos I come back from my holidays and I picked up the paper and I saw this picture [REDACTED].

Q: But...

A: Yeah.

Q: So what do you think, you wouldn't - I mean -

A: No. I wouldn't have nothing to do with drugs at all.

Q: Yeah... sense. Though some people get involved and they seem to... What about the other sorts of things you do with your friends, I mean what kind of activities?

A: Go to parties, just mainly go to parties, or we go out like shopping on Saturday in the West End, go to the pictures, things like that, go out for a meal.

Q: Go to the youth club?

A: Yeah, yeah, I forgot about that.

Q: I mentioned that 'cos you were saying - when you were filling in that question in the questionnaire about where you learned about the various things -

A: Yeah.

Q: - the sex education and so forth, the youth club got nothing on it at all,... learning anything at the youth club. Is it not the sort of issue that comes up?

A: No. Say like - 'cos I used to go to a drama club at ... school but there was still other activities going around but no one really talked about it. We didn't have any major talks on it or anything. I think they should do things like that.

Q: You think that's a good place to do it.

A: Yeah, 'cos there's a lot of young people there and they can relate to them, like there's younger kids than me and I think that they could relate to them.

Q: Do you think your friends are worried about AIDS at all?

A: Yes and no but if - when I say no, 'cos it's been going, people have been going on about it so much that they might just get fed up about it.

Q: Yeah.

A: Just another disease. People get bored.

Q: ... What did you think of those things that you saw about it on television and so forth?

A: I liked them ones - you know they had that advert where they had the subtitles about what people was thinking like that -

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: I think that was good.

Q: Saying one thing and thinking another. Did that ring true?

A: I liked those ones. It was a bit - maybe it was brought out too much but it was a good way to get the issue across, I think.

Q: ... close the door.

A: Okay.

Q: The creaking puts me off more than anything else... anybody out there... What, so you think it put people off, some of it?

A: Yeah, but some people might have just looked at it and thought, oh I don't really give a shit about that. 'Cos like boys they might think - 'cos there's boys that I know who might think they don't really take no notice of it and they're still going rampant and

Q: Yeah.

A: But may - you're more likely to catch - I think you're more likely to catch venereal diseases than AIDS, I think.

Q: Mm, yeah.

A: But it does make you stop and think about it, 'cos you think -and sometimes I sort of think, me and my friend we talk about it, say look what would you do if one of you had AIDS and all that, would you still hang around with me or something like that. Say no, I'd disown you, and things like that.

Q: Do you think they would?

A: Some would, some wouldn't.

Q: Yeah.

A: Like you wouldn't really wanna go near that person would you?

Q: You wouldn't?

A: Well if it was someone in my family or something I wouldn't disown them.

Q: Yeah. But you would somebody else?

A: If it was a friend that was really close to me I'd still be there for them, yeah, 'cos if I turned my back on them that would make things worse, to think that you was their friend and once you found out they got AIDS you turn your back, that's horrible.

Q: It's difficult though, isn't it.

A: It is. 'Cos you say that you'd be there for them now but then when the time comes you just think - no, I don't wanna go near her.

Q: Do you think that's the way your friends feel when they talk about it?

A: I think that - I think that's what it is, yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: Because they sort of like say things on the - on the spur of the moment not really realising what they're saying.

Q: When it - when it first came out there was a lot of talk about it being a kind of gay plague or gay disease or something like that. How - how did you react to that? Did you hear much about that?

A: Yeah. I thought - 'cos before I thought that it was just homosexuals and things like that caught AIDS, but when I realised that other people that were heterosexuals or bis - I thought - 'cos I really did think that it was just homosexuals that caught AIDS. Just makes you be aware.

Q: Yeah. And you - how did you realise that, you realised that from -

A: What do you mean?

Q: What - that it wasn't just a gay -

A: 'Cos you know when they said about blood transfusions and things like that, I realised.

Q: Yeah. So - and what, what do you think of the disease as, what do you think it is, AIDS?

A: In a way I think it's a curse -

Q: Yeah.

A: - in some ways. But there was different stories about how that - how AIDS originated, isn't it, like I heard the one about the African green-eyed monkey and that, that one, but I think it's - I think it is a curse.

Q: When you say curse, how do you mean, something puts a curse on - on mankind or something?

A: Yeah. 'Cos God might be saying that there's no need for all this homosexuality, things like that. But it's just - it's not fair 'cos innocent people are dying as well. But I think - I think it is a curse, yeah.

Q: So what do you think can be done about it? I mean what kind of things do you think could be done for young people to alert them to it?

A: Someone to talk to, someone to really stress it at them, but not just in advertising and things like that but in other ways. But I'm not really sure, not really sure...

Q: Do you think that could be done through sex education in schools and stuff?

A: Yeah, a lot more instead of just pregnancy and contraception and things like that. 'Cos there's too much pregnancy, 'cos like since I was in the first, first - from third year, pregnancy, pregnancy, pregnancy, pregnancy, and growing up and periods, yeah, that's it, periods, always about periods, boys having wet dreams and all this, things like that. But it was really - AIDS really came out sort of like last year, isn't it, everyone was really aware about it then, isn't it, so I don't think it was the tutors fault or anything like.

Q: No it was... and it has - I mean it's taken a bit of time to get into the schools' programmes anyway.

A: Yeah.

Q: 'Cos I suppose people are also not too sure what... But I imagine just more information would be a good idea.

A: Yeah, a lot more, in different ways.

Q: And do you think that that would be a way of getting people to pay more attention to it?

A: Yeah, if it was something that they themselves could relate to, and not just something that adults would see it, if they - if adults could relate to it they might just do something for them but not for the kids as well, our age. But I think every age group should - should have something that's specifically for them.

Q: What's relevant to them, sort of thing.

A: Yeah.

Q: When you were saying just now about boys - boys being rampant and -

A: Yeah.

Q: - does that mean that you think there's kind of like a double standard, like a different set of rules for boys and girls?

A: Yeah, yeah, definitely.

Q: What do you think about that?

A: With girls you're brought up to be ladylike, 'cos if you start being rampant you're called a slag or a slut or whatever, but with boys they can get away with anything, like they won't really get called no major names, they just get called Casanova and things like that but that's not really gonna hurt them, like if a girl gets called a slag...

Q: Do you think it's easy to get - to get called a slag, I mean do you think you'd get called a slag whatever you were doing, regardless of whether -

A: Yeah. It's like in Hackney, say like if you go round with a girl, she's known as a slag then you get called a slag. You get labelled as one. Or if say like you just may wear a certain kind of dress or something you get called a slag. You may get a bit tipsy at a party, you're called a slag. Things like that.

Q: Who mainly calls people slags?

A: Believe it or not, girls, 'cos they're bitchy.

Q: Yeah?

A: Yeah, and boys do as well, but it's mainly girls.

Q: - mainly girls.

A: Yeah.

Q: What do you think they're trying to do when they do that?

A: It's jealousy and they're just - they're just bitchy, girls are really bitchy. I find I can trust a boy a lot more than a girl. I don't know, they just want everyone to hate you I suppose. Or they just - maybe they think it's a joke but it's not really funny. It does hurt.

Q: It hurts you when you hear about it or when you - when you are called a slag?

A: When you're called - well I haven't really been called a slag, but my friend, it really did hurt her, I mean sometimes she can just sit there and start crying.

Q: Yeah.

A: I think it's mainly girls that call girls slags

Q: Yeah. And do you think that has an effect on - on the boys sort of thing, I mean if they - if a girl's being called a slag or something -

A: Yeah.

Q: - do you think they behave differently towards her?

A: Yeah, they'll - they won't have so much respect for you as they did before, or they might keep their distance, and they might start going round calling you a slag, saying oh yeah, I laid this girl and all that.

Q: What, just making it up you mean -

A: Yeah.

Q: - regardless of whether they had or not?

A: Yeah.

Q: Do you think that happens a lot?

A: Nowadays, yeah, I think it does.

Q: And that affects - that - that then affects a girl's reputation...

A: Yeah, a lot, it does.

Q: So it's - what do you think about it then?

A: I think it's stupid, stupid, stupid. There's really no need for all of it, no need. But some girls, they bring it on themselves. If they're called a slag they bring it on themselves. The way - the way some of them behave...

Q: They invite it?

A: Yeah, yeah. So I can't really help you. But if I knew that you was getting - getting called a slag and you wasn't - not one, or behaving like one, then I'd really say, oh that's not fair. But if I knew that you was all bringing it on yourself I'd say I can't help you, I'm sorry.

Q: So I suppose girls - in a way what you're saying - I mean there is this sort of double standard, girls have to be much more careful -

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: - and the same behaviour with boys isn't really judged that way at all.

A: No.

Q: ...

A: It is.

Q: It used to be like that when I was young and I thought things were changing. I think it's just the same - well it's not the same but the same sorts of things go on.

A: Yeah.

Q: Girls have to be so much more careful.

A: ...

Q: What about - well, it's (?) hard to say really - I mean in this relationship that you're in where you feel that you can't insist on any contraception, or at least on a condom -

A: Yeah.

Q: - or something like that, how do you feel about that, I mean does it worry you?

A: Sometimes it does. 'Cos I think - I - I do think that we should be using some form of contraception, and about a couple of months - for these past months it has been worrying me - worrying me a little bit.

Q: Yeah.

A: I think we should.

Q: It must be - partly I was feeling - I mean we talked before about the fact that it was - it was worrying that you were afraid you might get pregnant -

A: Yeah.

Q: - but I mean does it worry you a bit that, you know, you - you can't decide?

A: Yeah. Yeah.

Q: Do you think this is - why do you think this is, that you can't make the decisions as well?

A: Mostly because you don't wanna hurt his feelings. Yeah, I think that's what it is, you don't wanna hurt his feelings.

Q: What about your feelings?

A: No, but we've talked about it and he asked me if I'd decided on it and I said I have, but these past few months it has been a bit worrying, I just think oh no, I might be pregnant.

Q: Mm. Well I think anyway you might do something about it now, check out at least what you can do.

A: Yeah.

Q: But I suppose I was thinking more in terms of, you know, not being - not being the one who can make the decisions in the relationship -

A: Yeah.

Q: - I mean do you feel in relationships in the past you've been able to make decisions?

A: Yeah, but not sexually 'cos he's the first one I've slept with.

Q: Yeah.

A: But really we do make equal decisions apart from that one.

Q: Yeah. Other sorts of things.

A: Mm.

Q: Well I was gonna ask you about the future... this one. How what do you think about the relationship, do you think it's one that - that will last or -

A: I like to think it will, yeah. 'Cos we do wanna have kids -children and that.

Q: Ultimately but not immediately.

A: Yeah. And he says he wants us to get married, things like that.

Q: Mm. Do you want to get married?

A: Yeah.

Q: Particularly to him or just in general or -

A: That's funny, you know, 'cos I was thinking about that -

Q: Yeah.

A: - I like - I'm not sure, but I would like to get married to him but then again I think that I should be open to other relationships if I stop - 'cos I think that at sixteen I'm a bit tied down.

Sometimes I do think that, I think I should be going out with other boys. But I would like to get married to him, yeah.

Q: Mm. Maybe have a break for a little while, but it never works out that way, does it? I suppose it might do. Who - what's - who are you living with at home?

A: My mum. My dad's working abroad.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah.

Q: And you've got some sisters?

A: Two little sisters and one grown up sister, she doesn't live -she lives on her own.

Q: Yeah. How - how old are the little ones?

A: Two and seven.

Q: ... Do you come in for a lot of babysitting? (laugh) Do you look after them much yourself or -

A: Not really, no. Share it out. 'Cos my mum wants me to do my homework and get revising and that so it's alright.

Q: Yeah. 'Cos sometimes people have to do quite a bit of it.

A: Yeah.

Q: Do you get on okay with your mum?

A: Yeah. They do get on my nerves sometimes, we all get on - but I don't really get on with my big sister.

Q: No?

A: No.

Q: Where's she living?

A: Where's she living?

Q: Mm. I mean how far away?

A: In LONDON DISTRICT.

Q: ... Do you see much of her then or -

A: Not really. If I see her - I'm lucky to see her sometimes. But before I used to work up Dalston and she works in one of the hairdressers so I used to see her quite a bit, saw her every Saturday and - like she doesn't really get on with my mum.

Q: What, you'd prefer to see more of her in fact, would you?

A: Yes and no. Yes and no.

Q: ...

A: Yeah.

Q: What - you're working on weekends?

A: Yeah...

Q: Oh, selling sports equipment.

A: Yeah.

Q: Where's that?

A: Do you know... market -

Q: Oh yeah.

A: - along the High Street there.

Q: How's that?

A: I don't work there no more.

Q: What, you given it up?

A: Yeah. 'Cos I - 'cos I found that I had a lot more homework to do and I wanted to go out and everything on Saturdays sort of thing, and my mum - my mum said that it'd be better for me if I did pack up the job 'cos she'd be giving me money and that, but yet still I'd have time to go out if I wanted to, I wouldn't be so tired and things like that.

Q: Yeah. That's lucky really that your mum can afford to -

A: Yeah.

Q: ... It can be a bit of a strain doing a Saturday job -

A: Yeah.

Q: - and evening jobs and things like that. Specially if you've got to do your homework.

A: Yeah.

Q: So you're all getting on okay at home. What does your mum think about your boyfriend?

A: She found out about him only - about last month she found out. She - she was mad at me 'cos she goes I should have told her a long time ago instead of hiding it away from her 'cos she'd like to think that I'd be able to talk to her about them sort of things.

Q: Yeah.

A: She asked me if I'd slept with him. I said no. I said no. She goes I should tell it if I have so I could use some form of contraception, she goes that she'd like me to tell her but I still denied it. But she met him the other time as well. They got on really well together.

Q: Yeah. Why had you kept it from her?

A: 'Cos she'd like to think that I'd be a virgin until I get married.

Q: Yeah.

A: I'm - I will tell her but not now. Not now. 'Cos she's like religious.

Q: I was wondering about that. Which - which particular religion

A: Christian.

Q: She goes to church -

A: Yeah.

Q: What about you?

A: I go as well.

Q: But how do you feel about that?

A: I don't regret it in any way but - I think it's alright if you do sleep with someone before you get married, like on the radio station, what is it - GLO? - they was talking about it, about sex before marriage, and most people said they think it was alright. 'Cos you know that you're gonna - if you know that you're gonna be with this person - no, if you know that you really love this person then you can show your feelings in other ways.

Q: Mm. But you think your mum - it sounds as if your mum definitely would disapprove if she thought you were -

A: Yeah.

Q: I was wondering, too, about your own religious feelings, I mean do you think - you go to church, do you think it affects you, the way that you behave -

A: Yeah... supposed to be setting certain standards, different standards.

Q: Right. So you felt a bit bad about it, I mean apart from the fact that...

A: I did feel - I did feel a bit bad, yeah, but then I just thought, I've done it now, I can't alter the fact.

Q: Yeah. And enjoyed it as well. Yeah... difficult to decide that you shouldn't do it. Yeah. Some people... religious don't particularly - I mean - they don't particularly make rules like that about whether or not you should, I mean some religions do, some religions don't particularly... But do you think it's also affected the way you feel about your religion sort of thing, I mean -

A: No, not really, no.

Q: You still - you still believe in -

A: Yeah.

Q: Has it always been important, your religion?

A: When I was about - mainly as I got older I think it was. Not when I was young, when I got older.

Q: That's interesting 'cos sometimes it's the other way round, isn't it, you automatically go when -

A: Yeah.

Q: - you're young because your parents tell you to. So you really thought about it?

A: Yeah. Even though still I may be a bit - I might slide off a bit, but still it is important to me.

Q: I noticed when I asked you the question to say what you thought you'd be doing in a couple of years' time you said only God can know -

A: Yeah.

Q: - and you know, I couldn't tell whether that's like a - some people just say that automatically, don't they, God knows what I'll be doing -

A: Yeah.

Q: - or that you... it is God who knows...

A: Yeah.

Q: You've got no idea - what do you think you'll be doing?

A: I don't know. I don't know. I like to think that I'd be working, be married and have kids, have a nice house, all set out sort of things you know, (?) stereo...

Q: But those are the things you'd like to have.

A: Yeah. Have a nice husband and everything like that.

Q: This - this one possibly but not necessarily?

A: Yeah.

Q: It is difficult to look into the future, though, isn't it.

A: Yeah. 'Cos it goes so - it goes really quick.

Q: What about looking into the past - you said that this was the first boyfriend that you've had - had sex with. Have you had boyfriends before then?

A: Yeah. But it was mainly like - I'm having fun now and everything but it was just like kissing and that, things like that, like you know.

Q: Yeah. Did you count those as sort of sexual relationships?

A: No.

Q: You didn't?

A: No.

Q: What, you only count it as a sexual relationship if you actually -

A: Having sex I think.

Q: Yeah, yeah. 'Cos some people when they sort of go... (interruption) Sorry, what were you saying?

A: Some people think that it is just kissing, sexual.

Q: Mm, well I don't know, they think that other things, you can have a kind of sexual type of relationship without necessarily having sex itself. And that there's - you go up to a certain point and stop short of that but it's still a sexual relationship.

A: Yeah -

Q: - but you don't think -

A: I've never really thought about it like that, no.

Q: What about safe sex? I didn't ask you that yet, did I?

A: Safe sex?

Q: Mm. What do you think of as safe sex, if anything?

A: Is it - it is a good thing, but not everyone will use it, will they?

Q: Mm. What do you think it is?

A: Using a condom or some form of contraception. That's what I think it is.

Q: Mm. I mean they've been putting a lot of stuff out about it in relation to the AIDS...

A: When you say safe sex, condom automatically -

Q: That's -

A: - think of a condom.

Q: - yeah - that's what I was thinking. I mean I was wondering whether there were other sorts of things that you sort of might...

A: Just condom.

Q: Yeah.

A: ... springs to mind.

Q: Yeah, yeah. Did you - on the questionnaire -

A: Yeah.

Q: - on the questionnaire I think you said that you learned about masturbation at school. Did you?

A: Oh, yeah. That was just in the lower school.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah.

Q: You're about the only person out of all the people who filled in the questionnaire -

A: Yeah

Q: - who said that they'd learned about it at school.

A: Yeah, I remember learning about it.

Q: Did you find that useful information?

A: Yeah.

Q: Do you see that as a sort of sexual activity?

A: Yes, in a way, yeah. 'Cos you're fiddling - you're playing with yourself, aren't you?

Q: Mm?

A: You're playing with yourself.

Q: Yeah, sort of sex by yourself.

A: Yeah. And in a magazine I read about to do that or (?) do that.

Q: What, you didn't or you don't or you haven't ever done it? Would you?

A: No. No. I just had a few - 'cos it's sort of like a normal thing, innit? It's supposed to be a normal thing, they say it's supposed to be normal.

Q: Mm. It's just never struck you as being particularly -

A: No.

Q: - interesting?

A: No.

Q: Sometimes I mean when I talk to young women they're not - they know about male masturbation -

A: Yeah.

Q: - but they don't think of it for themselves at all.

A: Just know about boys wanking themselves.

Q: Yeah, yeah... necessary...

A: What is this for?

Q: Well what I'm, doing is we're talking to young women in London and in Manchester, two large groups of young women, and what we're basically trying to do is find out - you know, as I've been asking you about your relationships and so forth, how they think and how they feel about their relationships -

A: Yeah.

Q: - and partly to help out with sex education, 'cos we're also asking them what they think about sex education -

A: Yeah.

Q: - and partly to help out with the AIDS information, to find out what they think is lacking in it or what it would be more helpful for them to know, or this sort of stuff - and so basically we'll be feeding it back into... sex and AIDS education so there might be some improvement in it. ... young women 'cos I mean mostly people don't seem to think either of them are up to much.

A: Yeah.

Q: So that's the point of what we're doing, we're just doing - I mean ... paid for by this... funding organisation that provides the money for us to do it, part of the sort of government research campaign on AIDS which - they're doing some medical research where they're trying to find out what's actually - how to cure it and stuff like that, and some social research where they're trying to find out how you can inform people about what's going on. So it would be helpful... some of your ideas might actually be spread around. The other thing we're thinking of doing is coming back in a year's time to people we interviewed this year, just to ask a few questions and then see how things have changed, and how they think they've changed. Would you be interested in doing that?

A: Yeah, but I won't be - I won't be in NAME OF SCHOOL.

Q: No, right.

A: But keep my address.

Q: Right, have you given it to me?

A: Yeah.

Q: Is it on the questionnaire -

A: On the questionnaire it is.

Q: Good. And the other thing we were thinking of doing was - I don't know whether it would appeal to you or not - asking young women to keep diaries for us for a very short time, like maybe about a month or six weeks or something like that -

A: Yeah.

Q: - just writing down their thoughts and their feelings about relationships. Would you be interested in that?

A: Yeah.

Q: Right. Good. Great. Because - I mean it would - it wouldn't be for very long, little short bursts, just to give a feeling for what you were thinking at the time.

A: And then you'd use them in your studies?

Q: Yeah, that's right. And all of the stuff's entirely confidential...

A: Okay.

Q: I mean it would never be associated with you as an individual.

A: No. Okay.

Q: Great, good. Thank you very much. Anything else you'd like to -

A: What's your name?

[REDACTED]