

BYC07 RT 12/04/1989

INTERVIEWER: How old are you?

INTERVIEWEE: Twenty-one.

INTERVIEWER: And just tell me what you have done since leaving school?

INTERVIEWEE: When I left school. I left school early.

INTERVIEWER: Was that when you were sixteen?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes a bit earlier. I was working in a butchers and then I left there, done hairdressing for a week and then I worked at [DEPARTMENT STORE].

INTERVIEWER: Why only a week for hairdressing?

INTERVIEWEE: Because it wasn't, it was just like a scheme and I didn't really like it anyway. I didn't like the hairdressers so I left there and went back to a butchers and I have worked in about four different butchers since then.

INTERVIEWER: So you are an expert on meat then. Where are you working now?

INTERVIEWEE: I'm not working now. I have just left about three months ago. Oh no I was working in a picture shop, selling pictures and pottery but I left that about just after Christmas.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever think about going back into education?

INTERVIEWEE: No not really.

INTERVIEWER: You're not interested?

INTERVIEWEE: No. Apart from when I did the hairdressing I was going to go to, but that didn't work out, so I just left it.

INTERVIEWER: I just came back yesterday from the hairdressers and there were all sixteen year olds and the money is so bad.

INTERVIEWEE: I know, I think everyone wants to do that when they leaves school.

INTERVIEWER: I started doing that and then you find out how much you are going to get paid.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I know, it's really awful money. The only way I think it would be worth anything is if you can still do it when you have a family and that if you can drive, you can do it, that's the only way you will ever make any money.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, I mean if you are working for a firm you only get 10% of what they get.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes it's rubbish.

INTERVIEWER: So I want to know about your relationships you have had up to now. You're married now?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: You're going to have a baby. So first of all, what age was it when you lost your virginity?

INTERVIEWEE: Sixteen.

INTERVIEWER: And were you still at school?

INTERVIEWEE: I had just left school but half and half was in the fifth year, you know, and that was my first boyfriend that, but proper boyfriend.

INTERVIEWER: Were you keen to lose it or?

INTERVIEWEE: No. I suppose then it was something special but when I look back now it was no.

INTERVIEWER: Where you upset about having lost your virginity. Did you want to remain a virgin until you got married and stuff like that?

INTERVIEWEE: No. I said that at school but I think it wears off that. I still see him now and again just walking about. He was like, a bit well known, like everyone knew him and he was dead, so it was a bit like being someone really. It was this thing.

INTERVIEWER: Was it a conquest then, getting him?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I suppose. It was all everyone knew him and talked about him. It was more that than anything else, but it didn't last long. I can't stand him now.

INTERVIEWER: Were you using contraception at that time?

INTERVIEWEE: No. I wasn't at first and then I did go on the pill straight away. Yes and then I went out with him for about a year.

INTERVIEWER: How did you find out about contraception?

INTERVIEWEE: I already knew from school.

INTERVIEWER: And what type of things did they tell you at school?

INTERVIEWEE: The teachers don't tell you anything. Not really about that.

INTERVIEWER: Was it a Catholic school?

INTERVIEWEE: No. [NAME OF SCHOOL]. It was just friends really, girlfriends and that. I didn't really, I didn't tell my Mum, I just went to the doctors on my own and said oh, I want to go on the pill. And that was it.

INTERVIEWER: And they put you on it?

INTERVIEWEE: Then I did tell my Mum, which she wasn't, she just thought it was for the best really. It is, isn't it.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, not getting pregnant. When you were at school did you get to know, or told anything about sexually transmitted disease, VD and stuff?

INTERVIEWEE: No that wasn't really mentioned.

INTERVIEWER: So you weren't protecting yourself against that?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: Did you know much about that from friends and things?

INTERVIEWEE: No it was just, at that age you just like, you know the names but you don't really know that much about it do you.

INTERVIEWER: You just hope you don't get it?

INTERVIEWEE: That's all it was really.

INTERVIEWER: And what happened after the first boyfriend?

INTERVIEWEE: I have had other boyfriends, and from then it was just like, for a few years that's when I started going out to pubs and that so then it was just with my friends for a few years. And then when I started working in town I met this other lad in the butchers who I worked with and I was obsessed with him. I thought he was the best thing in the world. That was like before my husband. But he was, how old, RUSSELL is 23 and he was like more for his mates and I was hurt with him. More than anything he was a get.

INTERVIEWER: How long were you with him?

INTERVIEWEE: Two years.

INTERVIEWER: What was the relationship like then?

INTERVIEWEE: Well by that time I was living on my own anyway. He lived in Wythenshawe and I lived in Blackley and I used to.. I worked with him and then I went, but he was like, we still went out on our own but went out together you know, boyfriend and girlfriend but he used to come down and stay with me at the flat. And what happened. It was just, he was too much for his friends, he was like, like now comparing to DAVID but then thought he was.

INTERVIEWER: Did you feel that he was using you then?

INTERVIEWEE: In a way but he wasn't in another way. He wasn't, it was just the way he is. He will never change, that's just him.

INTERVIEWER: So he wanted to have that as well?

INTERVIEWEE: That's how it is. Taking him like that all evening.

INTERVIEWER: So the relationship was based on sex rather than having much of a relationship with each other?

INTERVIEWEE: I suppose you could say that yes. And then we would both go on separate holidays. I would go with my friends and he would go with his friends. We just split up, I'd come back off my holidays and he came back off his and we came back at the same time and for about a week later and then I found out that he'd been out with someone else and she was pregnant. So that was him finished.

INTERVIEWER: Did you see anybody else at the same time you were seeing him?

INTERVIEWEE: No. I was sort of all for him. I was really obsessed. I was awful. I wasn't interested in anybody else except him. I went pretty horrible with my family and everything really.

INTERVIEWER: When you finished with him what happened then?

INTERVIEWEE: Well I was still seeing him all the time. I used to, you know like I was going out with my friends and I would just see him once a week, you know go out with him once a week and then when I went to, I moved jobs, that's when I met DAVID and then from seeing DAVID I never saw him again. And that was about eight month ago.

INTERVIEWER: And so what happened. Tell me about you and DAVID?

INTERVIEWEE: Well DAVID. Oh God, it's dead weird. I met DAVID, like I said I've known him for years.

INTERVIEWER: Was he at school with you, no, it was an all girl's school.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. He used to work on the market where I worked and I knew him then but it was just like, just someone else, you know I just knew him. And then when I went to Harpurhey market he says, 'oh will you come out?'. But I didn't go out with him for a few weeks and then I did. I went out a few times and then that was it. I just fell in love with him and married him.

INTERVIEWER: So when did you get married?

INTERVIEWEE: November.

INTERVIEWER: So were you keen to get married really soon then, you were sure about it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes because at first we were going to, my Dad lives in [PLACE], he's lived there for eleven years so we were going to go there and work together but DAVID's got a [PRODUCT] stall, that's his job you know, so it's a lot to give up. You know if it didn't work over there we would come back to nothing. And it's hard doing something like that, so we just ended up staying here really.

INTERVIEWER: So now you are planning to have a baby, well having a baby?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. See DAVID lives with me now in my flat. But we are trying to buy a house. You know that's what we have been doing for the last few weeks. It's pretty hard.

INTERVIEWER: One round here?

INTERVIEWEE: Near my Mum, Newton Heath.

INTERVIEWER: Is that going to be really expensive then?

INTERVIEWEE: No I don't want a big house, just a terrace house. But they have gone up like the last, god knows what they've gone up the last year.

INTERVIEWER: That's because of the mortgages and interest rates gone up as well.

INTERVIEWEE: And I mean like we have a pension out and everything and it says any time you want a mortgage and you can have up to £20 - £25,000. But it's too much. I know we won't be able to afford that if we got that much, so I want one about 16 really, 18 something, like that.

INTERVIEWER: So you're pregnant at the moment, did you plan it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: You've been trying hard?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. Well we'd been married about a month and I decided I wanted a baby. You know that was all, so I was on the pill then so I came off the pill, but I didn't think I would get pregnant that quick. I was shocked.

INTERVIEWER: You must be really fertile. You will have to be careful.

INTERVIEWEE: Well after a month I was pregnant but in that month I said, 'should we wait to have a baby?', I'd changed my mind. So I said, 'oh well, next time, we will wait and that and get a house first', and then it was too late, I was pregnant. I mean I'm pleased because I wanted that anyway.

INTERVIEWER: Why did you want a baby then?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know, I just felt like I was ready to have one now. Like before I had never even thought about it. Like other boyfriends, only one mentioned marriage and that was it, I didn't want to know him.

INTERVIEWER: Had that happened before then, people who wanted to get serious and settle down?

INTERVIEWEE: Oh yes. At one time even RUSSELL, you know the one that was.

INTERVIEWER: Messing you around?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. But it was all sort of move up to Wythenshawe. He wanted it all his way, you know, he would be happy if I moved up there and I would be sat in so he could still have his friends. He would never have said, well I will move in with you, come away. It's just.

INTERVIEWER: Would you not want to move out of this area then?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, I wouldn't mind. I would live anywhere really. It's only like I want to live near here because my Mum was there and all my Aunties because they all used to live round here but they have all moved now.

INTERVIEWER: Are you close to your family then?

INTERVIEWEE: I'm quite close to my Mum. Not to my Dad because I only see him about once a year or whatever. You know if I go and see him or he come over when I got married. But that was it.

INTERVIEWER: Can you confide in your Mum then, is she like an agony aunt?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes because my Mum is only young. My Mum is, well I'm 21 and Mum's 38. Because she was only 16 when she had me. So I think that's why I'm a bit.. She was always alright. She always trusted me so I never did anything.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that made a difference, your relationship with your parents?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes it does because like at school when people have to be in, you know, like when you can't go out and that, well my Mum wasn't like that, she would get me ready. I never had to hide anything from her so it was a lot easier. You don't have to do things. You know if I wanted I would tell her and it's easier.

INTERVIEWER: I mean it was alright for you to go on the pill and stuff like that?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Were there other girls your age at school that got into trouble then?

INTERVIEWEE: Oh yes. Like friends who would say, can I come and stay at your house, so I can go out. And then in the end they are the ones that get pregnant because they are just trying that hard.

INTERVIEWER: Did a lot of your friends get pregnant then?

INTERVIEWEE: Oh god yes. A lot of them. Most of them. I don't think there's many people that I did go to school with that haven't got babies now.

INTERVIEWER: Really. Were they unplanned these babies?

INTERVIEWEE: Most of them. The kids are about three or four now. They are not even with their boyfriends. Like my boyfriends then, who I could have got pregnant to but didn't, because I was on the pill. They weren't on the pill so they did get pregnant. It could have happened to me but it didn't because I could just say to my Mum, you know, it's easier.

INTERVIEWER: So why do you think those girls didn't use contraceptives?

INTERVIEWEE: I think it's just, they don't get round to it do they?

INTERVIEWER: Yes that's one of the things we are interested in is why, because most young girls do now know about the pill, they know about contraception.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes it's just getting them going to the doctors and all the doctors round my Mums, going to the clinic, and they just don't do it do they?

INTERVIEWER: Well it's taking a really big risk.

INTERVIEWEE: Well I think my Mum would have took me herself, you know, it's better isn't it, I would rather do it with my doctor than her come home and say so what.

INTERVIEWER: Do you plan, well if it's a girl that you have, the way you are going to bring her up?

INTERVIEWEE: Oh yes. I mean you can't let them get away with everything, you've got to have a bit of leeway.

INTERVIEWER: Getting back to AIDS. When did you first hear about it?

INTERVIEWEE: Really when it first become publicised.

INTERVIEWER: You mean when it was on TV, the programmes on TV and stuff?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And did you watch the programmes that were on?

INTERVIEWEE: I watched a few of them?

INTERVIEWER: What did you think about it?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know. It shocks you a bit doesn't it.

INTERVIEWER: Did you see the way the programmes were presented. Did you think it would be a risk to you?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, it's a risk to anyone really. Especially like if you did have a boyfriend that wasn't always there. I mean now I wouldn't even dream about it with DAVID but before, it's always there. It does scare you. Like I wouldn't. Last year I went away with my friend, I wouldn't go away and sleep with someone, but you do have to think about it.

INTERVIEWER: Before it came out would you have?

INTERVIEWEE: No I wouldn't have done it then, but I mean it's not.

INTERVIEWER: If you had met someone that was nice and whatever, and that's the thing, you don't plan to.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I suppose. It is a bit scary really.

INTERVIEWER: Were you with DAVID, your husband, when it first came out then?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: So you were sort of having relationships with other people?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. That's when I was with RUSSELL. My ex-boyfriend.

INTERVIEWER: Right. And he's the one that you didn't particularly trust that was sleeping with another women?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes that's the thing. I mean like when I went on holiday and he got another girlfriend. It's a bit.

INTERVIEWER: Did you think about AIDS then when that happened or did you just think he's a bastard, he's done that?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes you think about everything. I mean I said to him, you know, I think now he will end up with AIDS. Because that's just how he is. You know, he doesn't really give a shit, but I don't know.

INTERVIEWER: If you weren't with DAVID now would you be asking people you slept with to use a condom?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, think so. I don't know. By the time you get to like sleeping with them I think you know them a bit then don't you. You know what sort of person they are.

INTERVIEWER: And what sort of person would you trust then?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know. Someone who wasn't like. It's just you can tell can't you if they are all for girls or.

INTERVIEWER: So it would be somebody who hadn't had lots of relationships and whatever?

INTERVIEWEE: And sort of quiet and not a lads' lad. Because, that's mainly the ones isn't it.

INTERVIEWER: So if somebody wasn't that type of person then you reckon they would be safe?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Can I ask what you saw on TV and things like that, what do you know of the ways to actually prevent yourself from getting AIDS?

INTERVIEWEE: Using Durex. That's it.

INTERVIEWER: Do you know actually how the virus is passed on?

INTERVIEWEE: Not really.

INTERVIEWER: You haven't got any..

INTERVIEWEE: No I didn't get that deep into it. It was just like.

INTERVIEWER: Have you ever heard about HIV. Have you heard of that?

INTERVIEWEE: Is that the one that doesn't kill you or, I don't know. It's the same as AIDS but you can have it but not pass it on, or something like that.

INTERVIEWER: I think a lot of people are confused about the difference between them. HIV is actually the virus. AIDS is the..

INTERVIEWEE: It doesn't make you ill?

INTERVIEWER: No. Well it does, all AIDS is, is just a collection of symptoms which they have given the name to, it's when it's got to a terminal stage and that's called AIDS, but HIV is the virus.

INTERVIEWEE: That you can pass on?

INTERVIEWER: That you can catch and pass on which actually ends up giving you AIDS. So if you saw advertising and stuff and talked about HIV would you be sure who would..

INTERVIEWEE: It's junkies as well.

INTERVIEWER: I mean would you be sure about what it was talking about?

INTERVIEWEE: No not really.

INTERVIEWER: Would you know whether something like is oral sex was dangerous?

INTERVIEWEE: No I wouldn't.

INTERVIEWER: Are these sorts of things you think you would need to know?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. I think I everyone should know really. But I never.

INTERVIEWER: Well the information is pretty basic and that's what you get. You know when they say cutting down on partners, is that something that you would see as a way not to get it?

INTERVIEWEE: Oh yes. It's hard to say isn't it. I suppose until you know someone who's got it or know someone that had, you know close to you, but I don't really know that much about it.

INTERVIEWER: Do you not know anybody that has come into contact with anyone who knows they have got it?

INTERVIEWEE: No not at all. Or even knows anybody that knows somebody.

INTERVIEWER: Do you see it as any risk to you then in any way?

INTERVIEWEE: No not now I don't.

INTERVIEWER: What about in terms of, think about when you were growing up and relationships, you know what everyone now is calling sleeping around and everything. It was seen in a different way. Would you see what you did as sleeping around. Would you have called that sleeping around?

INTERVIEWEE: No not really because it was always a steady boyfriend that I slept with. It was never someone who you just went out with one night or someone for a few weeks. It was always like a year or two years, you know.

INTERVIEWER: So that would make it safe rather than being one-night stands. Is that what you see as being dangerous?

INTERVIEWEE: Well it would be, it depends how many one-night stands you have doesn't it. It depends what kind of boyfriend you've got as well. If he's sleeping around it's no good you being a nun is it. So you can't win either way.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think if you weren't with your husband now, what would you be doing to protect yourself? Do you think you would be thinking about it?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't really think I would be thinking about it until I did meet someone because otherwise it's just, it doesn't really come to that, you know.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think you would ever ask someone, if you wanted to have a proper relationship with someone, would you ever ask someone to have a test. Would that come into your mind?

INTERVIEWEE: No. It wouldn't really no.

INTERVIEWER: It's just interesting because.

INTERVIEWEE: It should do really. I mean I think everyone should be able to say that but I don't think I could, no.

INTERVIEWER: Would you ever think about having a test to make sure that you weren't.

INTERVIEWEE: Well no.

INTERVIEWER: Because one thing that they are starting to do now is to test pregnant women.

INTERVIEWEE: No I have never thought about it before you know. It never really entered my head.

INTERVIEWER: I think for most people it doesn't. Do you think there should be more advertising or do you think people have learnt what they need to learn?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't think people know that much about it really. They don't. No one I speak to knows. It's just like AIDS, it's just there, no-one knows really that much about it unless you look into it yourself, otherwise it's.

INTERVIEWER: And they won't look it themselves unless they have a reason to?

INTERVIEWEE: Because you don't do you. You don't think.

INTERVIEWER: No, I'm afraid not. I mean I have been talking over the last few weeks to a lot of young girls, 16 and 17. At that age you don't know what is going to be a steady relationship and what isn't.

INTERVIEWEE: Well you always think your first boyfriend is the one you are going to marry don't you, but you don't. And if you do, it doesn't really work out does it.

INTERVIEWER: They think in the same way, they think of it as a steady relationship so it doesn't count. I think an awful lot of people do the same thing. Have your ideas about what is promiscuous and what's not promiscuous changed since AIDS has come out or do you think it's all the same?

INTERVIEWEE: No I think it has always been the same. I don't think really that it will change that many people. I think if they are going to do it, they will do it. I mean people who I know they all just, I suppose everyone thinks it's not going to happen to them. If they are going to sleep around they do it, don't they. I mean some of them who I used to work with, they will go on holiday and sleep with three lads, just in the two weeks that they are there and they still do it now. If it's in you, it's in you.

INTERVIEWER: Why do you think the people do that?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think it's because they want sex?

INTERVIEWEE: I think it's just. Everyone is different. When you are on holiday. I have only been away last year and by then it was a bit, well everyone was a bit thingy about it and I didn't really meet anyone that I was that into any way. It was just a holiday with my friends. We all had boyfriends anyway back home. It was just a last girl's holiday because we knew that this year we would be married or engaged or whatever. But I think people who go away, a lot of people do go away just for that don't they. No-one knows you, you get drunk as you want, everything is dead cheap. It's a laugh. And lads aren't really that bothered are they.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that the men aren't taking responsibilities they should be taking?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't think men do take any responsibility about things like that.

INTERVIEWER: Men that you have been out with in the past, have they taken seriously things like contraception or?

INTERVIEWEE: No I've been on the pill, so it's always been up to me. Most lads are not even interested in that are they. It doesn't even enter their heads.

INTERVIEWER: Do you resent that. Do you think that's wrong?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I do in a way because it's up to them as well isn't it.

INTERVIEWER: Over something like AIDS do you think it will end up being the woman's responsibility too?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes probably. I think it will.

INTERVIEWER: For something like carrying condoms and things like that. There seems to be a lot of pressures now for people that's one of the reasons for doing it.

INTERVIEWEE: I think any girl can go out and get a lad and sleep with them if they wanted. I don't think you could get many lads who had condoms on them. You just wouldn't because they don't really care do they.

INTERVIEWER: Most of them have this idea that they won't use condoms because it's not masculine or something like that not to use them.

INTERVIEWEE: I have used them and to me it didn't really make that much difference.

INTERVIEWER: Yes it's funny, you find most women don't mind using them at all. I wonder why that is. Men say that it makes it less pleasurable for them. If you had another chance to look at the sort of education you were getting is there any things you would like, like information about AIDS, is there anything you would like to know that you don't know about now about it. What sort of information do you think you would need?

INTERVIEWEE: Do they know that much about it though?

INTERVIEWER: It's changing all the time.

INTERVIEWEE: I mean they don't really know until someone does, they don't know what you can get it from until someone gets it through that. I don't know.

INTERVIEWER: But like we were saying about oral sex, you didn't know you could get it like that. Would you like to know more about how the virus is passed on?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. I don't think they make it, they can't really show you that much can they?

INTERVIEWER: I suppose not.

END OF RECORDING.