

**MAG12 5/6/89 RT**

QU: Tell me what you're doing at the moment, how you decided to do it.

AN: Well, I left the university last summer. And I got a job at [DEPARTMENT STORE] as Trainee Management. And I hated it so I left. And I decided that I wanted to get back into Micro-Biology; I was really disillusioned with it all, the end of last year.

QU: With university?

AN: Yeah, the whole course really, practical work; I just hated it. So I thought, ah, I've had enough; I'll go and do something completely different. I was there for about six to eight weeks, and I hated it. And I told them that and I left. I was out of work for about a month, and then tried to look for a job in the North doing Micro-Biology, and I got this job at [NAME OF HOSPITAL], doing research.

QU: That was quite lucky.

AN: Really lucky, yeah. I applied to loads of things, but they all wanted experience. All the ones in the North all wanted experience. There were a couple down South, knowing that I would really go. I applied for the ..(015)..post at [NAME OF HOSPITAL], and just by chance my application form was passed on to DOCTOR BROWN who's my boss, and he just phoned me up, and sort of offered me the job. So like we had a chat, and I said, 'Oh, I accept'.

QU: You landed on your feet?

AN: Yeah. I usually do, I'm usually really lucky.

QU: So you did a Micro-Biology degree at University?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Is there any reason that you went into Sciences and BA? Was it something you'd always been interested in and good at?

AN: Well, I've always loved Biology; I think that's probably my dad. He was always (?)going on about these nature programmes and all this sort of thing. He'd take me out down the canal, and we'd go looking under stones and different things. I think it must have come from there. Originally I went to [NAME OF UNIVERSTIY] to do Genetics. Because I did the project at school; the 16 plus project. And that was on genetics, and I thought - Oh this is really good. So I went to [NAME OF UNIVERSITY], started the course and I hated it.

QU: Why?

AN: Well, it drifted away a lot from what I wanted to do. There was a lot of population genetics, a lot of that. A lot of wishy-washy statistics sort of things. I just couldn't grasp it at all. And I really like bacteria..!

QU: Everyone's got their fetish!

AN: I think they're brilliant, I really did. So when I got the chance to do the Microbe-Bio Technology course, which was sort of a more refined Micro-Biology, I decided to do that.

QU: So you had to find out what science was, before you could choose what part you wanted to do?

AN: Yeah, it just sort of gradually went on. I mean I'd always said I wanted to go to university, never knowing really what it was. And I just sort of went, you know.

QU: You said that you came from the background where it wasn't expected to go to university..

AN: Oh no, they never expected me to go. I've got a cousin who's mentally retarded, and when I was at infant school, at first they thought I was the same as him. And they actually told my mother that I'd never learn. So when I started to come on, and learn things and do really well at school, it was a big surprise. Because nobody from my family has ever done that sort of thing.

QU: So where did you get the idea about going to university from?

AN: God knows. I really don't know, I just remember always wanting to do it, and always saying that I would.

QU: You knew it existed, University Challenge, maybe!

AN: Yeah, yeah, probably. I don't know, I never had any idea really of what it's like, but I knew I always wanted to go.

QU: Tell me about your family.

AN: Well, we didn't have a happy family life; my mother never liked me. For some strange reason, I don't know why. My father did, and I was always sort of my father's little pet, you know. And I just sort of went through school and did (?)my own thing; I was a real mouse really, very very quiet, very sort of studious, you know. At 16 I sort of noticed boys, and sort of started going out with a couple of them. My mother didn't like it at all. And then when I met the boy that I'm engaged to now, I was in the sixth form, and I had to sort of get up and go to university. For some reason my mother decided that he wasn't good enough, because he wasn't planning to go to university, and said I had to leave.

QU: Said you had to leave?

AN: Said I had to leave home if I didn't stop seeing him. It all collapsed into turmoil in the sixth form, I carried on seeing him, and went away to university. I've never been back since.

QU: Never been back to your parents?

AN: No, never been back.

QU: It's a serious problem between you and your mum?

AN: Yes.

QU: Do you still see your dad?

AN: I saw me dad for the first time in four years the other week at grandmas.

QU: Are you still close to him?

AN: I don't know really. I mean he always used to sort of stick up for me. I don't know whether me mother has gone through the menopause or what, but when it got really really bad, when she was shouting and screaming at me and what have you, he was sort of going through the same. And we'd sort of sit and talk about it, and he'd say - Don't worry, I'll sort it out for you. You know, get her back to how she was, I'll get her to talk to you. And I heard him saying to her at night - Why won't you talk to her and tell her what she's done? And she'd start screaming at him - You don't understand! - and all this sort of thing.

QU: Has this bad relationship with your mum always been there, or did it start at a certain age?

AN: I always remember it being there, I'd always get blamed for things that my younger brother had done.

QU: Have you just got one brother?

AN: Just got one brother, yeah. But I knew that she never liked me, just for the things she used to say to me. I remember once kissing her, I was something like 10, something like that, and she just turned to me and said - Are you a lesbian or something? She always, I don't know, she always sort of picked on me. But she had a bad upbringing herself.

QU: Did she have a bad relationship with her mum?

AN: Oh yeah, yeah she did. When she was young, her father went off with a younger woman. And grandma was left on her own to bring up my mum and her older sister. But me grandma was a bit of a raver; she used to go to Blackpool with these men friends for the weekend. And she'd leave me mum and me auntie GERALDINE sort of on their own. And me mum said she used to remember being sat huddled in a chair, when the electricity meter had run out, just sat in the dark, huddled together. And like grandma used to throw her out on the streets; she used to have men coming round visiting, and she'd throw them out on the street and lock the door, and wouldn't let them in. But having said that, when gran had a stroke, my mum looked after her for about nine years until she died.

QU: It's weird, isn't it?

AN: It is. I mean when I think, I think - Oh, I'll never do that; not after what she's done but, when she died she was really upset. I mean I was really ill when she stopped speaking to me and started picking on me..

QU: How old were you then?

AN: Well, it was when I first started going out with boys. The first boyfriend I had, she didn't like at all. And then shortly afterwards, I had a couple of other boyfriends that I didn't really, well, I snuck out to see them. But this one that I'm engaged to now, he was the first really serious one, and I think she knew. And like, she said he wasn't good enough, you know, coming from my background, this lad wasn't good enough. And I was throwing everything away, and if I ever got pregnant, got to go home.

QU: It seems as if that triggered it off, your relationships with boys?

AN: I think it probably did.

QU: How did it make you feel about having relationships with boys? Was it confusing?

AN: Oh it was, I mean I didn't know if I was coming or going. I mean one day she was really, really nice to me; she came upstairs, she'd brought me a buttie on a plate, I was (?)sobbing on me bed and I was screaming at her to go away, and leave me alone. And she came and she sat next to me, and she said - You'll have to finish with him, you know STACEY. And I said - I can't, I said, I can't finish with him. And she just went mad. She went haywire.

QU: Did she ever give you a reason apart from him not being good enough for you?

AN: No. She hadn't even met him. Never even had him in the house. But I don't know, it was just a thing with her. I used to go to a friend's house for tea; she started buying food and everything for me. She's always been like that though, really really sort of extreme. When I was first born my grandma had been on, bashing, said - Don't you think you should be at home with your children all the time? And me mum was going out at the time to work, in the mornings, to earn a bit of extra money for us. And me grandma said - Don't you think you should be at home with your children? Instead of being reasonable and saying - Well, yes I'd like to be, or, you know, we can't afford it; she banished her from the house. And this poor grandma, me dad's mother, was banished from the house

from when I was very very small until about six months, was it before I left home, or after I'd gone to university.. And she banished her for all those years, and me dad, you know, he never said - You can't do that. My mother's going to come round; don't be so unreasonable. He was like really subservient.

QU: Was she the dominating force?

AN: I think that was why really. She didn't like it when I said no. Because she'd always been used to having her own way. And like when my father started saying - you know, you are being unreasonable - she turned it all back onto me, saying it was me. And then when she started telling my father I'd been sleeping around and all this sort of thing, which I hadn't because I was a virgin, I hadn't slept with anybody. And then when I finished with my boyfriend before ADAM, he was called DARREN, when I stopped seeing him, she actually had the nerve to ask me - Did you sleep with him? - you know, after everything she'd put me through, she said - Did you sleep with him? Of course I said no, but I had.

QU: Did you actually have discussions about sex which weren't to do with an argument?

AN: No, she used to say that sex was dirty, and sex was all that men wanted women for.

QU: ...(158)..

AN: Yeah, she did, yeah, she said that was all men wanted women for - sex.

QU: She didn't have a positive view of sex, it was wrong?

AN: No.

QU: It sounds that your mum had a lot of problems about sex and turned it back on you.

AN: Yeah, you think it's you, don't you? I mean I thought it was all horrible. I still think I have a really low self-opinion of myself. I still cry about it, because it's amazing how it affects you through your life. She always used to tell me that I was ugly, you know, all sorts of things.

QU: At the time, did you feel that sex was dirty and that it was wrong?

AN: I don't think I really took any notice of her. She really frightened me, and she really upset me but, I was sort of able to block it out somehow. I really tried to block it out. Like at school, my work just went.. you know, and they were all asking what was wrong. And I said nothing, nothing, you know. And in the end they found me sort of crying in the cloakrooms, a teacher happened to come through, she said - You, in my study, now! And she was lovely, she was really great. And I told her that I'd sort of tried to make things better at home. I used to do anything to make things better, it was stupid really, because there was no pleasing her. But she said that the only thing you can do, she said - you're a bright girl, block it out. She says - I know it's difficult with all that going on all around you and what have you, she says, just block it out, get away to university, and you can please yourself what you do. And that's what I did.

QU: So university was your escape?

AN: ...(187)..

QU: It was really important that you did get away?

AN: Oh, yeah, it was. I dread to think what would have happened if I'd stayed. Because I couldn't have stayed with my mother. And my brother now, it's the same as I was; like he's had girlfriends, but he doesn't tell her. He doesn't take them home; he's frightened.

QU: She's got the same attitude towards him?

AN: She must have; I don't actually see him that much, I write to him. I remember him writing to me and telling me that mum got really annoyed when she saw my letters to him, on the mantelpiece, so she'd sit there smoking..! smoking umpteen fags, you know, and then she'd sort of calm down. And like I used to write to her, but she'd never write back. When me grandad died, she never told me. And then when I pushed she said it was all my fault. That my grandad had died. I was so upset.

QU: When you were growing up, through this, did you have a best friend or other people you could turn to for support?

AN: Yeah, TARA'S mum was absolutely brilliant. She really was. I went on holiday with them one year. Like she couldn't believe what was happening to me, you know, I used to be down their house crying every night. And she used to say - Oh, stay for your tea, love - you know, and all this sort of thing. And then, LEANNE'S mum, one of me other friends who I still see quite a bit of, despite the fact that she's in London, she was really good as well. I could just go round like, when LEANNE wasn't there, and just sit in their house.

QU: So you still got the relationship that you needed at that time, from an older woman?

AN: Yeah, it wasn't the same though. You know what I mean, they sort of had the attitude - Oh, she must be exaggerating it. They..(214)..it's like one of my arguments - which of course it wasn't. It's still going on. It was absolutely crazy. All the times I've sat downstairs talking to my dad about it all, he was saying - If this doesn't improve, we'll be getting a divorce soon. And I couldn't believe it. And she's up the top of the stairs listening to what we were saying. And she came racing down, flung open the door, and started accusing us of trying to put her away in a mental home.

QU: Do you think she did have mental problems?

AN: I don't know, I didn't really know what a mental problem was, I mean that to me was like normal home life. Although I was getting upset all the time, I thought it was me all the time, and I felt really horrible, really wicked sort of thing. I thought I wasn't being good enough, and I did anything to try and please her but, in the end it just got impossible. And I just switched off and went the other way and ignored it all.

QU: What sort of effects do you think it had on you, the sort of person you are now?

AN: Well, like I said I've got a very low self-opinion, really sensitive about stupid things. I sort of get jealous as well; my boyfriend, I don't like it if he looks at other girls, and I'm very possessive in that way. I hate to be dependent on; I find it difficult to trust him, that he's not going to just turn round and say - Sod off - because my parents did. He always says - Oh, I wouldn't say that to you, you know.

QU: But you still have a fear of that?

AN: Yeah, about desertion really. I find it really difficult. I mean we're buying a house together and everything. And I'm hoping like as time goes on it will improve, and I can see now that he's not..(247)..not the same as my mother. You know, that I'm not a horrible person.

QU: And that you can have a relationship..(249)..

AN: Yeah, cos that does frighten me, that we'll end up fighting like they used to.

QU: What sort of school did you go to?

AN: Mixed comprehensive school.

QU: And this was in Oldham?

AN: This was ..(255)..yeah, just the local one.

QU: Did you enjoy school?

AN: Yeah, I did, yeah.

QU: Because it was an escape?

AN: Yeah. I really enjoyed it; I liked to do well, I really liked to do well, and taking the classes, I like that.

QU: At my school if a girl was good academically it meant that a) they were a snob, b) they were middle class, and c) they wouldn't go out with people, they weren't interested in sex. Did that hold true in your school?

AN: Yeah, yeah. I remember at junior school, I wasn't at all popular. I always used to be fighting at school. Fighting. I used to really stick up for myself, you know, but I always used to be fighting. ...(271)..they used to say I was miserable, and..(273).. I suppose I was; I never used to like to join in. I always kept myself to myself. At secondary school I sort of got a bit noisier, I got a few friends. I buried myself in the work really. And it was when I was 16, 17 that I started going out, but before that I never went out. Like all the rest of the girls were all saying they were going out; I never knew whether they did or not. But it never really bothered me.

QU: Going out with boys?

AN: Yeah, yeah.

QU: Do you think there was pressure to be popular and go out with boys?

AN: Oh yeah, there is. Cos I remember like you really were one type or the other. You know, you'd go out and have a good time, or you were booky and studious, got greasy hair and spots, and nobody really bothered with you, you know. And the other girls used to wear make-up, and not bother so much about their work. And they didn't like you, and you didn't like them. I remember, I think it was the third year I first noticed it, like there was a really big split between the ones that did work, and the ones that went out together and wore make-up. I suppose really I wanted respect off people at school, like they never picked on me or anything. Like the lads, you weren't the sort they'd go out with, but they'd always want to borrow your work and copy off you. ...(299).. Not that I ever let anybody copy anything..

QU: Did you have middle-class as well as working-class kids at your school?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Were there class differences as well?

AN: Yeah, I'd say there was, like you'd have the girls like me who'd had their skirts three years, you know.. And you'd have the ones that'd be fashionable with the uniform whatever that was. And you sort of gradually become aware that some people have more money than you have. I'd never ever been abroad til last year, and like the furthest me, my mum, my dad and my brother ever got was MERSEYSIDE at [HOLIDAY RESORT] for a week. And you have these people like, kids of 13, 14, going off to Miami, Miami in Florida, and all this sort of thing. And I just couldn't believe it really, that people actually did these things. I remember one girl, NATASHA, she was super rich, I remember when we were in the second year at school, she went scuba-diving, you know! She went dancing as well, you know, and I'd never been encouraged to do anything like that. A lot of people had hobbies, you know proper hobbies which I'd never had.

QU: If you hadn't worked hard what would your future have been coming from your background?

AN: I'd have probably got married early on; that seems to be what a lot of them do. When I'm back in the area in Oldham, you tend to see people that you know, and you think - God, I know her, she's got two, three children by now. A lot of them.. Well, LEANNE, my friend, she sort of got out, she did well in a bank. A lot of them are married, and a lot of them have sort of stopped now; the ones that were ambitious haven't climbed any further. They've got married and have tended to have stopped. And then there's the ones that left at 'O' level standard, a couple of them have gone on to be nurses, a lot of them are doing nothing now. You used to see them sort of hanging around on the street corners when they'd left school. A couple of them went to work at ASDA on the checkout, things like that.

QU: Were there a lot of girls getting pregnant and leaving school?

AN: Not really, I remember one getting pregnant in the fifth year, that was a really big sort of scandal, you know. Everybody was looking at her going passed, trying to see if she was pregnant or not. But she was the only one that I remember that was actually pregnant while I was at school.

QU: When you were at school were you conscious that getting married, getting pregnant was one choice for you, and working hard was another?

AN: It seemed like that, yeah, because you'd have the girls that went out and had boyfriends, you know. And that seemed to be what everybody wanted. You know what I mean, everybody had to have a boyfriend, or else you just weren't anything. Like the ones that had a boyfriend for two months were like really good! I used to listen to this, and wonder what it would be like to have a boyfriend, but I was always sort of scared for some reason.

QU: Did you feel isolated because you didn't then?

AN: No, because I was in a little group that didn't, and then slowly friends started to get boyfriends, and they'd go out with their boyfriends together, and you tended to be left out. And just sort of stuck with the people that didn't have boyfriends.

QU: Protect each other?

AN: Yeah, group together.

QU: Did you ever get called names at school?

AN: No. I mean I had like boys asking me to go out with them, but I never wanted to. I was scared of the unknown; I don't know what I thought they'd do but, I always said no. And I was always very very embarrassed. I remember one boy writing his phone number on my pencil case, phone me up, he said! Oh God, I was so embarrassed, my friend's looking at me like that, you know, sort of laughing. She was a Jehovah's Witness though, and she was very strange.

QU: You said you started getting interested in boys when you were 16.

AN: Yeah.

QU: Did you go into the sixth form?

AN: I did go into sixth form, and that was when I had my first boyfriend.

QU: Did that make a big difference being part of a much smaller group?

AN: Yeah, I think you become more yourself. You know, I still had the same friends that I'd had all through school, you know, the same sort of little nucleus. And there was still a big split in the sixth form between the girls who wore make-up and went out with boys, and the rest of us. That carried on. But we then sort of became interested in boys, you know, the older boys in the sixth form. They had cars and things like that.

QU: Tell me about your first boyfriend.

AN: Oh God.

QU: If you can remember.

AN: I remember the first boy I ever kissed was at junior school. I don't know what came over me. And suddenly I changed, you know ...(401)..No, I actually met him outside school, me and my friend used to share him. Oh, he was gorgeous, he was a heart throb. It became embarrassing later on, you know, oh God. There was like local boys in the area, I remember one of them wanting to go out with me, but I was at the age where I was sort of getting scared, you know. Perhaps developing a bit more, getting bothered about it a bit more, and becoming more aware I suppose of different things. And I was really embarrassed to have anything to do with him. And somebody told me he was only out for what he could get. I didn't really understand.

QU: Was that a common thing for people to say about boys?

AN: Yeah. I sort of went through school; I sort of liked a couple of people, but I was never really determined to go out with anybody. And then I sort of went into sixth form and this older lad, and I really liked him, he was really (?)ugly, and I'd seen him a couple of times. It's so embarrassing, I really liked him. I thought he liked me, you know, and he was quite quiet as well. He was older than me. Like he'd sort of smile at me and everything. In the end, I remember I thought - Oh God, I can't not see him for two weeks - it was nearly Christmas, like we were breaking up for school holiday. And I thought - Ah, I can't not see him. I remember racing up the path to ask him to go out with me!

QU: You asked him out?

AN: Yeah.

QU: What did he say?

AN: He said yeah. God my mum...(431)..

QU: So that was quite an assertive thing to do.

AN: Yeah, I did, I actually changed a lot. My friends couldn't believe it, they were embarrassed for me, because..he.. was all spotty and horrible..

QU: But you liked him, that's what counted.

AN: I know, I thought he was brilliant.

QU: So what happened in that relationship, did it last very long?

AN: No, it didn't. His mother and father split up, and he used to drink a lot. And I just couldn't cope with him when he was drunk. He used to try and grope me and everything. I wasn't ready, and I just thought, you know, it was disgusting, sort of thing. I remember once he tried to grope me in the pub, and the barman saw him, and he came over with a soda syphon and squirted him in his face! ...(447)..

QU: Did this give you a bad impression of what boys were like?

AN: I don't know, I still really liked him, despite all this, I still really liked him. And I remember him going home and being really drunk and he used to lie in the middle of the main road, just lie down in the middle. I used to try to drag him up and everything. And I remember one night when he was really drunk, and I was really worried about him. I wanted to go out and pick him up off the road and take him home, but my dad wouldn't let me. I was really upset because my dad wouldn't let me, I was worried. In the end I just stopped seeing him, I still really liked him. But like, he just didn't really want to see me anymore. I wasn't really bothered after that, I just thought - Oh well.

QU: Did you have sex with him?



AN: No.

QU: You said he tried to grope you, did you have any physical relationship apart from that?

AN: No, because he always tried to grope me, you know. He wouldn't kiss me, I was trying to make him kiss me.

QU: He wouldn't kiss you?

AN: No, he just wanted to grope me. No, no way.

QU: Were you interested in sex at this point?

AN: I suppose I was becoming more aware, yeah. But I must have just felt this isn't what it's meant to be like, you know the ideas that you get, of what it's meant to be like. I just thought - This is in the wrong order.

QU: Where did you get those ideas from?

AN: Oh, 'Jackie', and 'My Guy', and all this sort of shit. ..(482).. You know you just get an idea somehow from these magazines that the boy will take you out, and will be really nice to you, and at the end, they'll kiss, and you think - Oh, how embarrassing. That's the way it's meant to be, and that's the way everybody makes it out that it is. Know what I mean?

QU: It's a bit of a disappointment.

AN: It is, you know, you read all these things.

QU: Were there any sex education classes at school?

AN: Well, there was meant to be but the teacher was always so embarrassed.. I remember him saying once - If you don't know this now, you never will. And that was like, we were 15, 16; it was very late I remember. There was no sex education at all. No period education.

QU: Meaning if you're not sexually active now, you won't ever be?

AN: Yeah, if you don't know now, you never will.

QU: That's a weird thing to say to 15 year olds?

AN: Yeah, everybody seemed to know about it (?)though.. Some people must have, but everybody pretended that they had. Like the thing he was talking about, I knew what he was talking about, I don't know how I remember: I used to babysit when I was 13, with my friend. And we found a load of this magazine called 'Man and Woman', I don't know if you remember?

QU: A sex manual?

AN: Yeah. And we read them all! I think I learnt a lot off that. And I used to cynically read the problem page of 'Woman's Own' that my mum used to buy.

QU: Did they talk to you about contraception and STDs at school?

AN: No, nothing like that. I remember they showed a little film about it. It was by this girl, like sat on this settee, and they showed the boy's hands sort of there, and the girl saying no, no. And that's all I can remember. And the rest of it was on smoking and things like that, and alcohol. No drugs, just smoking and alcohol. Oh, and another one about a man and a woman who were married, and they were having their first baby, and the problems that they were having; on a general basis really.

QU: So you went from nothing to marriage and babies?

AN: Yeah, nobody ever explained it. I learnt a lot from Biology, you know, about sort of ...(534)..and the (?)insides and things. MR (?)TAYLOR was really good; he was the Biology teacher. But nobody ever talked to you about the problems and the

entanglements, and what it means to a relationship when you start having sex, nobody ever actually discussed that sort of thing. They just seemed to expect that you would know, and they were really too embarrassed to start telling you. We used to have this supply teacher in, and she used to get so embarrassed, and we used to shout out - What's a condom, Miss? And she'd say - Right, we're going to watch this film. She could not cope, she couldn't have talked to us about it. ..(548).. everybody knew, she came in, she said..(550)..she'd sit down, with the white chalk and the chair and stick things through the back...

QU: Were there many people who were sexually active?

AN: Well, you thought that they were, because by the age of 16, some people had had what seemed like really long relationships, like two years. When you were 16 that was a long time. And you thought that they were, you got the idea that they were. I remember there was lads that always sort of talked about it, it was always the lads, never the girls. You know, they'd say - Oh, I wouldn't mind having her tonight - all this sort of thing.

QU: Were there girls who were called slags?

AN: There was just one that I really remember, they said she's a slag but she's really nice, you know, but she's a slag. She was, she was really nice. Her mum and dad I remember were, people used to talk, and you were always given the impression that they were really free and easy, sort of swinging sixties, which I suppose they were. And she'd sort of talk about anything, you know, she'd bring her Tampax in and let the boys have a look at them. Actually in the sixth form we got some photos of her, like she'd done it all, you know, she'd been a lesbian, and she'd done everything. There were stories about her in this straight jacket at a party and nothing else, like wriggling around on the floor. There were some photos of her that got passed round the sixth form and round the teachers, very sort of explicit centerfold photos. That sort of thing. A friend had took them, one of the other girls had taken them.

QU: Was there much discussion among the girls about sex?

AN: I remember that KATRINA did, she was the one that we all, well we didn't, I suppose we did think that she was a slag. The boys used to say she was.

QU: This was the girl in the photos?

AN: Yeah, that had the photographs. I can't remember what we said now.

QU: She was the one that was most open?

AN: Mmm. No, there wasn't, I don't ever remember talking, no.

QU: ...(614)..

AN: Yeah, well like one girl had sort of, in the fifth year, said that she'd seen the wedding ring that she wanted, and my best friend when she'd been going out with JAMES for two years, and they were quite serious. She'd been on holiday with him! As well, you know. But things that I found out later about their relationship, you know, that she had slept with him. And it was only when we became older, like it became the past, that it actually got talked about.

QU: It wasn't quite as rosy as it seemed?

AN: No, he was really nice, but she said she used to treat him really badly. She said that when she went to stay at his house, he'd sneak into her room, and they'd actually sleep together at his house. And if she'd told me that then, I'd probably have been really shocked. And she said that she'd slept with him and not used contraception. Because we actually came round to talking about it because JANINE, the Jehovah's Witness, her

brother got his girlfriend pregnant. And that was how we came to talk about, you know, ..(643)..in that situation yourself. It's only later you can talk about things like that; not in the school situation.

QU: So people wouldn't be talking about contraception amongst each other?

AN: No.

QU: Do you know why it was seen to be inappropriate to talk about things like that, even though people were doing it?

AN: I don't think anybody really wanted that sort of reputation. I mean, you learned later what girls were actually like. Because the ones that used to go out, used to go out with older boys, older friends. And you'd hear that they'd been out, that they'd got off with people, trapped off with people, and all this sort of thing, but you'd never actually know how far things went. You know what I mean?

QU: You hadn't got as far as talking about what people do, and how to take precautions?

AN: No.

QU: Do you think it would have helped if you'd had lessons on contraception?

AN: Oh definitely, yeah. Because everybody assumes that, like I say, like the teacher said to us - if you don't know now, you never will - but on the other hand, everybody assumes that you're not doing it. You know, you're not meant to be.

QU: So if you're not meant to be, you shouldn't know?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Let's get onto the boyfriend you had after the spotty one.

AN: BRETT, yeah.

QU: Was this the boy you slept with?

AN: Yeah.

QU: You were in the sixth form at the time?

AN: Yeah, I was just 18, just 18. He was a year older than me, I didn't know him from school, but I knew him from going in the pub. Like going to discos and things. And I thought he was really nice. So I started going out with him and everything. Until I started having a sexual, well not really sexual relationship, sort of fondling, things like that.

QU: Well, you become sexually aroused?

AN: Yeah. And then I always remember he wanted to sleep with me, he always wanted to make love to me. And he said he didn't want to use contraceptives because he couldn't feel anything through them.

QU: So he was talking about condoms?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Did he think of any other contraceptive?

AN: No.

QU: That was all that seemed possible?

AN: Yeah. I didn't really want to sleep with him, because I didn't feel ready, you know.. (713).. I didn't really feel ready, but I was very curious, you know.

QU: Did you think about virginity in a romantic way?

AN: No, not really, I don't know really what I thought. I know I was scared of getting pregnant, because my dad had said to me - we know what you're doing - which I wasn't at the time, he said to me - we know what you're doing, he said, if you get pregnant,

don't come home. And he used to come back to my house at night sometimes, and we used to sit and have a coffee and a laugh, and that's all it was at home, in my house. The rest of it was (?)done outside, sort of down by Palace and things like that. And my mum came down, and started calling me a whore and a slag in front of this boy. And she said to him - Don't you think you'd better go? So then he went. And that did put a lot of pressure on our relationship. But I really liked him, I trusted him. And he realised, sort of later on, that I wanted to go to university, and he said to me - You can't expect me to sit around twiddling my thumbs while you're off enjoying yourself at university. And I sort of begged him to stay with me, and he wouldn't do. In a way he was really special, because he was the first boy I slept with. I think I wanted to stay with him, you know what I mean?

QU: How did having sex make you feel about the relationship?

AN: I remember being really frightened, and sort of wanting to sleep with him but not really wanting to, being frightened of getting pregnant. And one night we went back to his house, and he didn't really force me, but I didn't really want to but I did want to. And I was really frightened. And I remember saying - we can't do it because I might get pregnant. And he got these condoms out, and that was it then, I was sort of frightened but not frightened. I remember it really really hurt. It really did hurt.

QU: So he did use a condom?

AN: Yeah, he did because I wouldn't let him near me. I remember he tried once or twice before, but I was just so dead against getting pregnant. I knew that if I ever did anything like that, without even entering, I could still get pregnant. So I was quite well genned up on what might happen. And then the second time, I only slept with him about three or four times, the second time his mum was in the kitchen. And we just went upstairs. Oh God, we just went upstairs and, I don't think I really realised what was going on, because he had speakers wired up from the record player downstairs, he had these speakers wired up upstairs. 'So let's go upstairs, and listen to some music'. And we got up there, and he just like moved the bed across the room against the door. And later on his mum came up, knocking on the door: 'BRETT, have you finished yet? Your brother wants to come to bed!'

QU: Did you have much say in what got done in these sexual encounters? Or was it really him having sex with you?

AN: Yeah. I remember one time he tried to force me, I was really frightened; just pinned on the settee, I thought - Oh God, what's going to happen? And he just wouldn't let me go. He was sort of trying to pull my skirt off, and get my knickers off; I was really frightened. I always thought after that, you know, that perhaps he was trying to trap me, because he didn't want me to go to university.

QU: To get you pregnant?

AN: Perhaps he wanted to get me pregnant, and then I would have to stay. But he used to (?)cry sometimes...(789)..

QU: Did you carry on using contraception?

AN: Yeah, I always insisted on it. He knew that, I mean, he used to say - Oh come on, you know, come on, it'll be alright. I used to say - No, it won't. I was very strong-willed about that. I suppose I still am. You know, I'd say - No, no way.

QU: Did you get pleasure from having sex with him, or did you do it for him?

AN: I suppose I thought that it was something I should have been doing for him. Because at that age everybody had, you know what I mean? A bit like wanting to be like everybody else, even though I never told anybody afterwards, sort of knowing within yourself, having something of your own that you knew and nobody else did. And after all my words..(802)..- oh, what the heck. If she thinks that.. I might as well, if she's going to call me like that. If my mother had been different perhaps I wouldn't have done. But I thought if she thinks I'm doing it, then I might as well. But I always made sure on the other hand that I would be safe, even though I didn't enjoy it at all. I used to be really frightened.

QU: You finished when you went off to college?

AN: Well, he finished with me when I wouldn't give up the idea of going to university. He just said - you can't expect me to wait three years, when you go off enjoying yourself, I'm not going to sit here and twiddle my thumbs. I was really upset for a while.

QU: If it had been him going off to university, would you have been prepared to wait for him?

AN: At the time I probably would have done, yeah. I think I would have done, yeah. I don't know, I think he just wanted a wife. And I knew that I wouldn't be. I mean I would have carried on seeing him while I was at university, but it wasn't what he wanted. I bet he's married now, with a couple of kids. I wouldn't be surprised.

QU: You went to university in [NAME OF CITY]?

AN: Yeah.

QU: It must have been a massive change in your life?

AN: Oh God, yeah, it was.

QU: What did you think about it?

AN: I felt really lonely at first. You know, you sit there, in your room with the green walls, and the prison bed, and the tatty rug, and the green wardrobe, and think - Oh God, what have you done? You sit there on your own at night, when everybody else has gone to bed, and think, God.. I think everyone must go through.. it's a horrible feeling. Because you think - What am I going to do? Will I ever make friends with anybody? I started going out with ADAM when I was at home.

QU: Is that the boy..?

AN: ..Going out with for two years, yeah. He was in the lower sixth, and I was in the upper sixth. And I got my exams, and got my grades and everything. He was with me actually when I phoned up [UNIVERSITY] to see if I'd got in. And I said - well, that's alright, and I toddled off to university then.

QU: Did you think that the relationship was serious at the time?

AN: Not really, no, I mean I liked him and everything but..

QU: ..You were off to university!

AN: He was nice, I thought he was nice, you know. Everybody liked him at school, he was always very sort of popular, really nice bloke. But I never really took any notice of him, I could've sort of took him or left him really.

QU: Did you have any relationships with people in [NAME OF CITY]?

AN: No.

QU: Were you tempted? It hits you at university that everybody is sleeping with everybody..

AN: Oh yeah, oh God, yeah.

QU: What did you think of that?

AN: I remember at first, PAULA, my next door neighbour, I remember when I first realised that that was actually her room. I was sort of really surprised because it wasn't that long after, it didn't seem that long after we'd started university, like a month or two months, that he was actually like sleeping with her. And the first time I slept with ADAM was sixth months after we'd started going out together. And things seemed to happen a hell of a lot quicker. I don't know whether it's because you're away from the parental influence, you know like - no, you're not staying out tonight. No, you're not having him sleeping in your room - you know, things like that. But things seemed to happen a lot quicker. A lot of people seemed to get through a lot of girlfriends and boyfriends. And usually they would have slept with them just in the course of the relationship, just because everything happened so quickly.

QU: Were you confused by this? Did you mind it?

AN: I remember being really shocked at one of my friends really. She'd gone out one night and come back with this bloke, and slept with him. I remember knocking on her door and being really surprised, you know, when two of them came out, and not really knowing what to say. Or where to look, I thought - Oh! What's NAOMI done? What's she doing here sort of thing. I was really shocked.

QU: You said most of the people at university came from very different backgrounds, did they have a different idea of what was OK to do in relationships? It was OK to have more partners, and they weren't so frightened of being called a slag?

AN: A few of them were...(874-875).. I used to get sick of them actually. Used to think - Oh no, not again. I think she was bisexual, that was...(877)..she used to have girlfriends and boyfriends and...(878). This sort of came out later on in the year, when I wasn't so shocked by anything anymore. But like, MELINDA, she was from a very middle-class background: 'OK, ja', you know. And I remember we were all shocked, all of us were when she was in the bath with her boyfriend. We had a bath at the end of the corridor, you could hear them doing things; we were all really shocked.

QU: It was something you'd never have dreamt of doing?

AN: Yeah, not in the bath, not in the corridor. You know, we'd have parties, and she'd turn up with a towel wrapped round her, you know, nothing else.

QU: At university you realise what you thought was the right way is not the only way.

AN: Yeah, everybody seemed to get a boyfriend very very quickly. I remember feeling really left out because I was still seeing ADAM, but he was never there during the week; he'd come up at weekends. The first year, I used to go home at weekends to see him, and I had a Saturday job, and I used to go home and see him. And I missed everything at weekends. And consequently, during the week, I'd be very left out, because everybody else had got boyfriends... So I used to feel like really alienated, you know. You'd go and knock on somebody's door, and they'd have their boyfriend in there, and you didn't really like to stay very long, you know. And you'd go out, and you'd always be the one walking at the back, because you didn't have a boyfriend with you. And like later on you'd find out that these relationships weren't perfect, you know, that some people actually really hated them. The first thing wrong in a relationship, and everybody just did it..

QU: How do you feel about having sex with somebody you haven't got a deep commitment to?

AN: I couldn't do it myself, I really couldn't do it. And I couldn't actually fancy somebody and then go and sleep with them just like that. I need to know more about somebody than that. I need to know that they're worthwhile getting to know. Because some lads would just go for all the girls like wildfire, you see them with a different girl every week. You knew that they'd sleep with them all. But I couldn't do it myself, no. I couldn't stand the rejection, you know, you thought you were actually seeing somebody, it's a big commitment having sex with somebody, if you do and you see them with somebody else the next week, you think - Oh God, you know. What's going on?

QU: What do you think happens when you have sex with someone, what's the difference?

AN: Well, you're not just friends anymore. That goes, that's gone. I mean you haven't got that friendship anymore; it's something more serious. And you start having a hold over one another, not before where you're just seeing one another, going out for a drink maybe. It sort of gets more heavy really. You can't just pick people up and drop them.

QU: That's what women are scared about, it's not men's attitude to sex?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Do you feel that if you were willing to have sex with somebody you should get something in return, which is commitment?

AN: Yeah, yeah. I don't know, I just couldn't sleep with somebody like that. It's just like it doesn't matter, it's just another, you know, just another person sort of thing, nothing very special.

QU: When did you first hear about AIDS?

AN: It must have been before the second year. I remember in the second year, we lived with our landlord, and he was gay. And he never used to worry about AIDS. I must have heard about it before then. I probably heard about it through my course perhaps in the first year. You know it was just starting to become known about. I don't remember it when I was at home, I don't remember ever having anything about AIDS whether I was at school or at home. It must have been the first year of university.

QU: What was your first reaction to it?

AN: At first I thought it was just a disease that a lot of homosexuals were getting like in New York, America. And I knew it was a virus, and I thought - It's just the homosexuals.

QU: Do you understand how that could have worked at the time?

AN: Yeah. And then you sort of hear more about it, and you realise that it's not just homosexuals. Like you hadn't actually heard about hemophiliacs who'd had Factor 8, and a lot of them had got it. I remember all the adverts on the telly, (?) a thing like that.. I haven't really heard much about it since.

QU: Did you ever feel any of the advertising was directed towards you, or that you should be worried about it?

AN: No, no. I remember thinking - My God, I'd hate to get that. And then I thought - Could I get it? - and I decided that I couldn't, you know. I just had one boyfriend; I wasn't sleeping around. He wasn't sleeping around, so I thought, well, you know. I know I thought about my landlord a lot, you know, the string of boyfriends they had, they always used to be worried about it. They always said - Oh I'm not going to have the test, you know. I don't want to know if I've got it.

QU: He wasn't taking any precautions?

AN: Not as far as I know, because this last boyfriend that he had, that he told me he really loved, he wouldn't sleep with him. He was only young, he was only about 21, and MARCUS, the landlord, was about 30, 32. And this young lad wouldn't sleep with him. Because he was worried about getting AIDS. Because the young lad had had the test, and MARCUS wouldn't, and MARCUS had been around..(978)..when we were there. He used to have loads of men in. And he used to tell me what it was like. He used to say - When you take women away from society, the men go wild. He used to say he used to go to these clubs, I mean he used to bring them back to the house, you know, like five or six of them in his room all night. You could hear it, it used to be horrible, you know, in bed- Oh no, not the boyfriends again.

QU: That gave you a strange idea of what gay men are like?

AN: I know, we hated him though, we really did hate him. He used to give them all keys, they used to let themselves in. They might have been gay but it's still pretty frightening when you open the bedroom door and you're confronted by a man you've never seen before. We used to have them in the bathroom and everything. We used to hear them singing to one another: 'Give it to me now..' I suppose I've got a distorted view, because he was horrible, we hated him. You know, other people that we've met, who've said they've got gay friends - They're really nice, they're really lovely people - you think, yeah, I can believe that, but there's also the other side as well like MARCUS was.

QU: But you didn't at that time think it was any risk for heterosexuals?

AN: No, no.

QU: Did any of your friends who were at more risk than you?

AN: Well, we never really talked about AIDS, no. We never really talked about it at all. I think everybody must have thought it was just homosexuals, because we never sort of said - Oh God, I hope I haven't got AIDS - things like that. It never really entered our heads, you're away from that side of life, know what I mean? You see it as another way of life completely, it's not going to affect you, it's not going to cross over into your way of life.

QU: Your decision to stay with your boyfriend while you were at university, was that because you were worried about AIDS or not?

AN: No, no.

QU: Were the people around you changing their behaviour?

AN: No, MARCUS didn't change. I mean when he finished with that young lad, GLEN, when he finished with him, he still went out picking up more boyfriends.

QU: Has the situation changed since you left university?

AN: What, that I think it might affect me?

QU: Yeah, or that it's more of a heterosexual risk, has any information changed your view about it?

AN: No, not really. The Manchester Evening News is always on about people using things like that, but I don't use drugs, or anything like that. It's still not changed, it still seems like it's another side of life, you know, I'm not involved.

QU: And this goes for your friends as well?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Are people you know more likely to use condoms now than they would have been in the past?



AN: No, cos most of the girls are on the pill with steady boyfriends. I think they've passed the condom, casual boyfriend stage now.

QU: So you think condoms are something you use when you're young?

AN: Mmm.

QU: They're not for a serious relationship?

AN: No, they don't seem to be. I don't know, I suppose in my relationship, I'd rather take the risks that go with the pill, than the risks that go with the condom. Because I think you're more likely to take a risk when you're younger, I don't know why. But I don't think I'd trust a condom now. I don't want to get pregnant that much, that I wouldn't trust one, whereas like when I was younger, you know I did. You take more risks when you're young, I don't think you really realise.

QU: You don't realise what the consequences are.

AN: Yeah, you're sort of protected from it all when you're young.

QU: Have your expectations of sex changed since you've been with your current boyfriend?

AN: Mmm, yeah.

QU: In what way?

AN: I don't know really. I've been with him now for four years, we're engaged, we're getting a house. I don't know if it's changed.

QU: Do you still see it as something you do for him?

AN: No, not any more. I wouldn't do it just for him. I've changed, I've changed a lot. I do it for me as well, I wouldn't just do it for him. I'll turn him down, if I don't want to, I'll say no, I don't want to.

QU: Have you learnt more about your body and what gives you pleasure as well?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Do you think you could have learnt those things about your sexuality without a long-term relationship, or do you think you found it through that?

AN: Oh, a long-term relationship I think. I think it's just something that grows, between two people. At first it's all finding out, isn't it? - I want to find out, I want to know - and it grows into something else.

QU: In your relationship, is your pleasure as important as his?

AN: Oh yeah, definitely.

QU: Do you think sex and relationships have lived up to what you thought about them when you were young in romantic magazines etc.? Have your expectations been fulfilled?

AN: Yeah, I think they are. I think we've been through a lot together, it's brought us a lot closer, and we'll go out for a meal, that sort of thing. Like they say in the magazines, they'll say about when you're young; it doesn't happen when you're young, it happens when you're older. I think all my friends, they're the same as well. You're courted more when you're older, you know, there's not the rush and the fumbling of when you're 16. Because you've sort of done it then, and you know what to expect, so you're not in such a rush to do it when you're older. And there's not the pressure on you either. I don't know whether it's because I'm more independent through going to university, I know my own mind more, anything like that. I've had the chance to get to know my own mind. I haven't fallen into the traps of becoming pregnant when you're (?)young.

QU: How did you make the decision about settling down, buying a house, getting married?

AN: I don't know, I didn't want to until, I suppose, a few months ago really. I was dead against it at first, and he bought an engagement ring. I still didn't want to get engaged or anything like that; I was really still frightened at what might happen. Also what put me off was having to go home and tell my mother and father; that was still really important, you know, I was at university. I thought - Oh God, I'm going to have to go back and tell them, even though they weren't supporting me, they didn't make my grant up or anything like that. I'm going to have to go back and tell them. Then when I left university, it's sort of like being away from that culture, back to real life. I started living at his parents because I couldn't go back home; although I had wanted to get a flat on my own, he didn't want me to, so I ended up staying at his mum and dads.

QU: What did you feel about him not wanting you to live on your own?

AN: I thought he was really stupid.

QU: Was it because he didn't trust you?

AN: No, he worries about me. He really does worry. You know, like tonight when I was coming out, I says - I'm going over to that girl tonight. He said - Be careful on your way home. You know, like - don't talk to any strange men, sort of thing. He's really protective. He didn't want me to live on my own because he'd just be really worried about me.

QU: Why did you want to live on your own?

AN: I didn't want to live with his parents. I find it really difficult living with other people in that sort of situation. That's one of the things that worries us about getting a house, I just can't stand it; I spend a lot of time in my room at ADAM'S house. His parents get really narked, one of us not sitting down there. They sort of intrude, like his mum's been through all my things, which really upset me. You know, like wanting to know. I just feel awful...(1136)..to tell you this. We went to Blackpool and he bought a massive vibrator. He thought it was really funny, a big joke and what have you. I was thinking - Oh God, throw it away. And he thought it was really funny and was laughing about it. I thought he'd thrown it away. And he hadn't, he'd hidden at the back of his record player at home, in his mini system. His mum was cleaning in the back of the record player for some reason, and she found it.

AN: Did she say anything?

AN: No, she didn't say anything. I don't know what she must think, because she's been through all my things, I know she has. I put my pills, my contraceptive pills in my suitcase under my bed. And to get that suitcase out you need two people, you know, me and ADAM need two people, one to lift the bed up, and one to pull the case. And like she'd been in it, she'd put something in it that had never even been in there before, so I knew that she'd been reading through everything. And I was so upset, because I didn't want her to know about that.

QU: The fact that you had a sexual relationship?

AN: Yeah, because she still treats him like her little boy. He's still at his house, and she still thinks he's really young. I don't know, we just don't seem to get any time on our own. I just didn't want her to know.

QU: Do you feel happy about sleeping together in that house?

AN: Oh, we don't.

QU: Where do you have sex?

AN: We don't.. When they go out, which is fairly rarely, we do then.

QU: You don't necessarily feel like it then?

AN: No, I feel so pressurised, I get really upset, you know, it's like - Now! Not for the next...(1164).. I can't cope with this. And she won't like go to bed, oh it's horrible. Like some nights we'll sit up, and it'll get to 12 o'clock, and I'll end up going to bed before she does. And like she'll come down, she'll come down again, and she's nearly caught us once. She came down, they'd been in bed for hours, and she just came down - KENNETH wants a drink...(1172).. Oh God, and we just got dressed. You're always listening when you're downstairs. We've stopped doing that now, it just got too much. And like..oh that was it, ADAM went out one night, and I stayed in like to go to bed. And he always comes in to see me when he goes out. So he came in...(1178)..and he was just saying - Oh yeah, he'd had a good time. In like his own room. And this must have been half past one. And the next morning she said to me - Whatever was the matter last night? I said - what do you mean? She said - well, I heard ADAM going in to your room, and voices. You know, this was about half past one, two o'clock; she'd obviously been listening. And the fact that she'd been through my things really upset me.

QU: Is this the reason why you want to move out, you want your own place so much?

AN: Yeah, I mean it's just like we're brother and sister, we can't do it. When I was at university for two years he came to visit me at the weekend.

QU: So you had a much better sex life then?

AN: Yeah, well we had a sex life, we haven't at the moment. It just gets so frustrating sometimes, you know, just wanting time on our own. You just can't have it. I don't know what his mum and dad think, whether they expect us...(1196).. I mean when we got engaged nothing changed. you know, you'd think she'd go off to bed earlier or something.

QU: Have you thought of renting a place together?

AN: Well, that's what I wanted to do, I wanted to go and rent somewhere on my own. I said - You can come and stay whenever you want - but it causes such a lot of trouble at home, his parents.

QU: The idea of him moving out?

AN: Well, the idea of him coming to sleep and stay with me.

QU: So they're very protective of him?

AN: Yeah. Cos when I went to university, I came home to see him every weekend. It changed then, I had a lot of work to do, and he said he'd come and see me. And he said - Dad caused such a ruction, he really did. He caused such a load of trouble over that, saying like - If you really want to be together, you'll wait these two years, and then be together. He really didn't want him to come up and stay and sleep with me. So we made up this pretense that whenever he came up he was having a rented room. He had to describe this other room which wasn't mine.

QU: so as far as they're concerned, you wait til you get married before you sleep together?

AN: Yeah. I don't want to get married.

QU: Does ADAM want to get married?

AN: He does, yeah. I don't, I don't want to get married; I didn't want to get engaged. He took me off to Wales, and he'd brought the ring and everything, and he took me to this

really nice hotel, and he just got it out. But it didn't really matter, you know, so I said yes. You know, I wasn't against it. I hadn't really thought about it. I'm not really bothered about being married or getting engaged. He gets upset when I don't wear the ring. Because he thinks then everybody'll know I'm taken sort of thing. That really annoys me, that really does annoy me. Because he doesn't go round with a ring, and I wouldn't expect him to. It's got this little possessive thing.

QU: you don't like the idea of being his property?

AN: No, I don't, God! I've said to him - I'm not yours, I'm myself. I just don't like it. Sometimes he tries to be like his dad, his mum's really submissive, it's sort of opposite to what my parents are. His dad's sort of really bullying; I don't like his dad, I think he is a bully. And she sort of does anything, you know, she's always cleaning, and she does everything for him. He has breakfast in bed every single morning. And sometimes Keith tries it on with me.

QU: He's come to expect that?

AN: Yeah, this is what his dad's like, and I soon put him right.

QU: In the household, are you expected to be his mother's..(1247)?

AN: No, I stopped that a long time ago. What happened, at first she said - I'm not letting you stay because we need the money, or anything like that. I'm letting you stay because I want you to help me with all the housework. So anyway. (?)ADAM'S unemployed, I mean, ADAM and his dad don't do a jot, you know, just sit there, it makes me really mad. When his dad's gobbled up his tea, ADAM'S mum's still getting hers out of the oven. Brings his out on a tray, he eats it, and she's rushing round after him. If he's finished his main course before she has, he'll say to her - come on, stop watching telly - and she'll get up, leave her hot dinner, and go off and get him ice-cream or something like that, coffee and biscuits. I just sit there; God, I don't believe it. Because it's so opposite from what my parents were like.

QU: Have you talked to ADAM about what he expects from you?

AN: Well, we have talked about it, yeah, and I have told him..(1266)..false impression of what I think his father's like. Because he knows that I wouldn't stand for it, he knows what I'm like. The other night I was cooking, I got in, I always get in after he does, and I went in the kitchen, and he said - Are you making pizza? I said - yeah, I think I'll have some for my tea. So he says - Oh, I'll have some as well. So I started doing it. Then I thought - hang on a minute, where is he? And he was in the room, watching TV. So I shouted - Do you want some of this? And he came rushing in laughing, and he says - I know what that means; it says, 'if you want some get your ass in here and get it!' I think anybody'd try and get away with things that they can. If you can get away with things; I do it sometimes, everybody does, but it's where to draw the line, to stop yourself being used and unhappy. His mother's so unhappy, she's so downtrodden, you know. I feel sorry for her in some ways, but when I think, you know, you've let this happen, you have to say, but it's anything for a quiet life.

QU: Does he understand what you want out of your career?

AN: Oh yeah, definitely.

QU: What does he do?

AN: He works for Oldham Council .... he's a technician. He's thinking about doing a degree at the moment. But he definitely knows what I want to do; he wouldn't stand in

my way, he definitely wouldn't stand in my way. Because I'm very strong-willed, obstinate sometimes. I'll do what I want really.

QU: If the situation arose that this job finished and the only job that came up was in London, do you think you would move?

AN: No, I wouldn't take it, no. Not unless he moved with me, I wouldn't take it.

QU: Do you think he'd be prepared to move with you?

AN: No, because it's sort of his turn now; I've got my degree, if he wants to do a degree, I'll have to wait til he comes out before I can go on and do the next thing if it's a long way away. You have to be prepared to do that really. It's give and take, because he waited, or we both waited for one another really, for the three years. Like at the moment it's me that'll have to do the waiting. I don't know, if this M.Phil comes up, I'll probably do something else in the (?)area. But I'm prepared to wait, especially with us buying a house at the moment.

QU: That's quite a big commitment isn't it?

AN: Mmm. There's a point where I think you have to become committed to one another.

QU: Are you scared of doing that?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Think there might be somebody else better for you?

AN: Yeah, well I always think there might be someone better for him. I always say - I'm not what you want, you want somebody who'll stay at home, and do your washing and your cooking and your cleaning. This is when I get really mad and upset when I'm thinking about my parents, or my birthday, or near Christmas, or something like that. He sort of understands me now. I mean at first I used to get him really upset as well, but he can cope with it now. Because I always worry that we'll argue, and we won't get on, that we'd be like my mum and dad.

QU: What's your ideal of a partner or a man?

AN: I think ADAM is really, I'm sure that he is. I suppose I do get a lot of my own way, but he knows where I'm pushing it, you know. He is considerate, apart from the fact that he won't let me have a car to come to work. I come about 10 miles, and he goes up the road, anyway..

QU: You'll have to do something about that.

AN: I know, yeah, I'm peeved about that, I get really mad. So I've said I'm going to save up for one on my own, and I will do as well. He says - Oh, when I finish with this one, you can have it. I said - I'm not having your cast-offs. ..(1343)..

QU: Have you ever met anybody, or do you now anybody who is HIV+ or has AIDS?

AN: No.

QU: And would you find it shocking if somebody you knew was HIV+?

AN: I don't know if I'd be shocked, it would probably mean a lot what he'd been doing to get AIDS. I would probably be very surprised, because I can't imagine anyone that I know having AIDS. You don't know people's lives outside work, you just don't know people.

QU: What sort of person do you think is likely to get it?

AN: Homosexuals, drug-abuser.

QU: Do you think a gay woman is as likely as a gay man to get it?

AN: No.

QU: What puts you at risk?

AN: What do you mean?

QU: It's not being gay that makes you at risk?

AN: No. Promiscuity, not taking the right precautions. I mean if you are going to sleep around, whoever you are, you should take precautions.

QU: If you use safe-sex then you wouldn't be at risk?

AN: No.

QU: What do you understand by 'safe-sex'?

AN: Condom, definitely with AIDS.

QU: Anything else?

AN: Just sex with one partner, or a couple of partners in your past history, just sort of not sleeping with a lot of people. Or if you are going to sleep with more than one partner, just knowing their history.

QU: What would make you feel secure if you were checking out someone's sexual history?

AN: Well, I'd probably find out if they'd had a long-term partner before me. You get a general idea of people, at work, of what they're like. The things they do at weekends and things. but I'd probably find out if they'd had a long-term relationship before me.

QU: And then you'd trust them more?

AN: Mmm.

QU: If you had a new partner, would you practice safe-sex, or would you find out about their history?

AN: I'd find out what they were like, and then I'd take it from there really.

QU: Do you think you'd be happy to rely on that, and then just use the pill, as you have been?

AN: Probably, yeah. I think it would worry me more now, like getting older. I think it would worry me a lot more now. You never know anybody's full past history, you never know what everybody's done all the time. I think I'd be a bit more cautious, but I'd probably go back on the pill. I'd probably use a condom for the first, I don't know, I'd say for the first couple of times. Perhaps I would if I wasn't so sure, you know, I think I would then. But then as I got to know a person, I'd probably go back on the pill. Like your trust builds up, you find out a bit more. I'd definitely be worried I think at first.

QU: So if that situation arose, would you now think about AIDS as being an issue?

AN: Yeah, definitely.

QU: Do you think there's pressure on you to stay in a long-term relationship now that AIDS is around, that it's more difficult to experiment?

AN: Yeah. I mean like before you might have got a bit drunk, gone to a disco, had a few drinks, and said - well, you know, he's nice. Now you probably think twice about it, you think - Will he have a condom? Will I? Where's he been? You just don't know. You just meet somebody, and it's like instant attraction. You'd definitely think twice about it.

QU: You said you'd be able to ask people to wear condoms, do you think you still would?

AN: I think you'd have to.

QU: Even if you were involved with people?

AN: Yeah, I'd think you'd have to. I think I would. I'd insist on it.