

LJH 18 Lucinda
Second interview 29.6.1990

Q: ... see how it compares. Well, you did say that you were gonna do the B.Tech., that that's what you wanted to do. So what, you left school - were you leaving school last year?

A: Yeah. Yeah, I was. I was going to leave.

Q: And you have two years in college?

A: Yeah, two years. I finish up next June sometime. About this time.

Q: So how is it, I mean what's -

A: Oh, it's really good, it's - the course is different modules and that and it's really good fun. I mean, the people there are quite nice as well. And it's totally different from school. At school you were a child or something, you know, but here you're a young adult and you're treated like one as well.

Q: You prefer that, do you?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah. Do you still keep up with your friends that you went to school with?

A: Yes, I mean, my mates like MEGAN, GRACE, I still see them, we regularly see each other. Every four weeks we always go round each other's houses, have a chat.

Q: What about new friends, have you made any new friends?

A: Yeah, I have. Like the whole group, we all get on really well, and there's a bunch of first years starting 'cos it's the first time the B Tech's been started up in Westminster... so we're gonna have to train them up as well. So I'm meeting a lot more people as well.

Q: Yeah. Do you do any sort of placement stuff, do you actually go and -

A: Yeah, I went to HOLIDAY AGENCY.

Q: Yeah?

A: Yeah. It was really good fun.

Q: What did you do, what did you have to do?

A: Everything.

Q: Yeah?

A: Yeah.

Q: What does that consist of?

A: Telephoning up people, use the typewriter, use the computers, Prestel - generally working in an office. What else do you do? - I booked a couple of flights.

Q: How long were you there for?

A: Four weeks.

Q: Oh, gosh.

A: Oh, and I was helping the reps go out as well. That was good fun.

Q: Yeah. What about getting actual trips? That would be what would interest me.

A: No. (laugh). ...didn't let me go on any trips. But I went to Germany with the college -

Q: Yeah.

A: - for a week. That was quite good, it was residential. I don't know... next year.

Q: Sounds quite good then. Is it what you expected?

A: Yeah. I thought it would be something like that, yeah.

Q: So what's your ambition now?

A: I don't know.

Q: No?

A: At the moment I haven't come to any decision. Whereas next year I go back to college, and after that I don't know. I don't know if I really wanna go into education anymore. Before I wanted to go a bit deeper but I don't know if I really want to now.

Q: Mm. See how it goes next year, I suppose.

A: Mm. See what my results are like, 'cos it's basically on that really.

Q: How do you think you've done?

A: I think so far I've done okay. Not brilliant but - I know I haven't done as much as I could have done, but it's alright. It's average. I know I could have tried harder though.

Q: Yeah? What was making you not try to hard?

A: I'm bored. I'm really bored. I don't know, loads of things, I'm really generally bored. There's got to be something a bit more - something out there that I've got to do, 'cos at the moment I'm really bored with everything.

Q: Yeah. What are the things are you're bored with?

A: I don't know. Boys?

Q: Yeah?

A: All males, you know, I'm bored with them. Don't wanna know.

Q: No?

A: No. Family, they're getting me down. Everything generally. Anything I'm doing, I'm pretty bored with it.

Q: I wonder why.

A: I don't know. I really - I mean, I sit down and I try to think of it, why, why am I feeling like this? And I can't think of any particular reason why I feel like this, but I know that there's something more for me to do, there's something else just there.

Q: Yeah. Yeah.

A: Just got to reach out and grab it.

Q: You haven't quite figured -

A: - what it is. No.

Q: Yeah. But are you exposing yourself to different things to find out, are you doing...?

A: Yeah, I'm doing - like I've started a club at college, photography, a couple of months ago -

Q: Yeah.

A: I really like that.

Q: Yeah.

A: Quite good. But - I don't know. I haven't felt it yet.

Q: Something will come.

A: Mm, something's got to come.

Q: But what about boys, has there been any boys since last year? Last year you weren't particularly - you'd just been in a relationship with a guy who'd gone off to EUROPEAN COUNTRY, I think it was.

A: Oh, him, yeah. I had a postcard from him actually a little while ago.

Q: Yeah?

A: Then I met GREG. We went out with each other from the summer onwards, and finished about October. He was a bloody waste of time.

Q: Was he?

A: He was really nice to me and he was going, "oh, I love you", and I said to him, "I'm sorry, but I can't say I love you 'cos I don't feel anything for you". I said, "I like you". But he was a two-timing so and so.

Q: Was he?

A: 'Cos he went out one night, and I wasn't going out, 'cos my mum wasn't well, so I said look, I'm gonna stay at home and look after my mum. So he said alright. And he found another bird at this party, and he took her home and everything. I was so angry. And I got in - I met him in a pub the following night. I tell you, I had a pint of cider and I wasted all that cider over him.

Q: Yeah?

A: I should have drunk it. He wasn't worth it.

Q: How did you find out, then, did he tell you or -

A: He phoned up the next day and said that's what he'd done. He said, "I'm really sorry but I don't know why I did it". I goes, well - and he goes, "'cos I know what you'll do", he goes, "I know I'll never see you again". I goes, "you're bloody right, you ain't gonna see me ever again". And I haven't. And once when I did see him actually, down Brent Cross, and I was walking down and he just saw me ... like that, and he just turned and went the other way and I turned and went the other way myself. 'Cos I just don't wanna know. But because he was one of my good mates' brother, now me and MEGAN don't talk either. I mean, I said to her - I goes, "I know things will change between us, and I don't want them to but I know they will, 'cos they always do", and she goes, "yeah, well, we'll just try". She's a bit (?)negative most anyway. She didn't believe it, she said "oh, no, we'll be friends forever". But 'course, it never works out like that, 'cos family - blood's thicker than water.

Q: But that was - that was after quite a few months, it must have been.

A: Yeah, that was after a while and then - ... some guy for a week, but forget that, that was just stupid. But other than that, no.

Q: Was the relationship with GREG a sexual relationship?

A: I don't know. It was a bit of both really.

Q: Mm. What, friendship as well?

A: Yeah. 'Cos we were friends, we were very good friends before. And then he asked me out but - and it was good while it was going on. In the early time it was good, and towards the end I was getting bored again. But I didn't say nothing, 'cos I thought, oh well, maybe it'll go like it was... later on. But as the summer stopped, you know, I wanted to move on again. But he was a bit before me really. But - in a way I was hurt, but in a way I was thinking, that's alright, it's an easy way for me to get out of the relationship.

Q: Yeah. I mean, it sounded a bit like that, the way you were describing him, I must admit.

A: It's easy to get out of it like that.

Q: Yeah. So had you actually had sex with him?

A: Yeah.

Q: How was it? Any good?

A: Not really.

Q: No?

A: He wasn't - he's not that kind of person. He's a bit shy and that, and I had to like bring him out a bit and... It just wasn't worth it.

Q: What, so you didn't enjoy it much?

A: Not really.

Q: Was he - was he the same age as you or -

A: He was eighteen. No, nineteen.

Q: ... older. Was he inexperienced, then, I mean had he -

A: I think so. He must have been. But it was like, before when we were friends he was always saying, "oh, I had this old woman last night, oh, she was so good", you know, "I had this twenty-eight year old last night and she was so good, she was so big". You know, I used to think, yeah, it's true, you know, 'cos I was his friend. But it couldn't have been. He must have been... he must have been doing something else and saying something else.

Q: Did he used to say that to you when he was a friend rather than when he was -

A: Yeah, when he was my friend... But - did I tell you last night about the twenty-eight year old guy?

Q: Well, you told me about -

A: BEN.

Q: - you hadn't mentioned a name. There was a guy who you didn't - you weren't particularly fond of and you got pregnant. Is that him?

A: No, no.

Q: That was another. No, you didn't tell me about BEN, tell me about BEN (laugh).

A: Oh, my God. Twenty-eight year old guy with a child and everything -

Q: Yeah?

A: ... with him. That's about it, I think. It's not much, is it, after a year?

Q: Well...

A: ...(?)careful.

Q: Well, also I mean it's not that - I mean, like you were saying last year, that you - what comes up comes up sort of. What about this BEN, how did you meet him?

A: He was a friend of a friend, we met at a party. He was alright. He was a different kind of guy. I mean, he was totally different than the people that I'd met before 'cos he was older. He - I don't know, he was different. He had something about him which was different and I was - I mean, first of all we agreed to be really good friends, and we never did anything sexual anyway. We were just such good friends. But - I don't know, I think I cared for him a lot more than any of the other relationships that I've ever had. He was really good to me.

Q: Had you wanted it to be a sexual relationship? Did you feel you wanted to at the time?

A: At the time I thought, you know, I do love you and all this business, and I want it to be sexual, but now I'm glad it wasn't. 'Cos if - 'cos I still see him now and again now, and we still have that same thing. And he's always - he's always saying to me as well, "if something had been different, if I had been maybe younger", maybe he hadn't met his first girlfriend who he's got a child by, "I would have taken you forever". But he goes, "now I can't. 'Cos you're young, you've got your whole life ahead of you".

Q: Yeah.

A: I can't say much about that, I mean - he was right.

Q: He decided then that there wasn't -

A: There wasn't any choice. And afterwards, now I think he was right. It probably wouldn't have worked anyway.

Q: But were you upset at the time?

A: Mm, I was very upset.

Q: Yeah, it is upsetting. And you think that that was the fact that it wasn't sexual, made it easier for you to handle -

A: Yeah.

Q: That's often the case, isn't it, that it's some sort of - being - having sex with a person changes the nature of the -

A: Yeah, it becomes a bit more deeper. This way it wasn't so deep. It was deep but it wasn't so deep.

Q: Mm. So had you felt that with GREG as well, that you were - when it became sexual it changed into something deeper?

A: It didn't change with him.

Q: Yeah?

A: It just - just went along the same. I don't know, I just shouldn't have gone out with that guy.

Q: Yeah.

A: You know. ... silly thing to do. 'Cos we went out first of all - he was really ill. This was when I was doing work experience at [AIRLINE] - yeah, me and MEGAN went to see him 'cos he was really ill. And he said, come to the cinema with me tomorrow. I goes, "but you're ill, how can we go to the cinema?" He goes, "oh, I'll get better, don't worry about it". So we went to the cinema and blah, blah, you know, we got off with each other in the cinema and that, and it was okay, we went to the pub for a drink. Then MEGAN come along, all three of us drinking. Then we got the bus home, and he - what did he do? He just held me funny, and I thought, "oh, he wants a bit more out of this", you know, from his body language I could tell. And MEGAN goes, "he seems like a nice guy". And I thought, maybe he is - you know, I'd known him for quite a while, for about six/seven months beforehand. I thought to myself, "yeah". So I went out with him. I should never have done it.

Q: Mm. I was interested, because it was like - I was trying to think of the difference - it's like people who you really get involved with, I mean with or without sex sort of thing, and people who you don't, and it - with or without sex. And the difference is the degree of caring somehow, isn't it?

A: There is. I think there is.

Q: Yeah.

A: But, I don't know, with GREG, nothing - oh, that's just part of my life that I just wanna forget, 'cos he was a waste of time. And it's like MEGAN says to me, "do you remember when you went out with GREG, what you were doing?", I said, "just don't remind me", you know...

Q: And when you - when you say - I mean when you talk about sex, do you think of it as being sexual intercourse sort of thing, or do you think of anything else being involved?

A: No, sexual intercourse.

Q: Yeah. Because I mean - you say the relationship with BEN, it became very close and so forth, but it didn't have sexual intercourse.

A: Mm. But it was a very loving kind of thing.

Q: Yeah. So did you do other things apart from sexual intercourse?

A: No. Oh, yeah, we'd kiss and cuddle and things like that but nothing else. Anyway, I'm quite glad of that, actually.

Q: Mm, as you said. I was just thinking, like it's - are those other things sexual or not sort of thing? I mean, did you do other things with GREG before you actually had sexual intercourse?

A: We kissed and cuddled as well, nothing else.

Q: What about the sex itself, I mean what kind of things did you do when you were having sex?

A: Straightforward. He wasn't very adventurous. He wasn't at all adventurous, you know, he'd just lie on the bed and that was it. And that's why I think I got bored, 'cos I'm not that kind of type of person. I'm adventurous anyway, so he didn't satisfy me at all. I mean I faked it so that he would think "I'm doing the right thing", you know, and it worked, I mean he (?) thought he was doing fine. 'Cos he went back to - he was mates with BEN - 'cos we used to hang around in one big group, and he knew BEN, and now he's working with BEN... And he went back to him - 'cos he doesn't know about me and BEN - but he went back to him and said "oh, me and her had a really good time..." like that; and like BEN's looking at him funny, he's thinking, "what you talking about?", you know, "'cos you didn't do anything to her anyway". He was saying, "oh, yeah, she really loved it last night" and he was thinking - and BEN went away and told me. Then when we broke up, he was going, "oh, (?) LUCINDA was just no good, she was just absolutely pathetic". And BEN just whacked him one and said, "look, LUCINDA's a really nice girl and what you're saying about her isn't right, and you know it's not right 'cos she wasn't like that at all". And GREG got a bit suspicious at "why is it he's doing all this business?". But now it's all blown over so it's alright. But GREG thinks something happened but he's got no proof. I haven't seen BEN now for about three, four months. Since GREG started working up there I haven't been up there either.

Q: Mm. Do you think that's - that's usual, for, you know, young men to go around talking to others about what's been happening between them and their girlfriend?

A: Well, when I was at school it seemed the in thing for boys to do -

Q: Yeah.

A: - but now I'm at college, they say - they say the same thing, "oh, I went to bed with this girl last night", but it's different, because they don't say it was good or it was bad, they say it was loving and "I really wanted to make her feel happy". It's a different kind of thing now, what they're saying.

Q: Mm. Do you think that's their age?

A: It could be, but I mean they're still the same age. He's like eighteen and GREG was eighteen.

Q: Yeah, true.

A: But then what a twenty-four year old - I mean, I was listening to a twenty-four year old, and he was saying the same thing as what GREG was saying. So I don't think age really comes into it. I think it's the maturity of a person.

Q: Yeah. Yeah. I suppose I was thinking... and also maybe it's to do with, if you're in a crowd at school who are all doing that, or saying that -

A: Yeah.

Q: - then you get hooked into doing it yourself somehow. But then you said, you know, you would fake it with GREG to make him feel okay.

A: Yeah.

Q: Why - why did you feel you should do that?

A: I don't know (laugh). But he just - I had this mind, thing in my mind, if I faked it he would feel better so that if ... someone did say anything to him, or anything like that, he'd be able to say, "yeah", or he would be - his own ego would be happy enough to say to himself, "I did alright". 'Cos I know that he's shy and I wanted to bring him out, 'cos I could see a person underneath him which is a loving caring person, but - he's just a sod, he would...

Q: Yeah. Do you think there really was a loving caring person hiding in there sort of thing?

A: I don't know, and I don't ever wanna find out. I mean I probably will sometime, 'cos it's bound to get back to me, oh, you know, but I don't ever wanna find out. Not personally.

Q: What kind of things do you think you do want in a relationship now?

A: Someone like BEN? (laugh) No -

Q: ...

A: A bit of BEN but - I really don't know. I think I haven't had the experience yet to find out everything just yet, and... carry on working about it. About relationships.

Q: What about long - long-term, do you think that you might get married or something like that or - not even thinking about that yet?

A: Well, my mum and dad are pressuring me now, 'cos of arranged marriages.

Q: Yeah.

A: There's that... they're saying like, "you've got another two or three years and that's it, I'm marrying you off". And like they've just started now. So I don't know. But I know that during - in the next ten, maybe seven years, I will be married and probably be pregnant. In which - I think, you know, it's alright actually, for me myself as a person I think that's gonna be alright. Because I don't wanna - because I'm scared of having a baby anyway, 'cos of what happened last time. See, if I have it early on in life, maybe it won't be so hard on me anyway, instead of having it later on.

Q: Do you think that - I mean, how would you feel if your parents sort of insisted that they'd find somebody for you?

A: Well, in a way my parents are alright, they're more westernised than they are Indian -

Q: Yeah.

A: - and they've said to me look, if you see - if we... wedding - 'cos they've told me "you have to marry an Indian guy, he's got to be the same caste, he's got to be someone like us"; I said, "yeah, that's what I want as well. I want someone who is coming from a larger family into ours, and I'm going into a family where he's got brothers and sisters, I can go round with him, you know, and have - latch onto another family as well." They said, "that's good, 'cos that's what we

want for you as well", 'cos the bigger a family is - it's better that way. The family unit as I feel it now, is really important. And - what was I saying?

Q: You said it's okay that your parents want you to marry somebody who's... same caste and so forth... agree...

A: Oh, yeah, which I agreed to as well. And they've said like if we go to a wedding and you see someone you like, then we'll talk about it, see what he's like as a person. And like we'll have to go out - like me and him - first of all, like what they do is they have like sit around like here and then we have a cup of tea or something, and see how it goes. If we both look at each other and see that we're alright, we like each other, then maybe with a chaperone we'll go out for dinner or something. Spend an afternoon together, and if we really like each other, then plans will begin.

Q: Mm. And do you think that's okay?

A: Well, I know it's gonna be done so I don't really have a say in the matter anyway.

Q: Yeah.

A: In a way it's good, in a way it's not so good. I don't know.

Q: What about the relationships you're having now, are they with Indians and non- -

A: No, they're mixed. MO was Indian but the rest have been all types. BEN was black, GREG was Greek.

Q: What about your parents, do they know about the relationships that you have?

A: No. To them I'm - I am an eighteen year old, so sweet, so kind, so lovely little girl, and that's about it, that's all they know about me. They don't know anything else about me. I mean, it's bad to know that your parents don't even know the kind of person you are, but I know they wouldn't agree to me being the person that I am.

Q: Do you - is it like this - I mean, basically you're accepting the way that they want you to be, at some level, isn't it?

A: Yeah, 'cos it doesn't bring up family resentment or anything like that. It keeps them happy, so as long as it keeps them happy I'll do it for them.

Q: Mm. And in the meantime you're sort of experimenting with finding yourself, without them knowing what it is.

A: Yeah, yeah. So that if something goes wrong, I know "you're to blame, you've done it wrong, you should have done it this way", and I just go out there again and do it again, in a way that I feel is - could be right. And if it doesn't go right then I'll just try again. As far as I'm concerned, you have one life to live and if you miss it, that's it, you've passed on.

Q: How - how are you feeling about the abortion now? I mean it was very close in time to when we spoke. Last June.

A: I haven't forgotten about it, it's always in my mind. But I know that I have to learn to forget, to carry on with what I'm doing now. Otherwise I'll always stay back in that time and I won't be able to go into the future. It's like - we've been talking again, I would have had the baby now; where could we have (?)met, where would I have been now? Bed and breakfast, out on the streets. I don't know.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: So maybe it's best this way.

Q: Well, it probably is the right decision to make. But I felt at the time you were doing it so alone, you know, without any other support and it was incredibly difficult.

A: Yeah, I - I still feel I am that kind of person who will always be on my own. I mean I probably will get married and have kids, but there'll be a part of me which will always be back here, to that time last year, on my own.

Q: Yeah.

A: ...myself. I see myself as being a person that likes to be on their own and do things on their own, but I know I can't; I've got to change, I've got to become part of a group.

Q: Mm. But you're giving yourself this bit of space beforehand.

A: Yeah. Is it alright if I smoke or -

Q: Yeah, sure.

A: Do you?

Q: No, I don't, thanks. There's a packet over there that somebody else left behind. So quite a lot's been happening to you really, since you left school, hasn't it? How do you feel about it, do you feel comfortable in yourself or - apart from being bored with everything right now?

A: What, with life?

Q: Mm. And what you're doing and everything.

A: I think everything's gone right for me so far. I think I've been alright. I don't know if I want something to happen right now. Don't know if I want a relationship right now or something to just come into my life, but it's all flowing in one line at the moment; and maybe that's why I'm bored and I need things to go up and down and job me about a bit.

Q: Mm, yeah. That's in a way why I was asking, are you doing anything to get that to happen? Because you can kind of wait for something to happen, it may never happen -

A: It may never happen. I try but nothing happens. I mean I've got this job in Marble Arch, 'cos I've stopped working at [DEPARTMENT STORE] -

Q: Oh, yeah, you were just about - you were gonna be interviewed last year when I spoke to you, yeah. So you have got the job at [DEPARTMENT STORE]?

A: Yeah, I got the job. And it worked out. It's alright. It's only a temporary job, I finished at Christmas. And they didn't keep me on so I went - I was out of a job for about two or three months, and I got this one in March, April, something like that. And it's good, I really enjoy it. It's up in Marble Arch so it's away from everything. It's totally different. The people are different, ... from all different islands, Scotland, all different kinds of people, different personalities from what I've known before. They're all older, younger.

Q: ... cat?

A: No, neighbour's cats. And - it's interesting.

Q: What sort of job is it?

A: It's just like - you know, like if you go down Marble Arch there's these little boutiques and that? It's in [FASHION STORE].

Q: Oh, yeah.

A: And that sells bags mainly.

Q: Yeah.

A: And it's different. I like that. Is the smoke going in your face?

Q: A bit. It's okay.

A: ... over here. Is that alright?

Q: Yeah. That's a Saturday and evening job...?

A: No, this is just Saturdays.

Q: Yeah.

A: But over the summer I'll probably be working full-time. 'Cos I got a job in a travel agency. They pay me £75 a week. The money's just not enough.

Q: Yeah. It's much better in the bag shop?

A: Yeah...

Q: Well, that's a shame, because it might be a nice experience to do the travel agency work in the summer.

A: Yeah. But the thing is, I'm learning it all at college, so there's no point.

Q: Mm. Just get to put it into practice a bit.

A: Yeah. But you get - anywhere you can get a job in a travel agency...

Q: Yeah.

A: But I wanna go into something like - maybe tour operators.

Q: Yeah.

A: And in the end, maybe I wanna open my own business.

Q: That would be sensible.

A: Mm. But I don't know. ...businesses... taxes...

Q: Then how will it fit in with your other plans? I mean, you'd have to do it fairly fast if - to fit it in.

A: Oh, yeah, I might be going to America next year.

Q: Yeah?

A: 'Cos my FAMILY MEMBER's emigrating to AMERICA, and the way she described it, she went over there two weeks ago, she was (?) [SKILLED JOB ROLE], and just waiting for her green card to come through...

Q: ... What, sort of you'd go and visit or -

A: Well, the thing is, I can't go for a year 'cos I'm a British citizen, they won't let me stay there anyway -

Q: Yeah.

A: - but go there for about four months, get myself a really good job so they'll say that "we need you here, you can't go back to England"; so they'll say that to the Home Office, whatever they do over there -

Q: Yeah.

A: - and get me to stay. Or I'd have to marry someone over there.

Q: What do you think of that for an idea? - both bits of it.

A: I don't know about marriage but I mean... have to see how it works out really.

Q: But do you fancy that, living in the States?

A: ... the thing is, it's so different, to get up and just leave totally, my family, my friends. If I have to do that then I have to do that.

Q: Mm. But if you just went for four months, I mean you wouldn't be cutting off all your options really, would you?

A: Yeah, that's what I mean, I mean I'm probably going for the summer anyway.

Q: Yeah.

A: The whole family. Have a look at what life is like out there, if I like it fine, if I don't, come back here.

Q: Yeah. That's a big opportunity, isn't it?

A: But I mean, everybody says to me, that's an opportunity you can't really miss out on, you have to go for it, and do it when you're young as well.

Q: Yeah. Well, at least check it out. I always used to have that idea about America, "I'd better get out there and see what it's like before it sinks" (laugh), 'cos it always seems to be on the brink of disaster. But is - I mean, it's quite different from here. It's quite a long time ago that I was there, living in Philadelphia and New York. Yeah, it was quite... really - well, New York is, but Philadelphia not so much. Philadelphia... W.C. Fields sort of said something like, "I'd rather be dead than in Philadelphia" (laugh).

A: Oh, no.

Q: It's supposed to be very boring, but in fact it was okay, it wasn't too bad. ... I mean, there were some interesting things going on there, but I think they've got - they're a bit self-conscious, because it's fairly near New York and they sort of feel in comparison it's not got a lot to offer. And I just... Los Angeles very, very briefly at the end, just to pick up the plane... it was smoggy, you know, it was being typically Los Angeles -

A: Yeah.

Q: - and also we got lost on the motorways because they're so complicated, so - that was my memory of Los Angeles. But it's - I mean, the weather out there is fantastic, apart from the smog of course...

A: That's what I mean, like go over there and if I like AMERICA, I mean you don't have to stay in one place anyway... move around till you find the perfect place for you. I've got a RELATIVE in Canada as well... on my own to Australia.

Q: ...?

A: ... to Australia. But I'm gonna do something in the next year, I have to do something.

Q: Something dramatic. Yeah. And you said the whole family might go out for the summer, and they might consider going out there.

A: 'Cos - when my FAMILY MEMBER said she was going, my dad seriously for a week thought about it. But then he said no. You know, he loves London, he was born and bred in London -

Q: Yeah.

A: And he said... And I'm like that as well, I love London. You can only stay so long in one place.

Q: But it would be exciting to go out there for the summer, it would be great.

A: Yeah. So that's... 'Cos I haven't been on holiday now for about four, five years.

Q: Why's that? Too busy?

A: I don't know [COMPLEX FAMILY DETAILS] I don't know... back to India... future.

Q: Did you go on holiday there before then?

A: Yeah, that was the last time I went there.

Q: Yeah. How do you find it out there?

A: ...

Q: Yeah?

A: 'Cos we've got a house in the country. (?) Servants and everything. It's an easy life over there. I don't know, for a while I just thought, well going over there

and doing something for the people - I don't know... It's all in the back of my mind, but I don't think so.

Q: Yeah. Yeah.

A: 'Cos I know this family who went out there, and they're all doctors, and they opened up this place, a clinic for pregnant mothers, 'cos they have a lot of stillbirths and unborn babies, things like that -

Q: Yeah.

A: - and I thought, you know, get into something like that. And doctors over there are terrible, just give you the same medicine for anything... people, do something for them.

Q: You've got a lot of possibilities that you've been thinking about. Well, you're still young, you can still do many of these things, can't you? But you think ultimately in seven years' time you're gonna be married?

A: Yeah. I don't know... my family has got that in for me. I know it's gonna happen, within the next couple of years anyway. It's bound to happen. But I think in a way I want it to happen as well. I like the idea of a family unit.

Q: Yeah. What you were saying before. You were saying as well that you were adventurous. Last time you were saying you sort of quite like doing risky things somehow. I mean, do you still feel like that?

A: I still do risky things.

Q: Do you, what do you do?

A: Climb out the window at night and go out with my friends when I'm not supposed to -

Q: Yeah?

A: Yeah. Done that a couple of times. I haven't got caught yet. I don't know though. If I get caught I know... but I don't know. I think I've calmed down a lot since last year, calmed down.

Q: You're still smoking. Drinking?

A: I've cut down a lot on the drinking but I'm smoking a lot more. And they don't know I'm smoking either.

Q: How - it must be difficult to keep all these things from them, or do you just behave completely differently when you're at home? Just totally different.

A: Mm.

Q: Yeah.

A: They don't know what I'm really like.

Q: Yeah.

A: I think my mum's got an idea, though, that I'm a kind of wild person but dad doesn't. My dad sees me as a little girl. But my dad's more - like he'll let me go. 'Cos like you see, Indian people have these really weird ideas. When a girl get married, she's gone. She'll never be yours again, as your daughter. I mean, she'll still be your daughter, but she won't be so much your daughter as before.

Q: What, she'll belong more to the other family?

A: Yeah... that's what they think. And he's - he's gonna let me go, I know that, but my mum's gonna find it hard.

Q: Yeah. You feel closer to your mum?

A: Mm. Mm.

Q: Can you talk to her about anything? I mean - about some things.

A: Yeah.

Q: There's a lot of things that you can't talk to her about, obviously - but there are some things that you can't -

A: Yeah.

Q: What about these more general things that we were talking about last year, about AIDS; have you noticed any change now you've been at college in the way people think about AIDS, or does it not come up or -

A: Not really. It doesn't really come up. I mean, before, when everything was on the telly and - really big last year, but now it's not so much. I don't know why. But it's not so much in the news now, it's not in the public eye that much now.

Q: Mm. Toned off ... Less interest in pushing it...

A: Yeah. But it's still there, you know it's still there.

Q: Yeah. There was a programme on the television last night about heterosexual spread and... very late, though, I mean... watch it. I was interested to see that they've started just a few programmes going out again. But you think people aren't concerned about it, you think -

A: I think it's still there but everyone doesn't speak about it. It's just something that hangs in the air but nobody actually talks about it.

Q: Mm. Have you been worried about it yourself? When - within these relationships that you've had, what sort of - were you using contraception then?

A: Yeah. I was on the pill for a little while. But the pill doesn't agree with me. I was feeling really ill all the time. I don't know whether I was ill otherwise, or because it was on the pill, but I didn't really like it.

Q: So what else did you use?

A: Condoms.

Q: And how do you like them?

A: I didn't really. But I know it's got to be put on, you know.

Q: Yeah. And what about your partners, how did they feel about ...? ... quite different.

A: He didn't like it. He didn't like the condom, he preferred when I was on the pill, but when I wasn't feeling ill, he said "alright, I'll wear the condom".

Q: Do you find it - I mean some people say they sort of interrupt the flow of things and stuff like that.

A: Yeah, it does, but we like brought it in as part of our lovemaking as well, so it was alright.

Q: ... if that's what you've got to do. Do you ever talk about, you know, this kind of thing with your friends at college - AIDS, sex, stuff like that?

A: Yeah. 'Cos - I don't know, 'cos we're the only group who do... we're together a lot, we're together all the time, and like you grow to like understand people, and like we all understand - after a year we all understand each other and what affects us all, and like if anybody starts talking about racism I'm straight into it. And then they don't touch the case of it because (?)MAYA will blow her top.

Q: Yeah.

A: You know, so they know don't talk about it with her. But it's like people have touched upon different things, so you know like what to talk about or what not. Or ... talk about something which is touchy but - to one person, you do it mildly.

Q: Have you experienced much racism yourself?

A: No, I've never experienced it at all. But I've seen it happen to other people. I didn't like it...

Q: What about the group, are there many people of different races in the group?

A: Yeah... total mixture.

Q: Yeah.

A: I think that's the best way as well. You learn about other people like that.

Q: Yeah. Sure. Do you think you're lucky in not having experienced racism?

A: Yeah. 'Cos it's really upsetting. 'Cos I mean my friend experienced it. She was beaten up about it and that. And like she didn't do nothing, she didn't go to the police. She just sat back and took it - well, I don't know if she sat back and took it, but she didn't do anything about it.

Q: Yeah.

A: And they got away with it. And that's what I was really angry about. 'Cos if you don't... straight in the middle, it'll carry on. And if you don't stop it now it'll affect your children, your children's children, it will just carry on and on and on.

Q: Do you think there was any problem like that at the school? I mean, you say you haven't experienced it yourself but do you think there's any problem of racism at the school at all?

A: I don't think so. I don't think there was in the older children but there was, I think, in younger children. When I was in the first and second years. But as they all seemed to grow up, they seemed to like mature a lot. But myself, my brother and my sister have never ever been in that situation. I mean, once my brother was actually bullied, and I went straight up that school and I got the little kid and I gave him a right bollocking and he's never done it again, as far as I know.

Q: I remember you were very protective towards your brother and sister.

A: I still am.

Q: Yeah. How are they getting on?

A: Fine. My sister's just finished her exams and (?)is about to leave school now. She's going to EUROPEAN COUNTRY for a week, she's really excited about that. My brother's into the World Cup and my sister's into the tennis, so you can't watch anything these days. I mean I like a bit of both but I'm not into watching every single match -

Q: Yeah.

A: ... tennis tournament or whatever.

Q: Oh, they're gonna get into a bit of conflict this week, then, aren't they? Unless you've got two televisions.

A: Yeah. We'll put one up in my brother's room... music and that's it. Otherwise - I mean, as I said before, everything's going alright. It's all straight at the moment. I know something's gonna go wrong, something's got to go wrong, it always does.

Q: That sort of fatalism.

A: I don't know. But it's always been that way for me. When everything is going right, then there always is something that goes wrong. I don't know whether it's good that things go wrong; I don't think I should see them as going wrong, but something happens that stirs up something. Something happens. I don't know if it's good or bad...

Q: ... Anything else of significance that you'd like to record that's been happening in the last year? It all sounds quite -

A: In the last year: the really major thing was changing from school to college.

Q: Did you find it hard or -

A: I did. 'Cos like at school we were part of a big gang and we used to really run the school, you know what I mean?

Q: Yeah.

A: But now it's like being a little person in a massive college. That's what it was like in September, but now it's not like that anymore.

Q: You've got your group.

A: Mm.

Q: It's hard to make those transitions. But you were also saying, I mean, there's a positive aspect in that they treat you more like an adult -

A: They do. Which I really like that.

Q: Yeah.

A: ... like at work, when I was a placement, I was treated as part of their - their working team, which felt, you know -

Q: When - when you've been talking about this business of, you know, very likely that you'll get married if your parents say, do you feel that you're kind of being - losing control over your life or what's happening to you...?

A: You see, I don't think so, because since you were younger, you're geared up to by the time you reach twenty-three, twenty-four, you'll get married. It's expected.

Q: Yeah.

A: So it's part of you as you're growing up.

Q: Yeah. What do you think it's gonna be like to be married? I mean it's almost as if it's sort of - it's there and that's it -

A: It's coming closer and closer.

Q: Yeah.

A: I'm not really looking forward to it.

Q: Yeah.

A: I'm a bit scared, but then again - it sounds good. It sounds interesting.

Q: Mm. Got some positive aspects.

A: (?)Well, if me and they get on.

Q: Yeah. Do your parents get on?

A: Yeah... Like during the four, five weeks she went to India last summer, my dad was totally dependent on me to have the house run and everything. So plus I was working in the summer, and plus I was like mum at home.

Q: How did you find that, a little taste of what it might be?

A: It was difficult. But I had my aunt at home and she drove me up the wall. I was having arguments with her literally every day. You know what I mean, she was like one of them people who'd come into the home - like she got married two years ago, and we brought her straight into our family as part of us, and she just turns round and (?)slap us in the face literally.

Q: Yeah?

A: Yeah. And - she was a proper little in-law, you know what I mean? ... of what one could be like. And I've hated her ever since, and I've never said a word to her since last year. And, even though she comes regularly to the house - I mean, when my mother came back, I told her everything. She literally - like she'd use - she'd make - she's got a son who's gonna be two in August; she'd make him dinner and she'd make herself dinner, go off to work and leave - she left the little kid with my brother, who's only twelve - fourteen, thirteen, something like that.

And he had... a tin of beans... and when I got home I really had a good go at her.
I really felt -

[Could not get tape going after this, notes on it]