

LSFS35 10.2.1990**Gemma**

Q. ...what important relationships you've had or have been important in your life.

A. I think actually, as far as sexual relationships go, I've never had one that I didn't think at the time was important. I've only ever been involved with someone if I thought it important and I really liked them. The most recent person I went out with was last June, as in a sexual relationship, and that I could still - he went back to COUNTRY, he emigrated - well, he lived there and went back... but I could still like go back out again now, but... it wasn't some old fly-by-night that didn't really matter or anything like that.

Q. So how old was he?

A. Twenty-six.

Q. Twenty-six.

A. Five years older than me. (Tape break)

Q. Right - to get back to where we were - was he - was he REDACTED or was he -

A. Yes, he was REDACTED.

Q. So how did you meet him?

A. I met him from work. What happened was he was married in COUNTRY 2, he went to college in COUNTRY 2, married a woman from CITY, and he was a SPORTS player and he came over here to play SPORTS - like they import players from COUNTRY 2 and COUNTRY... and the SPORTS didn't go so well, he got an injury, he split up with his wife, went back to COUNTRY for about five months, then came back here to try and get it together again with his wife. It didn't work out, and he came to work at my company where I work, and that's where I met him. For ages we were just friends and then all of a sudden one day he said he's gonna teach me to skate, and then we just started going out from there.

Q. So how long did it last altogether?

A. Until he went back, a couple of months.

Q. And do you still hear from him?

A. Yeah. Well, rarely. He's not exactly a writer or anything like that. But I do still hear from him and I know I could contact him if I wanted to. I know where he is, I know his phone number; I know his parents' house and phone number, so it's not as if he's gone away and I haven't got a clue where he's gone, what he's doing, or anything like that.

Q. And do you see him as somebody who might come back, who you might resume a relationship with?

A. I see him as somebody I might resume a relationship with, if - as in that I've got no intention of staying in this country, I want to go and travel, and I want - I'd love to go to COUNTRY, 'cos it's a very nice place, there's all the opportunities, and COUNTRY 2, without the - there's things that COUNTRY 2 has got that seem a bit fierce. So there's all the opportunities in COUNTRY without the fierceness. So I know I'd love to live there. So I see it that I could go over there and resume a relationship but I wouldn't think he'd come back here. I'd like him to (laugh)...

Q. He probably wouldn't.

A. No.

Q. Was he your first sexual relationship?

A. No. He was my fourth - he was my fourth. My first one was when I was eighteen and I was going out with someone - I went out with someone for six months, and it was a really bad relationship, as in he was treating me badly; he was a very spoilt only child. And then for a long while I just accepted it. I was really downtrodden and that sort of thing, and then suddenly I just realised he treated me like rubbish, "I'm not staying with you"; you know, this is no good, this is not a good relationship, you've done a lot of things to upset me. It was - I read a book called "Women Who Love Too Much", and it was a typical relationship that I read in that; you know, you would do everything to try and please him and then it doesn't work and you ... something wrong with yourself. And I suddenly thought, it's not, it's not me. And I got out of it. So I finished it with him. And then, about six months after that, I started going out with someone else, and that was PETER, who I went out with for about seven months. And he was a bit older than me - he was about nine years older than me; and we got on really well, we had a good time, and then it just started to go wrong. You know, when you think, you know, it's not going anywhere; we're carrying on, we can carry on doing this forever. So that was that.

Q. Where did you want it to go?

A. I think I wanted security out of it. I'm not sure - when I think about it, I'm not sure I wanted to marry him, but he was a person, you know, like the REDACTED I could marry him and it would be so ... you know, from how it was before, if it carried on like that it could be so good because we really got on well with each other. We had a good time, we liked going out together, but we didn't mind staying in. But that would have been - if I could have married PETER, it would have been for the safety of it. And then other than that, there's two other people I've slept with and they were both - both people I liked, but both only once, and I never went out with them. It was a bit - I wouldn't say - it wasn't seedy or anything like that, and I knew them really well, and I still talk to both of them and I'm still good friends with both of them - it was kind of like something that just happened, but I wouldn't - I'm not ashamed of it. I wouldn't say "oh - oh, my God, I can't look at him. Oh, no, what did I do...?".

Q. What, so embarrassed or -

A. Yeah, it's something like that, I still see them - you know, "are you alright?". And one of them has got another girlfriend now, and - who is a friend of mine. I still see the both of them, I just don't take any notice of it. So it's never - never been involved in anything sexually that I didn't - the only time I've ever - I can ever say I did something I didn't want to do, was - it wasn't something I didn't want to do as in a sexual act I didn't want to do; there were times with the first bloke I was going out with - like I said, it was kind of the "Women Who Love Too Much" syndrome, he would want to and I wouldn't, but I would if I thought it might make him happy, that sort of thing.

Q. So you did it for him.

A. Yeah, not for me. And now I wouldn't (laugh), I wouldn't hold someone's hand if I didn't want to now. I'm just - I'm just older and wiser, I've seen through it all. I was gonna say, that was the first person I ever had a sexual relationship with, and I was of the opinion that it would cure everything. And, 'course, now I know it won't. I've just learnt a lot more since then. That was all due to my naivete, of what the powers of sex were.

Q. What did you think they were?

A. I remember thinking if you had sex with someone you could control them.

Q. You could?

A. Mm. You know, you had that control over them. Because it was something so personal and so special to me, it must be to them, so I could then, you know - if they'd said to me, do this, so I could do it back. But then, you know... you can't, you can't at all. It was just the opinion I had then, I don't know where I got it from.

Q. So what do you think actually changed you?

A. I don't know. There was no act, just one day I woke up to it. Nothing happened, it was one day -

Q. ... read something or -

A. No.

Q. - talk to somebody or -

A. No, just one day it just clicked. And it wasn't until after I'd been out with PETER, the second boyfriend, that I read the book, "Women Who Love Too Much". And I remember getting out of the relationship, the first one, and I didn't know why, but now I can see why. And I sometimes feel like, Christ, I had a lucky escape, 'cos, you know, I could have spent the rest of my life with him and - oh, my God, what would I have done?

Q. Yes.

A. So I feel like, you know, I had a really lucky escape at times, that I'm learning a lot more. And sometimes I really worry that - oh, God, you know, what could I do, what can I find out, where must I get all this knowledge from so I don't make the wrong decisions? And you can't - there's nothing someone can tell you. I could tell that to someone who's sixteen, she'd say "yeah, alright" -

Q. Yeah. I suppose you don't wanna be told -

A. You don't wanna be told things like that, you have to find it out yourself. You have to - I heard a book advertised on the radio, I think I was in a shop and I heard the book advertised on the radio, and the woman who wrote the book was being interviewed. And a couple of things she said, symptoms of women who love too much, I thought "I've got to read that book", you know, "I've got to read that book and find out" -

Q. - because it sounded...

A. - I think I heard that book advertised actually when I was going out with DANIEL, the first one, so that might have been, you know, one of my things like "I love too much and I've got to get out of it", so that may be - now I think about it, that may be one of the things that changed my mind. But it wasn't until later that I read the book - I think I read the book about a year ago, and since then I feel much stronger in myself because I understand certain feelings I have, and I can understand, from my background, why I do it, and that I won't do it forever. And, like, I'm starting to change it, I'm starting to do the things that she said in the book to change it, and they are hard, and there are times when, you know, there's the easy option that you could take. It's like, I go to counselling and it's very hard to go to counselling, and it really - before you start to get any better, you dredge up all the old muck from your family background between your parents, that you don't want to - so you can change it, but it's not easy. It's not easy by any stretch of the imagination. I've been doing that, I've been, like, on the road of changing it for a year, and I don't feel like I've - I feel like I've come on, now, but six months ago I was getting nowhere. Although I was - I can see now, looking back, that I was -

Q. What, it felt like -

A. - at the time it felt like, "oh, what am I doing? - oh, this is all too hard - I want to go and live on and on and where only I live" - you know, that sort of thing. So I don't - I wouldn't try and make out to anyone it was easy.

Q. So what sort of things have you been trying to change?

A. You do more for yourself. It's more a case of - if you don't want to do something, you don't do it. There's a difference between being totally self-centered or not doing something you really don't want to do. I'm not totally self-centered, I will help people; but if there's something I really don't want to do, I'll say, "well, no, I really -", you know, "I really don't want to do that. I'm sorry, even if it would help you... that's not something I want to do". So it's more when you do things for yourself, you take more interest in yourself, and go on holidays you want to go on and go - if you want to go out, even if you want to go out for a drink, if your partner won't go out with you, you phone one of your friends up. You know, one of your friends will always go out, more often than not.

Q. Sure, yeah.

A. So you say "alright, then, you stay in, I'm going out. I want to go out; it's Friday night, I want to go to a disco. I'm going." and it's more of that sort of attitude. And I've got - the other thing is, I've got a kind of a motto now, you know, it's your life; this is not a dress rehearsal. You've only got seventy years. Don't look round when you're sixty-five and say, "I didn't do this - number one, number two, number three and number four", you know. Do what you want to do. And I've also decided that I will make my own decisions and I will do what I want to do and I will take responsibility for it; 'cos if someone tells you to do something, you do it and it goes wrong, you can hold it against them forever, but what's the point? You should have done what you wanted in the first place. If it goes wrong for yourself, then you made the decision, you've lived by it... Tough, you know, you think you've made it yourself, you're not blaming someone, 'cos I think blaming someone fills you with self-hate. You know, you've got - it's about the emotion that you've got inside and I don't think you need it, so you - you know, ...that's one of my new mottoes of life, I should write them on the wall and live by them.

Q. Has that partly come through counselling, you've come to realise that, or through yourself or through reading the book?

A. It's a sort of combination. It's a combination, it's from my - from my family, from, you know, from reading, from realising - from growing up, from realising that there's a lot of people in this world, you know, no one's looking out for you really. Apart from your mum, no one is looking out for you.

Q. Yeah, that's true.

A. And your mum can't look out for you when you're not near her. So you have to look out for yourself. I just - it's a combination of things, mainly 'cos I've... growing up; through things I've done when I'm growing up, I'm realising these things. It's not - it's not something you could have told me when I was fifteen, 'cos when I was fifteen, I knew everything.

Q. Yeah.

A. I did; no one could tell me I didn't. It was like, you know - I remember when I was fifteen, it was Tracy Ullman; she was on the - she was on an interview, and she was saying, "oh, I was really horrible when I was fifteen", you know - I'd be "don't you tell me that, I know what I'm doing"; and I was just like that, and all my family were laughing, they were saying "that's you, that's you to a T"! "Don't you tell me that, I can drink, I can"

- you know, two shandies and she fell over. It was - I think it's a lot that you realise when you grow up, and obviously - I can't, in ten years' time, think I knew nothing then - I knew nothing then, you know, when I was twenty-one I knew nothing. But compared to when I was eighteen, you know, I've picked up an amazing amount.

Q. Right.

A. It's like - oh, what was it I was saying - oh, when I was fifteen, my parents didn't love me and when I was fifteen I was amazed at how much they'd picked up. I'm amazed at how much I've picked up since I was sixteen. You know, I mean five years - in the five years when you go for, you know, new schools, you take some exams - I took my A-levels - you go out into work, and, you know, there's teachers at work (school?) that will tell you off, and you think "oh", you know; and then there's adults at work who will stab you in the back.

Q. Really?

A. And you think - especially in the industry that I work in -

Q. Which is what, FINANCE- -

A. FINANCE. And you think, no one in this world is looking out for me. My teachers taught me 'cos it was their job; but, you know, now it's time just to stand on your own two feet. You have to pick up a lot, you have to get streetwise very quickly. And that's in every aspect of life.

Q. You mentioned that, you know, through - you could understand more about how you were through your family background, things like that. What happened through your family background that...?

A. Well, I'm the youngest of four, I've got three elder brothers; my parents split up when I was seventeen, and - a really bad breakup and they were really arguing -

Q. ...

A. Yeah, and it was really distressing. And, because I'm the only one left, my - my mum is clinging onto me, you know; she is overly anxious of me and she is clinging onto me, she doesn't want me to leave.

Q. And you're the only girl.

A. I'm the only girl, yeah. So, you know, she will scoff the fact that I say I want to go and travel. And it's - it's fairly terrible, she will do cartwheels for my dad and for my brothers, you know; and so I've grown up with sort of - with the idea, watching my mum lay down her life for everyone, and getting walked over for it. And for, you know - first of all, I was like that.

Q. So you modelled yourself on her.

A. First of all I was like that, I would do things for people... I'm not cut out to do things for people, I'm too selfish, you know. My mum did a lot for me and so it's made me selfish and I'm not cut out to start looking after anyone else. I have to look after myself. I don't like anyone, you know, I don't like restrictions, I don't like anyone asking me what I'm doing, where I'm going and that sort of thing. I mean it's - it gets hard. It's very hard. And so I get very mixed up about that; I get very very angry with my mum, and now I feel guilty because that, you know, she's always done everything for me and she's always done... for me, but I want her to stand on her own two feet and do things for herself. Because of that - that background I've grown up in, first of all I was very like my mum, an armadillo; I would do things for people and I wouldn't do what I wanted to do, I would do what somebody else wanted to do. And then I suddenly grew up and thought, well,

you know, it's my life, I'm not gonna have a good life out of doing what somebody else wants, I'll do what I want. So I kind of - first of all I went with it and then I went totally against the grain, sort of completely rebelled and -

Q. That's lucky that you could in a way, that it wasn't so ingrained that you kind of found it very difficult not to please people and do what they wanted all the time. Can you talk to your mother about things like that?

A. Yeah.

Q. Is she - is she -

A. I mean, I end up arguing with her, I end up shouting at her, "for Christ's sake!", you know, but - she understands to a certain extent, but then again I think it was the way she was brought up and she's [FIFTIES] now. And I started changing when I was eighteen, nineteen - she's [FIFTIES].

Q. Yeah.

A. You know, it's not gonna do. It was hard for me to change, so God knows what I must be like if she was to try it.

Q. Mm. So when you went into your first relationship, were you kind of - as you say, trying to please him and do everything that he wanted?

A. Yeah. Yeah, I would try and please him.

Q. So when you actually started having a sexual relationship, was - who first decided, was that something that - I mean, when you lost your virginity, presumably with him -

A. Yeah.

Q. - was that something you talked about, was planned, or did it just happen?

A. It was something that was planned, and I - it was funny, I wanted it to happen to please him. I didn't think, "oh, let's have a go and see if I like it", I wanted to please him.

Q. And did it?

A. Yeah. He thought - he was like - he was such a chauvinist, "oh, this is great, I've got a virgin" sort of thing.

Q. Was he a virgin -

A. No. So it was that sort of attitude. But now, I would sleep with somebody if it pleased me, and if it pleased him, you know, everyone's happy. If it didn't, I shouldn't think they'd do it. But if I didn't want to, I wouldn't, no matter what. I had a friend - he was a friend that I met through - he used to play - his friend used to play SPORTS with ADAM, the REDACTED, and he used to - he was a friend, you know, and my friend started going out with his friend, and there was all this - you know, this bloke PAUL decided that he really had the hots for me, and he wanted to go out with me. And a couple of years ago, I would have probably done it, because I wouldn't have wanted to upset him; but now he's going round proclaiming hate for me to everyone.

Q. Because you wouldn't go out with him.

A. Mm. So now I'm just - I'm just going round and saying to everyone "he's a wanker". You know, I don't care. I don't need it.

Q. Right, if that's his reaction, then -

A. Yeah, fine.

Q. So it's all about his insecurity.

A. Yeah. My friends know. My friends and his friend and, you know, ADAM and everyone knows. The entire SPORTS team that they play for knows, 'cos it hasn't been kept quiet. My friend..., this American girl, you know, she's got the biggest mouth in the

world, she goes "here, guess what! PAUL's been trying it on with GEMMA and she doesn't wanna know and now he don't like her!". They're all - you know, it's that sort of attitude.

Q. Yeah.

A. And a couple of years ago I would have been "oh", you know, "oh, what am I gonna-" - it would have really worried me to have said to him, "get stuffed" -

Q. Yes, "I don't want..."

A. - but now I'm just like - I can say "get stuffed" so easily now. I say "so easily", I don't - if it's something I really don't want to do then I don't; and if it's something not too drastic I usually worm my way out of it, but I don't do it if I don't want to.

Q. 'Cos that reflects a level of confidence too. You've got to have a certain amount of confidence in yourself to be able to -

A. I think you gain confidence in learning - not only - I don't mean educationally, I mean learning about the world. The more you know, the more you know how to look out for yourself, the more confident you are. There's an arrogant confidence where you know nothing and think you're great, and I don't think that gets you anywhere. I think people like that, you know, they project - project their arrogant confidence, but, you know, you can see it. But you can tell somebody who is confident in themselves, as in they - I think they easily talk to people. I mean, I'm a chatterbox anyway, I've never had any problem with talking; but they'll talk to people without being embarrassed. If they say something and everyone laughs, you know I've said things before and everyone laughs, and there was a time ago - there was a time I would have really cringed, thought "oh, they're all laughing at me", but now if I say something and everyone laughs, it's either 'cos I've said something funny or 'cos I'm saying, "oh, it's true", you know, you know, "don't laugh at me, I'm not making it up, this is true", it's that sort of thing.

Q. Yeah, right.

A. I don't go, "oh, no, everyone's laughing" (laugh) -

Q. ... said something foolish -

A. Yeah, which I would have done a little while ago.

Q. Yeah.

A. I mean, you can say something foolish now and then that would think, "no, I didn't mean to say that (laugh), it came out, and it sounded really - you know, it sounded really funny, but I didn't mean it that way". I've got that confidence now that I can say, "oh, well, if I said something funny or foolish I did, no one's perfect", whereas a while ago it would worry me.

Q. And you said on your questionnaire that you were in a relationship now, or that you had a special manfriend -

A. Mm, yeah.

Q. - but not a sexual relationship.

A. Oh, that's my friend - yeah, that's my friend JACK. He's - he's not someone I would go out with, but he's really - we get on really well and he's a really good friend. And he's as good a friend or better a friend than any girl as a friend I've ever had. And I don't think that you cannot have opposite sex people as friends. I can talk to him about sex. I can - you know, it's funny, 'cos he's - there's him and another friend of his - or a friend of ours - who's just gone to COUNTRY 3, and we were talking about sexual fantasies

once. I says, "I've got one" - ... go "what?" (laugh) - you know, and it was that sort of attitude. But -

Q. And you can talk about all those sort of things quite freely.

A. Yeah, I can say that to him, I can - I mean I can really - JACK can come round and I can really cry my eyes out, saying "oh, ADAM's gone back to COUNTRY ... and I'm still really really upset about it"; and he'll say, "yeah, yeah. Come on, then. Let's go out.". We'll go out - you know, go down the pub, whatever -

Q. What, and be supportive?

A. Yeah, he will support me. And he'll say - and he says I don't - he's one of those people who - he'll try and help you out and he'll get angry with you when you do things that let yourself down, but then he's also - he's got the - he's got the same sort of attitude as I have, in that I'll - I'll say, well I'm not perfect, I'm not telling you what to do. You know, and anyone who tries to tell me what to do, I'll say, "when you're (?)like shit I'm perfect, you come round and tell me about it".

Q. Right.

A. I said, but I don't think any man's got the right to tell anyone anything. No one's - I will - I will help my friends out -

Q. ... tell them -

A. - but I won't tell them anything; and the way I help people out, is that I'll do this with anything, from buying a car to deciding on a boyfriend to deciding on a new dress: I'll say, "put a list of ten things you must have about" - you know, say a car for instance - "ten things you must have and ten things you'd like it to have. And if it hasn't got one of the ten things it must have, then it's no good; if it's got five out the things you'd like, then that's fair enough", you know, and so you might say, right, the car's gotta be red - you go out for a red car, and then you say, right: the car's gotta do 190 miles an hour 'cos I wanna be a... racer, and so you look at the Ferraris and, you know - it's this sort of thing. And I say that over everything. And if anyone asks my advice I always give them that, say if you just analyse it that way -

Q. Have you always done that or has that come with the sort of confidence and everything else?

A. That's come out with - that's my brother who's - runs training courses for COMPANY, and he told me that, once about getting a new job. He said, well look, think about what you want in your new job; it must have, you know, fifty grand a year salary and that sort of thing. And I've since then I've gone through it with my friend JESSICA who was going out with a bloke who - you know, he was really using her, it was a really bad relationship, but I wouldn't say that. And then one day she was saying to me, "oh, what shall I do?", and I said, "right", and I just said to her, "think about your perfect, you know, the perfect bloke, what would he look like?" - he must be autonomous, funny, faithful, this, that and the other. "Think about ten things you'd like him to have" - you know, ... dark hair, blonde hair, blues eyes, long legs and all the rest of it. And then we went through her boyfriend and he didn't have any of the things she thought a bloke must have, and he had two of the things she thought she would like. I said, "well", you know -

Q. - speaks for itself.

A. - "I'm not telling you to split up with him, but you realise with your idea of what a bloke must have, he's got none of them". I'm not - you know, I wouldn't tell anyone to split up with anybody, but that's how it came out. And that's how she's gone through it. She kept

the piece of paper that we wrote it on and the person she's going out with now has got all ten of the "musts" and about nine of the "likes".

Q. Oh, that sounds a lot better.

A. So - she keeps coming over to me and says - she keeps saying to me, "you remember that piece of paper where we wrote the musts and the likes?", and I think it's a very good way of analysing things. If something is important to you, as in who you're gonna go out with, the house you're gonna buy, the company you're gonna work for, because you spend a lot of time on these things. And people you go out with I think can really muck you up.

Q. And so would you do that with anyone you met up with?

A. Yeah, yeah. When I - when I think about, you know, things that someone must have and I'd like them to have, ADAM the REDACTED had all the musts and most of the likes, you know, so -

Q. So it's a shame he's gone.

A. Yeah, well - but then again I think, you know, I - I'm still young and there's still a lot of things I've got to do; there's still a big wide world out there I want to see. You know, in three or four years' time I might meet up with him again, but I wouldn't - it won't be such a shame that I'll end up with someone that I don't really love. I wouldn't. So if I - it will be - it was a shame but, you know, life goes on, and I wouldn't settle for somebody who I didn't like. So it wouldn't be that tragedy...

Q. Have your brothers affected you at all in ways that you think or see things?

A. They don't affect me, they advise me, they'll tell me things.

Q. I mean are they - are you quite close to them?

A. Mm. So they won't - they won't tell me what to do or what not to do or anything, but I wanna talk about anything I can, or anything like that, but they won't - as I say, they won't tell me what to do at all; 'cos they know full well I'll say, you know, "who are you to tell me what to do?". And they - they admit and they agree that you make a lot of mistakes in life and no one can make them for you, so you just have to get on with it. They can tell me as much as they want, and if I'm not gonna agree - I'm a very sure-minded person, if I'm not gonna agree I'm gonna do what I want to anyway, whether it be the right or the wrong thing. So they don't really affect or dictate anything to me.

Q. Do you still see your dad?

A. I haven't seen my dad for nearly two years, 'cos he moved down to... SOUTH COAST. And I don't - I don't get on with my dad, I don't like him very much, he wouldn't - he's not the sort of person I'd choose as a friend, so, you know, I don't really - it doesn't matter to me that I don't see him.

Q. Was that even before he split up with your mum?

A. Yeah, before he split up - I can't say I ever actually liked my dad as a person. He was my dad and I had a sort of duty to love him, but I won't say I really liked him.

Q. So you couldn't talk to him -

A. Oh, no.

Q. - or share things with him?

A. ... He wasn't all that interested in us as people, he was only interested in us doing well at(?) school.

Q. Did he make a big thing about it?

A. Mm, yeah. We had to be top of the class, or else. So -

Q. And were you?

A. Well, I was pretty good at school. I wasn't - I just lost interest in it by the end, I was sort of drifting.

Q. But you got three A-levels –

A. Yeah, I got through, but I was supposed to go on - I was supposed to go to law school, I was supposed to be a lawyer... stuff it, I want to work in a bank. And I hated working in a bank, but it was my mistake, it was my decision.

Q. But you must have obviously left there... somewhere else.

A. Yeah, I left there and I went to work IN FINANCE, which I liked, I liked much better. It has its ups and downs but, you know, nothing's perfect. It does have its ups and downs, it has its boring days, you know, and its days when... miserable and that sort of thing. I like the girls I work with, I get on well with the girls I work with. So I do have a nice time at work. If I didn't - if I don't like something, I cannot stick it. 'Cos when I worked at the bank, I worked for six months... six months in CENTRAL LONDON. I was dying to get out every minute of it, from six months into it, perhaps before, from about four or five months I was trying to get out. And I got out after a year. 'Cos someone with four months' experience, no one wants them, so I got out after a year.

Q. So does your present job lead anywhere in terms of - like on the questionnaire, you said you were an FINANCIAL ROLE -

A. Yeah.

Q. Do you - does that sort of work up, can you sort of work IN FINANCE or something -

A. Oh, it could do. Yeah, I could - I mean I could go in tomorrow or Monday and say oh, I wanna transfer, I wanna become a FINANCIAL ROLE, and from a FINANCIAL ROLE you learn how to do the FINANCIAL ROLE and then you say, after a while, "well, I can do that now, are you gonna promote me?", and they say "no" or "yes", or you look for another job. You know, I mean you'll get on.

Q. Do you think you'll do that?

A. No, I will. What I'll do is I'll work for another couple of years and then I want to travel. What I'll do is, I'll apply to train in COUNTRY 2 or in COUNTRY as a nurse. I'll get away and I'll be in a job that I prefer - 'cos I prefer working, you know, either in sports, medicine or midwifery and I know they're completely opposite, but they're the things - that's what I'm interested in. That was what I've actually liked doing.

Q. Bit different from law school.

A. Yeah... like a job as such, it would be nine to five and that sort of thing. No, I think law school was a - some dream my parents had for me, not I had. You know, and that was - that would have been too hard a slog at something that I didn't really want to do. So that was then when I was eighteen, I thought well I'm not doing that. So that was the start of my - kind of going completely against the grain and doing what I want to do.

Q. Except do you think that, say, something like nursing is - you do have to kind of do lots of things for other people all the time. Do you know what I mean -

A. Yeah.

Q. - put yourself to one side slightly - is that in conflict with your sense of - of doing things for yourself...?

A. No, I would - in doing things for other people that would be my job; I do things for other people now and get nothing back for it - I would get satisfaction out of looking after somebody that is ill, that cannot look after themselves, having somebody come in that's

injured their leg playing football or something, you know, and they can barely walk, and I get them - and I walk them out after a few months, you know, or however long it takes. And it's - it's interesting. I mean, the human body and things like that are interesting. I can sit and read medical magazines for hours, because that is interesting. It's something that I'm interested in. And I would be doing it for myself, because I would be getting satisfaction out of it. I mean, all the better that you're helping somebody -

Q. Right.

A. - but I would be getting satisfaction out of it. What I'm doing now - I don't mind doing it, it's quite a cushy little number and I'm getting well paid for it so - I'm not exactly - I'm not doing something I hate, but I'm not getting much out of it.

Q. It's more a means to an end -

A. Yeah.

Q. - to travel -

A. Yeah. It's more to save the money 'til I've got enough money to emigrate. Emigrating to every other country in the world and never come back again.

Q. If we can go back to your - like your experiences of sexual relationships - when it comes to kind of negotiating when, for instance, a sexual relationship starts, in your experiences has that been something you've mutually agreed or has it been something that the man has suggested and - do you know what I mean, how does the kind of power or control go between you?

A. It's been mutual. Well, I say it's been mutual - I've never had sex with somebody I didn't want to, and I'm sure they didn't either, you know, they wanted to. So to that extent it's been mutual. And it's - it's - I think it's been - it's been - everything other than the first, which was like a hard and fast agreement - it sounds like a contract - it's - it's been, you know, when the attraction gets the better of you. But it's never been - I've never done it when I didn't want to, other than ... the first relationship.

Q. And then the very first time you had sex, was that - did you want to have it then, at that particular point in time?

A. Yeah. I never - I wouldn't do something I didn't want to like that. When I say I didn't want to, I - I don't say I've said "no, I don't want to" and they've said, "well we're gonna". I might not have really wanted to, but I've wanted to in that I've thought the effect it might have, so -

Q. So you've done it anyway.

A. Mm. So it's kind of been - so that was - and like I say, that was only in the first.

Q. And did - was it - when you actually first lost your virginity -

A. Yeah.

Q. - what was that like for you?

A. Painful. It was - you know, ... than what I thought it would be.

Q. What had you thought it would be?

A. Fireworks and (laugh) music and -

Q. - orchestras -

A. Yeah, that sort of thing, yeah. I said, "oh, was that it?".

Q. What, you actually said that -

A. So then he said, "yeah, that was it". You know, it was a bit of a - it's an anti-climax.

Q. And did he try to kind of do anything to please you?

A. Yeah, but, you know, just the - there are times when - I wouldn't say I didn't want to, that would probably put it a bit harsh; there were times when I thought it was a bit of a chore, but, as I say, that was only the - there were - there were times when I enjoyed it, you know, and then other times when it was a bit of a chore. But, as I say, now - well, in my recent relationships - it's been 'cos I've wanted to. If I haven't, if I thought it was gonna be a chore, I've not.

Q. And when you say kind of "it", do you mean kind of sexual intercourse or do you mean other sorts of sexual things or -

A. Sexual intercourse or, you know, I mean any sort of sexual act. If I don't - if I don't feel like doing... one or the other, I won't.

Q. And are there bits that you like more than others?

A. Mm. Oh, yeah, I think everyone's got bits that they like more than others.

Q. So what's it for you then?

A. I think I actually prefer oral sex to normal -

Q. Which, the oral sex being done to you -

A. Yeah.

Q. - or the oral sex you doing -

A. No, the oral sex being done to me. Because there's always been - I can always climax doing that, whereas in - you know, straight missionary intercourse, ... "hurry up!"

Q. "What's the time?"

A. Yeah. So it's - you know, but that would be - now, I can turn round and I can say what I want, whereas... not gonna ask. But I can turn round now and say.

Q. You could ask.

A. Mm.

Q. And do they do what you ask?

A. Yeah. ...going. So it's not - not that sort of - I was gonna say, I was very nervous and apprehensive of it at first, but now I look at it as something that I control, so I say what I want and say what I don't want, this sort of thing. I've never - I'd never go into anal sex or anything like that. Just something about - you think, no, it's not something that I wanna do.

Q. - that attracts you, yeah.

A. Otherwise... it's a bit of a... involved in the fact that you might get caught, so you think... you know, that sort of thing. But I wouldn't - I wouldn't ever let it get boring now and that sort of thing, I wouldn't really be ... now at all.

Q. And aspects of things like foreplay and that sort of thing, that are often nicer for women -

A. Yeah, they are. Sometimes you get - I've read books, as in, you know, "The Joy of Sex" and "The Complete Guide to Sexual Fulfilment", basically because that is for ideas, because you get - you get people, "what do you do?", you know -

Q. - "what shall we do next?"

A. - so, you know, that's to... that sort of thing. But there are - you know, there's often - I know of people - I know of friends of mine that will read things like that and say "oh, how do they excite me?" and I say, "well, give me the pages where... they excite me". You know, there was a time when I would... page... I mean, they had - "how am I the best thing in bed so that they always come back?", and now I think, "well, how do I please me?", you know, and I always worry about -

Q. ...

A. - and I always worry about getting involved - I've had friends of mine involved with people and say "oh, he was really weird", I say - if he was really weird, he was really gone, 'cos I wouldn't have - I wouldn't hang around in that situation. It's kind of - it's been a turnaround, I don't know - sometimes I find I'm getting too self-centered.

Q. I don't know, it sounds sort of very - refreshingly kind of something...

A. Am I being too self-centered or am I - you know, and then I come back to "no", you know - it's everyone else's own responsibility to look out for themselves, and if someone can't, then I won't abuse the fact that they can't, but I'm not gonna look out for them. 'Cos no one's gonna look out for me. It might be a - perhaps it's a hardened attitude I've grown up with, but in - you know, it's come into every walk of my life. Especially into sex, 'cos I think sex is something so personal and something that can make or break your relationship, and it affects a lot of your life. You know, if you always have bad sex, then if and when you get into good sex with someone, you've got such a - an ebullient(?) influence that it's bad, that you don't know good. So I know bad and I know good now and -

Q. - you can judge more what -

A. - I've got more judgement. And I think it's something for both to enjoy, and if you don't then you don't do it, and if someone else doesn't then you - you know, you hope that they don't; but if they don't, there's nothing you can do about it. And I think it's a lot more with women than men. I never really hear of men who have been in bad sexual relationships, had sex that they don't like, but you hear a lot from women.

Q. Yes. It's as though women don't think - don't put sex as a great priority or something, therefore if it's not so good then it doesn't count as much as it maybe does for some men.

A. I think - I think that sex is important, I think that sex is as important as the relationship, you know, the partnership; I think it's as important as the mutual agreement in the relationship, that you both agree on the house, the carpets, the curtains, the holiday, that sort of thing.

Q. So sex would be important to you in a relationship?

A. Mm, yeah. Yeah. It wouldn't be the most important but it wouldn't be less important than agreeing over house furnishings... If I - some - I don't know, people that marry the provider, I've known people that married a great provider to look after them, looks after their welfare, but -

(Tape Change)

Q. ... things like kissing and cuddling is more important than the sexual act itself.

A. Oh, I think it's important. It's being comforted. So it's just as important to me, someone who I'm having sex with to cuddle me and to consult me on the decisions and acts, but, you know, to some people it's more important that they're consulted over what they're gonna eat, where they're gonna go or what they're - you know, what they're gonna do the next day. To me, it's all - no one thing's more important than the other. There are things that are trivial. But nothing's more important than the other, it's all very - it's all on a very equal base. It's very important to be a partnership, to be mutual - to make mutual decisions and mutual agreements and that sort of thing; it's not overly

important that they come in, kiss me on the cheek every evening and ask me how my day was. That sort of thing. But it is important that they tell me they don't like their job, or they don't like living here anymore, and that's just as important. I think - I think you've got things in life that you decide that are minor and things that you decide that are major, and I think sex is one of the majors, and not one of the minors. That's what I'm saying, to a lot of people sex is a minor, for me it's a major 'cos it's an important part of the relationship. It is and - I'd say fifty percent of the relationship between two people.

Q. So if you were going into a relationship with a guy, you'd actually look very much to see what the sex was like and how much mutual attraction -

A. If the sex was bad and everything else was good, something would have to be done about the sex, otherwise it - it might be alright now, but in ten years' time that's still not gonna be good and that's gonna be something missing, you know. You don't - you don't go into a relationship with someone ... missing; I think you go into a relationship with it all there and if things start to go, then you start - you know, you have to look to pick them up again. But I wouldn't go into a relationship with something missing. You know, so there's no dive into disaster.

Q. Right.

A. You don't make a cake and not put eggs in it. I think there's essential ingredients, and sex is one, friendship's one, you know, partnership's one, the attraction's one - you know, they're all things that you put in. You've got your own recipe for your partnership.

Q. And going back to - like the relationships - well, say, starting at the first one, what happened then about contraception?

A. First of all...- this was all discussed before, and I've never slept with anyone without, you know - you know, what method of contraception we're using; but first of all, we used a sheath. Then I went on the pill. I was still on the pill when I went out with the -

Q. Did you stop using the sheath, when you went on the pill?

A. Yes, with the first one. But I was still on the pill when I went out with the second, when I went out with all of them, but I never said and the sheath was always used as well, 'cos it was kind of my way of testing, right, you know, "have you got the responsibility to ask, to use" - you know, if you're gonna say, ah - when I turn round and say, "ah, what about contraception?", if anyone says "I thought you were on the pill", and I think it's something that you both - you both have to really think about.

Q. So that would be a mark against them if they said -

A. If they said nothing.

Q. And - so did they all have some -

A. Yeah.

Q. - well, they all had sheaths -

A. The only - the only one that didn't was the last one, who - who I had said I was on the pill. But I - I've stopped taking it now 'cos it made me fat. So I've decided that, you know, I don't want to take it anymore. It makes me fat and it - I used to feel sick the first couple of days I took it each month, so -

Q. So what would you use now?

A. I'd use a sheath. It protects you against cervical cancer and sort of sexually transmitted disease.

Q. And how much did you think about things like AIDS in that...?

A. It was that I always considered it, it was always in the back of my mind, and I always talked to people about previous partners - you know, I mean I could talk to people and they had come into contact with someone with AIDS - you know, you don't know, you can't get a list of everyone's sexual partners and all their sexual partners and all theirs. So you can't - I wouldn't say it was something that worried me but it was something that was in my mind. But I never actually - I mean, obviously you don't know, but I never - I never actually come across anyone that I thought could have come into contact with the disease anyway. But you don't know. It's something I think about, it's not something that it... who I sleep with or what contraception I use.

Q. So is - which is more kind of important, protecting yourself against pregnancy or AIDS?

A. I think what's more important to me is protecting myself against infections like cervical cancer and thrush and things like that. Obviously I don't want to have a baby, but if I had to have one I'd have the pregnancy problem... the AIDS. But I'm more - I'm more immediately concerned with minor infections really. Might - might not be the most sensible answer, but if you look after the pennies the pounds will look after themselves, it's that sort of thing. If you can protect against minor infections you'll also protect against the major ones.

Q. And do you - how did you first hear about AIDS...?

A. I think it was through school. School. You know, the AIDS scare first came out when I was at school so that was where I heard about it.

Q. What did they say about it there?

A. It was the venereal disease that you die from, I think, you know; that was the thing - there's no cure for AIDS so just don't catch it. That was what I first remember hearing about it, there's no cure, you mustn't catch it. That sort of approach to it.

Q. Were you in the sixth form by that time?

A. I think so, yeah. But I mean then all the jokes went around, you know, queers only get it and - you know, it was all this sort of thing. What do they stand for - you know, what does AIDS stand for, and it was arsehole-injected death sentence, and all - you know, all of this came out; and then it was like you were getting it from giving blood, you were getting it from an injection, you were getting it from... and then Princess Diana went and visited someone who had AIDS and shook their hand and she hadn't got it and - and there's all, you know, there's still all the controversy that's going on around it now, you know -

Q. And do you understand what it is?

A. Oh, yeah. My - my brother's a MEDICAL PROFESSION, so I know - quite a lot of medical conditions, whether I want to or not I've heard about them, and I understand what it is. I understand what the implications of it are.

Q. You know the difference between that and HIV?

A. Yeah. HIV's the - the virus, and AIDS is when you've actually caught the illness, 'cos you can carry the virus for about - you know, that's the worry, that you can carry the virus without getting the illness and you can pass it on. But -

Q. Do you know how you get it?

A. Yeah, blood... You can - I mean, the theory is at the moment, that to get it from saliva it'd take about eight gallons of saliva to... wet kiss, you know, ... pass eight gallons of

saliva on but - there's a lot of - I still think there's a lot of darkness, even in the profession, there's a lot of darkness around AIDS. So -

Q. And semen...

A. Yeah. It's - I know it's easier to pass from man to woman than it is from woman to man... sort of thing. It originated in Africa. How it originated, I don't know.

Q. And who do you think is at the most risk now?

A. Anyone in a relationship with somebody who's homosexual, somebody who's bisexual, hemophiliacs, I think; anyone who comes across the stage where they need a blood transfusion, especially in America where you get paid to give blood, so prostitutes go and give blood...

Q. But here they treat it now, don't they, the - I mean it's supposed to be screened.

A. The blood, no, we test it - mm, they're supposed to. They test it but then it's a case of if you're carrying and you haven't actually got the disease it won't show up, that sort of thing, so you can - someone who's carrying it and doesn't know can quite innocently go and give blood, it goes into someone... you know, it... Children are born with it, babies are born with it... I don't think - you don't have to be permissive. I think the innocents are getting it now, the permissive are wise to it... stop. I think it's more the innocents.

Q. What, sort of bad luck?

A. Mm.

Q. And do you think -

A. I think if you go out asking for it, you'll get it. I think if you're careful and if you - I mean, as far as you can, you sleep with somebody you know and that sort of thing, I think you've got - you know, the odds are for you rather than against you. And it's not as easily passed with people, you know, you shake someone's hand, you don't get it, and that sort of thing. I mean, it's harder to get than hepatitis B, which is passed on by blood... It's harder than getting that. And, although, you know, hepatitis B can be treated or something, it's much more severe, how many people do you hear of with that? So -

Q. So if you started a relationship with someone new, I mean would that be something you'd ask about or -

A. If I - yeah, in effect. It'd be something I'd expect them to ask about too.

Q. Mm, of you.

A. Yeah. I wouldn't - you know, I would - condoms would be used, if I was sleeping with them, 'cos I'm not on the pill now, so they'd have to be; but, you know, it - you get the best of both worlds, you get protected against pregnancy and against venereal disease and infection.

Q. And what do you think of condoms?

A. I think they're - I don't mind using them at all. I don't mind using them at all, if you're - you know, it's kind of - everyone says oh, they're horrible to use and all the rest of it, and people say, oh, you're interrupted, putting them on; and they don't bother me at all.

Q. Have you found that they bother any of your partners?

A. No.

Q. Sometimes men aren't always keen...

A. No, never. They've never said. I've - I have bought them, but I've always gone out with - always, whoever I've slept with's already bought them first anyway, so, whether they have them or whether they've bought them specifically, they've always got them anyway. So it's never been - never been a problem.

Q. And with your relationships - is there some sort of negotiation about who had them...?

A. There's just been occasions - I've said, "oh, do you want me to get some?", you know, that sort of thing, I've never - it's never been "I bought them last time, you've got to buy them this time". I've bought them and they've bought them, we've had two... this sort of thing so -

Q. And do you kind of play with them at all, in the sense of, you know, using them as part of sexuality sort of thing?

A. No, not really. It's just been a case of putting them on. Either I've done it or they've done it. The only time I've got near playing with them is when you get the funny coloured ones out of the toilet - you know, "let's see... this is supposed to be the tasty one" (laugh) -

Q. - "strawberry" -

A. Yeah, that sort of thing... kind of... taste... that sort of thing. I've never really played with them.

Q. And has there been ever an occasion when you've actually had sex without using anything?

A. No... contraception.

Q. And can you imagine the time that there would be?

A. When I wanted to have a baby.

Q. Yeah. But no other sort of -

A. No. Well, I mean, if you weren't - if you weren't on the pill and you got raped or something like that, obviously you would then -but then you're - if that happens you're catered for with morning-after pills and that sort of thing. So if ever you go into a moment of passion... you know... the pill, so unless I wanted to have a baby, and I was planning to have a baby, and we were both planning - 'cos I wouldn't stop taking the pill or trick somebody into having a baby - that's the only time I wouldn't use contraception.

Q. And what do you understand by safe sex?

A. Safe sex I consider is safe of AIDS - that's what I think about. When I see a "safe sex" advert I think it's a condom advert, you know. On the tubes or anywhere else, that's what I think they are.

Q. So is safe sex using a condom?

A. I would consider it, yes. That's what I would think about.

Q. Anything else at all?

A. ... the rhythm method, you've got the safe period, I might think of it as that. I might have thought of it as that before, 'cos that's the other thing it brings to mind, is the safe period when you can have sex - the least fertile time of the month, I think.

Q. But that wouldn't protect you against AIDS.

A. No, but before AIDS that was what - other than AIDS, that's what I think of safe sex, safe time to have sex. But now it's kind of safe as a protection from AIDS. I mean, I know AIDS has been a big thing and I know a lot about AIDS, but I've never gone into sexual relationships thinking "I have to protect myself from AIDS against this person" because I've always used condoms anyway, at first.

Q. Right from the very first time?

A. Mm.

Q. So - do you prefer it with or without a condom, or does it make any difference?

A. It doesn't make any difference.

Q. No?

A. It makes no difference at all. I mean, not that I can tell... can't tell.

Q. Obviously you don't seem to take any risks with contraception -

A. No.

Q. Do you take risks anywhere else, in other aspects of life?

A. I wouldn't run across the road when there's cars coming! (laugh). No, I don't, I don't really take risks.

Q. I mean do you sort of smoke or drink a lot or -

A. Yeah, I smoke and I - I sometimes drink and I'll get drunk and I'll fall over, but I don't go out drinking all the time, I don't drink on my own; there's times when I go in the pub and I don't fancy a drink and I drink orange juice or Coke. The drink isn't a problem. I don't smoke that much. I'll smoke when I'm bored, really. If I'm bored, if I'm really fed up... like "oh, this is driving me mad, I'll run away" and I'll go and sit down somewhere, have a smoke and calm down. I don't smoke in work. I don't smoke at home. I smoke in the pub when I've had a few and I might smoke all of a sudden, you know.

Q. Like sort of social smoking, yeah.

A. Yeah. I will smoke in the pub. If I - but even then, I'll be in the pub and I'll not be drinking and I'll - you know, if I've had a few with someone, feeling a bit tipsy, a bit merry, I wanna smoke, I wanna do cartwheels on the... you know, this sort of thing. I'm your original "two drinks and she's giggling the world away". No, I can drink more than that - but I don't drink on my own and I don't drink every day. I've got loads of drink at home and I don't drink at home. Even though - if I have people come round - if someone comes round, I'm straight away - I'll make them a cup of coffee; and I mean last year when I got back from COUNTRY 2, and - that was when, you know, two days after I'd gone to COUNTRY 2, ADAM went back to COUNTRY, so I was a bit... home; I had friends round and, you know, we had a drink then, but firstly they come in, they've wanted a cup of coffee and some sandwiches to eat, we played Trivial Pursuit, and I'm drinking that Baileys - I only had a couple of them. But that's the only time I can think I drank at home. If I go round to someone's house and I say, come round... drink, you know - there's normally about four or five of us. But I never drink at home. If someone comes in my house I usually offer them a cup of tea. I don't say "do you want a cup of tea or d'you wanna drink?" and they say "I wanna Scotch" and open the cabinet. That sort of thing.

Q. And what about drugs?

A. I've never taken drugs - never - the only - I've taken morphine as a painkiller, I've been injected morphine when I was in hospital; and I thought that was great (laugh). "Yeah, I feel alright, nothing hurts!" I'd had my OPERATION and they injected me with morphine -

Q. Yeah.

A. - 'cos they didn't give me a pre-med to the anesthetic, so when I came round I didn't have any painkiller. But - I've smoked marijuana and all that did was make me giggle, and then afterwards I got like a really bad hangover and I'm like "oh" - I can do that, it doesn't bother me, I don't have to do that. Sometimes I do - yeah, I'll smoke a joint, but I've never taken hard drugs. Never sniffed anything. Never taken heroin. ...drugs as a - I've only been given a drug that I consider a drug, which is morphine, as a painkiller. I

wouldn't know where to get drugs from. I would know where to get marijuana from, 'cos I've got a couple of friends that are black and they've always got it, but I've never bought it. They've always got it, and they've been smoking a joint and I've had a puff and - you know, suddenly felt dizzy, felt giddy, fell over, fallen asleep, woken up and thought, "oh, I've got a bit of a hangover now". You know, but I've never actually bought it.

Q. And what about things like sport - do you do a lot of sport?

A. ... I play squash and badminton. Bits of aerobics and weight-training and I go skiing and things like that. A lot of my life revolves around the sports centre; all my - most of my friends are from the sports centre. I met a lot of them there. And they're not all sport-o-holics by any stretch of the imagination, but they go down there, they do their sport and then they sit in the bar... and that sort of thing. So you meet lots of people that way. There's also - the sports centre where I go, there's also a health suite, you can have a jacuzzi or there's sunbeds too, so. It isn't - it isn't like - you don't go and you're all into sport, they talk sport, they eat sport; you go in the bar afterwards and they're talking about, someone'll say, "well, who's having a party?" and that sort of thing. So I mean, the manager of the sports centre, there was someone there had a party, one of the staff there, ... got really drunk and dived across three tables. You know, it's not - the sort of atmosphere's very good.

Q. Sounds good.

A. Mm, it is. I've got a lot of friends there, I know a lot of people there. You know, and everyone - you'll be there playing squash and you'll be up there having a practice on your own and someone looks over the balcony and says, "fancy a game?" - "yeah", and you play them for a game, you know. And they could thrash you or you could thrash them or it could be a good match, but it's all - it's not too serious. It's all part of, you know, they want to learn, they learn, you're learning, it's that sort of attitude.

Q. So that's probably the nearest you get to taking risks in a way, falling off the ski slope or -

A. Yeah.

Q. - crashing a knee on the squash court.

A. Yeah, I mean, I'm very like - I'm a daredevil, I'll say - I'll say, "oh... get up and do that, that's slightly off-key, that's slightly different". I like to travel, I'll travel, I'll go and do everything which is taking a risk, I'll go into a country completely on my own, but they're not what I consider risks.

Q. What do you consider to be a risk?

A. I'd consider being a risk walking down a dark alley in the middle of the night, you know, that sort of thing, that's what I consider to be a risk. Walking home on your own late at night in the dark.

Q. What, 'cos of men attacking you -

A. Mm. I consider that a risk. You know, I'd get a taxi. So - yeah, there's things - I don't really consider that - things risks as such.

Q. And, just thinking of the - like the two one-night stands that you had, were they kind of when you were at parties or drunk, or were they those sort of one-night stands?

A. One - one time was at a party, but I never fancied him anyway. I'd spent most of the night talking to him and dancing with him, and I still see him now. The other one was - I'd been at the sports centre on Sunday night, I'd gone over to their flat - 'cos we were supposed to be meeting to go out, you know. One thing and another happened. You

know, the eventuality was that we were never gonna get out, we were never gonna go, because one thing or another was always gonna get in the way, and then I - I just ended up, I spent the night there. I spent the night there - I didn't think I consciously - I didn't consciously think I'm gonna stay here, I'm gonna sleep with him, but -

Q. But was it that you couldn't get home?

A. No, I could get home. I had my car. But I just decided to stay there. I didn't go up there thinking "I'm gonna stay there". I went up there, I was gonna say "how are you?", you know, stop for a cup of coffee, and in the end I just decided to stay. Just decided, "oh", in the end, "I'm gonna" - it was a conscious decision I made to stay.

Q. Mm. Did you feel that they were your decisions -

A. Yeah.

Q. - or were you sort of persuaded into it?

A. ... they were my decisions.

Q. And what happened about contraception then?

A. It was both times using Durex.

Q. What, they'd got them or you'd got them?

A. No, they'd got them.

Q. So do you think they expected to sleep with you?

A. No, I think they had them at home anyway. You know. Both of them asked me if I wanted them to use it, and I said "yes".

Q. Is that their way of asking you if you're on the pill sort of thing -

A. Yeah, probably.

Q. - or would they have had sex with you unprotected?

A. No, I think that's their way of asking, both of them said "do you want me to use protection?"... both of them said, "do you want me to use contraception?". Both times I said yes. Once - twice - both times I was on the pill. I said yes anyway.

Q. Why? - for the reasons you've said before?

A. Yeah. Because it's - then it's them taking responsibility, which I want, which I like, and it's protection - I don't think of it as being protection from AIDS, I just think of it as being protection. I don't consciously think "they must use a condom 'cos I'll get AIDS if they don't", but then I think oh, you know, it's good... alright.

Q. And for them was it a sort of - did they think it was gonna be a one-night stand? Or did they want it to become something else?

A. I think they both knew it was gonna be a one-night stand. And I knew it was too so -

Q. So did they make sort of an effort to - to give you pleasure, or was it like a - a kind of night when they were having -

A. No.

Q. - sex and that was it, sort of thing?

A. No, they both made an effort to give me pleasure. 'Cos I wouldn't - once - it's funny 'cos once it was ... effort to give me pleasure and the other time it was a two-way thing. They were giving me and I was giving them, so, you know - once I completely gained, the other time it was mutual. It was never they were there for more - you know, their own gain, their own pleasure, and I was just there, you know, I could have been anyone.

Q. So you never felt kind of used or -

A. No, no ... smile on my face the next day (laugh)... No, that was the - no, I was never used. Well, I don't think I was. I didn't feel like I was.

Q. Did you with your first boyfriend... sort of slightly different sort of person?

A. Yeah... not so much used, but I just felt it was all a bit of a chore.

Q. A chore?

A. Mm. So it wasn't so much used, it was just like "oh, no, not again", you know. Sort of -

Q. Was that 'cos you didn't fancy him so much or because he wasn't exciting you at all?

A. No, it was because I - because he was selfish, it was just - I just went against him as a person, his idea, his attitude started to aggravate me, so I went against him as a person. It was when I was deciding I didn't really like him.

Q. And - and can you tell me a bit about the sex education you had at school?

A. Yeah, we had - all the sex education, as in how it's done, oral sex, anal sex, contraception, sexually transmitted diseases - I think that was about it.

Q. Well, it looked like you'd had all those other things, masturbation, homosexuality -

A. Yeah. Yeah.

Q. So - were they good?

A. Yeah.

Q. 'Cos some people get hardly anything.

A. No, we used to - we used to sit in there, you know, get everything in the lessons, so - yeah, it was quite good.

Q. Which lessons did they have it in?

A. Social Education. It was - the rest of social education they were going on about sex, religion, stereotypes, people, that sort of thing. It was really - it's kind of the introduction to sociology, so - you know, you go on to do sociology and you do all the different - all the different, you know, the studies of the family, and watch all those films - Seven, Seven Plus Seven, Twenty-One and those -

Q. Yeah.

A. - so they all come out. But it was kind of an introduction to that. Sex education, religious education.

Q. How old were you then?

A. That was - that lesson started in the - when I was fourteen. We'd already been taught once in science when I was eleven, and we were taught before that about menstruation when I was nine; but also, when I was about seven or eight, my mum worked in a hospital, she brought home some books and leaflets. Yeah, I read them - sat and read them, went "oh, yeah"... So I was never - I was not taught - I was taught at school, I was taught at home, learnt it all from my friends in the playground anyway, so -

Q. So could you talk to your mum about things like that?

A. I could do but I've never come across the situation where I wanted to. Never...

Q. So she doesn't sort of ask you about contraception and -

A. No.

Q. - whether you're using any or things like that.

A. No. I think she knows, you know, I'm sensible enough, so - if I have to, I will...

Q. What about boyfriends?

A. She asks me about boyfriends, but she's never asked me about sexual relations with them. You know, she's asked me where they live, what do they do, all that sort of thing.

Q. And you've never particularly wanted to talk to her.

A. No.

Q. Do you think anything changed, like after she split up with your dad? I mean, does - do you see sort of her as being a potentially sexual person at all, or is she -

A. No. I mean, no, nothing's really changed.

Q. She's not got together with anyone else.

A. No.

Q. And do you see yourself leaving her?

A. Yeah. Yeah. As I say, I really want to travel. I want to go to other countries, I'd like to settle in another country. So, you know, that will happen.

Q. And what about things like marriage and having children?

A. Yeah. I mean, I want to get married and I want to have children, but I want the stable background first, I want it to be a secure family, so -... stability, you know, the proper background, the proper relationship are more important first. Because I wouldn't like to bring children into a family that wasn't stable and wasn't secure and that would give them hang-ups later on.

Q. Have you got sort of anyone - apart from ADAM, is it, from COUNTRY, have you got anybody that you've got your eye on?

A. I don't know. I'm more - I'm more interested in travelling at the moment and, you know, someone to go out with would be... so - I don't know. I mean, where I get my ideas from, where I get my priorities from it's ... me.

Q. So you're quite independent.

A. Mm, yeah. Yeah, I don't like the thought of anyone - like, needing anyone to look after me.

Q. And can you think of anything else in terms of the way like men and women relate and negotiate sexual relationships that, in your experience, has been important?

A. Not really. No, not really.

Q. And do you think any of your friends are kind of at risk from anything like AIDS?

A. No. My friends are - I mean, everyone I went to school with, is going out with someone from school, they've been going out with them since fifteen and they're still with them now, and they're, you know, getting married and all the rest of it. So they're okay... as far as it goes, I'm probably the randiest of them all, and I don't consider myself at risk so I shouldn't think any of those.

Q. Have you got any gay friends?

A. None that I actually know who are gay. There are some that I think might be. There's a girl of mine - girlfriend of mine who I think, you know, might be, but - it's her choice. I wouldn't tell her she couldn't be; I'm not afraid of being her friend, I don't think she's gonna make a pass at me or anything like that. And there are a couple of blokes that I do know are gay, and one of them that I do know, 'cos I was in a nightclub and I said "he's nice", and he went "I saw him first", you know (laugh), and it's that sort of attitude. I went "shut up, you", you know. So - but I don't feel any threat from them. Quite nice people actually... friends...

Q. I think I've more or less -

A. Right.

Q. - unless you can think of anything else.

A. I can't. You've bled me dry...