

MBS14(RT) 26.4.89

INTERVIEWER: Which college?

INTERVIEWEE: [NAME OF COLLEGE]

INTERVIEWER: What are you going to do there?

INTERVIEWEE: That's what everyone asks. I'm doingGCSE first.

INTERVIEWER: Right. So is that something you would have done at school?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: So it's only the course where you can do that?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. And then I'm going to do 'A' levels from it. I'm doing 'A' German and GCSE business and information studies.

INTERVIEWER: Business and information studies?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes and 'A' level typing.

INTERVIEWER: Oh so you are going to be really well qualified aren't you?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. I hope so.

INTERVIEWER: Have you had to work really hard?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Why did you want to come to college and do 'A' levels because I should think a lot of people wouldn't be doing that?

INTERVIEWEE: There are a lot leaving for jobs but I don't fancy going on a YTS.

INTERVIEWER: No I don't blame you.

INTERVIEWEE: I would rather get a qualification and go on to something better.

INTERVIEWER: So what do you think you will be doing eventually?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know really, I'm torn between banking and language work.

INTERVIEWER: What do you mean by language work then?

INTERVIEWEE: I would like to be bilingual.

INTERVIEWER: And what be a translator or something?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. You know a secretary.

INTERVIEWER: Well you are going to have some typing as well aren't you?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: That sounds pretty good. Would you be doing that in Manchester or do you want to travel?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know, I might go abroad.

INTERVIEWER: So you've broad horizons here then. You want to do lots of things. Have you always wanted to get out and do?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. I don't like the idea of being stuck in one place all the time just be typing in an office, I'd get bored.

INTERVIEWER: What do your mum and dad do?

INTERVIEWEE: My mum is a postwoman.

INTERVIEWER: Oh right. I have got to go down to the post office actually, does she work at [NAME OF POST OFFICE]?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Well she will be hearing about me down there as well.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes she works down there.

INTERVIEWER: So does your mum push you at school?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes she always has done.

INTERVIEWER: She has encouraged you?

INTERVIEWEE: She wants me to do as well as I can.

INTERVIEWER: So tell me about your mum and how you get on with her and stuff like that?

INTERVIEWEE: I get on with her great, she's always been really open about everything and anything I wanted to know she's always gone over it with me and told me everything. She's really good.

INTERVIEWER: Are you the only child?

INTERVIEWEE: No. I've got a younger sister. She's in second year here.

INTERVIEWER: So why do you think your mum is like this, is she quite young?

INTERVIEWEE: She's thirty-nine.

INTERVIEWER: I suppose it's about the normal age.

INTERVIEWEE: She was twenty-three when she had me, and I've always got on well with her.

INTERVIEWER: Does she talk to you about sex and things like that and you have never had to keep any secrets?

INTERVIEWEE: No never.

INTERVIEWER: What sort of things do you talk about?

INTERVIEWEE: I told her all about when I started having a boyfriend, and I've been going out with him for fourteen months now and I wanted to go on the pill and I thought she would go crazy.

INTERVIEWER: How old were you when you asked her then?

INTERVIEWEE: It was only about six weeks ago, I was sixteen. And she said 'OK'.

INTERVIEWER: And did she go down with you to the family planning clinic?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: That's what my mum did. I dragged her. But yes she did, I wanted her to. It makes you feel a lot better doesn't it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. I don't think I would hide anything from her, you know, because she is really open with me.

INTERVIEWER: That's really good, so she answered all the questions you had about pregnancy and that?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, she's been really good.

INTERVIEWER: So what did she tell you about contraception and things like that, what sort of advice did she give you?

INTERVIEWEE: Well I don't know. She never likes these inter-uterine devices. She has actually had a cap herself and she said she didn't like it. So really the only option she had was on the pill.

INTERVIEWER: Does she use the pill now?

INTERVIEWEE: Now? No.

INTERVIEWER: Is she not having any relationship with anyone now?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember your dad or has he been away for a long time.

INTERVIEWEE: I remember him.

INTERVIEWER: How did you get on with him?

INTERVIEWEE: Me? I don't like him.

INTERVIEWER: Is he not a nice man. In what way?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know. He's very sarcastic all the time and he was always getting at my mum. We don't get on at all.

INTERVIEWER: So did they get divorced then?

INTERVIEWEE: They are separated.

INTERVIEWER: And how long has that been for?

INTERVIEWEE: It's been nearly a year now.

INTERVIEWER: Are you happier for it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. My mum loves it.

INTERVIEWER: Does she. That's nice that she feels happier.

INTERVIEWEE: She does really. Her independence.

INTERVIEWER: Has she always worked as well?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, always.

INTERVIEWER: And how does she like it at the Post Office?

INTERVIEWEE: She loves it. She's been there twelve years. She's part time, she starts full time this week. But she's in school at the moment.

INTERVIEWER: Do they have training courses?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. They have got training courses that last a week and she has to be there at half past eight every morning.

INTERVIEWER: Oh god.

INTERVIEWEE: She's up at half past six. Terrible.

INTERVIEWER: That really is going back to school. Can we just talk about what type of sex education you got at school? It's obvious you got quite a lot from your mum. First of all obviously she talked to you about contraception, what other things did you tell you about, I mean did she tell you about sexually transmitted diseases?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Which ones?

INTERVIEWEE: Well she always went on about VD and AIDS and stuff like that?

INTERVIEWER: Did she tell you how you could get them or how you could not get them?

INTERVIEWEE: Is it sex and oral sex.

INTERVIEWER: To get what?

INTERVIEWEE: To get AIDS.

INTERVIEWER: And did she tell you ways, what did she say that just having sex you would get it by or how to protect yourself?

INTERVIEWEE: By condoms. That's more or less the best protection.

INTERVIEWER: You knew about oral sex. Do you think oral sex is risky?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: So your mum told you about things like that it wasn't just sex.

INTERVIEWEE: No she just..

INTERVIEWER: She went through different things. That's good. My mum didn't. She wasn't quite that brave. Do you talk to your mum also about your relationships, how you are getting on with boyfriends?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: So when you were at school here, what things did they talk about in sex education.

INTERVIEWEE: There's not so much now. When we actually did sex education they talked about how you had a baby, how it was formed and everything and they showed us all the devices of contraception, the coil, the cap and all those, passing them round. And everyone was going 'oh aye'. It was quite good.

INTERVIEWER: Did you think that you probably knew more than most people?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I suppose so.

INTERVIEWER: From what you got from your mum?

INTERVIEWEE: She has always told me everything.

INTERVIEWER: If you had just had the stuff you had at school and your mum hadn't told you anything do you think that would have been enough?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: What didn't they cover?

INTERVIEWEE: They didn't actually cover sexual relationships, you know, the talk behind it, it was just it happened and that was it.

INTERVIEWER: It was just 'the sperm swims this way and the egg goes that way' and?

INTERVIEWEE: The sperm finds the egg and they go into the womb and plants itself on the walls of the womb and multiplies.

INTERVIEWER: They don't tell you about where it happens and what you say to somebody and stuff like that. And so you think it would have been better to have all of that sort of stuff?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Did they talk about AIDS at all at school, any classes?

INTERVIEWEE: Nothing.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember when AIDS first came out?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, I was in the third year.

INTERVIEWER: Right, so tell me what you remember of when it first came out?

INTERVIEWEE: I remember it being on the news about acquired immune deficiency and everybody had to be aware of it. And all the sleeping arrangements of girls. It was really weird.

INTERVIEWER: So did you see the programme on TV?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, how it actually affects the people.

INTERVIEWER: Did you think they were good?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes they were really good.

INTERVIEWER: What parts did you think were good then?

INTERVIEWEE: The way they actually put over how serious it was. How it has to be avoided. It was really good.

INTERVIEWER: So how would you go about avoiding it then. I mean do you think about it as something that's a risk to you?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: It doesn't strike you as being any threat at all?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: Do you know anyone who's got it or who might have it or who you think would be at risk?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, you know people who are at risk. Tell me about that?

INTERVIEWEE: Well there was a few girls who came here last year and they were absolutely terrible at sleeping around, you know they would have been with a boy for just four or five weeks and they were sleeping with them already and it was last two or three weeks and it would be over and then somebody else would come along and the same thing.

INTERVIEWER: Were they using any protection?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: They weren't.

INTERVIEWEE: So they were just as much at risk of pregnancy and AIDS than anything else.

INTERVIEWER: So you think they weren't using any contraception at all?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: Do you know why they didn't use contraception?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: Did you not talk to them about it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. I said why didn't you use anything and they just said it just doesn't seem right. Silly really.

INTERVIEWER: So they were definitely at risk. Do you think there are a lot of people, young women who are not taking any precautions at all?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I do. Because it was one of the things that can't happen to me, you know. Because they thought it was just only gays that got it but it's not.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that a lot of people still think that it's only gays who get it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And for that reason they don't think they are going to get it. Do you think it's just gays that get it?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: I think the reason it was gay people to begin with in this country that did get it was just by chance, that's the way it came into the population. I mean in Africa and different countries it started a very different way, it's mostly heterosexuals, straight people that have got it. So I mean it's nothing to do with being gay that makes you get it. What sort of person, if you had to describe the sort of person who was likely to get it, what would you say?

INTERVIEWEE: It could happen to anybody. Anybody at all. I mean you could have your husband go away and he would be there with a prostitute while they are away from you and she could have caught it from say a bisexual man.

(Break in tape)

INTERVIEWER: So you don't think there is anyone type? So why do you say that you are not risk?

INTERVIEWEE: Because I have the same partner. We were both virgins when we started going out with each other and neither of us had had a steady relationship before and it just developed.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me right from the beginning about this relationship then?

INTERVIEWEE: We just met by chance really.

INTERVIEWER: How old is this boy?

INTERVIEWEE: He's seventeen now, he's eighteen in THE SUMMER. My best friend has gone out with his best friend, and we just decided to go out one night, and we hit it off right away. And I've been going out with him for fourteen months.

INTERVIEWER: Fourteen months, that's a long time. So when did you start sleeping together?

INTERVIEWEE: After about eight months.

INTERVIEWER: And what happened to make it happen. How did you make the decision, whose decision was it?

INTERVIEWEE: I think it was a joint decision really that we both wanted to further the relationship and it seemed just the obvious way to go.

INTERVIEWER: And were you happy about it, and you enjoy sex as well?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: It wasn't painful or anything. Do you do things like oral sex as well because a lot of people think sex is just intercourse, so you are happy to do other things as well?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think this is going to be a long-term relationship then?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. We're getting engaged at Christmas.

INTERVIEWER: You are getting engaged. What do you think about your future in terms of going out with people, would you see this person, you are likely to get married, who you are engaged to, you are not thinking about the future in any other way.

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: It's a bit early, you are only sixteen you know. No, if you are happy.

INTERVIEWEE: Everybody has said that to me. You are young and you will want to go out. But I'm perfectly happy.

INTERVIEWER: So what does your boyfriend do?

INTERVIEWEE: He's a sign-writer. He's just finished his college course now. He goes into college two days a week and he is working three days a week at a sign-writers in [NAME OF TOWN]. He's really enjoying his work and he's good at it.

INTERVIEWER: He's got hands that don't shake. It's what you need isn't it.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. He's got his written exams in June, and if he passes he will have a diploma in signwriting and City & Guilds.

INTERVIEWER: So you are not worried then about your sex in the future, about getting AIDS, about getting?

INTERVIEWEE: No. I don't think he's got anything.

INTERVIEWER: When you first started sleeping with this boy did you ever have sex without using contraception?

INTERVIEWEE: No, never. Because that is something my mum has always drummed into me. I could never do with getting pregnant, to be tied down by a baby or anything.

INTERVIEWER: There are a lot of girls who think that you never get pregnant the first time. But you don't believe that?

INTERVIEWEE: No. There's a few in fifth year now have had to leave this year because they got pregnant.

INTERVIEWER: If you had got pregnant would you have thought about abortion?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't think so.

INTERVIEWER: Why is that?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know it's just one of those things I can't see me doing.

INTERVIEWER: Did they talk about abortion at school?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: Is your family Catholic?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: So it's not to do with that in particular. So tell me what your plans are for the future, because you put down on your questionnaire you were thinking about being a social worker?

INTERVIEWEE: I didn't.

INTERVIEWER: You didn't? Sorry I've got your names mixed up, so what's your name?

INTERVIEWEE: CHRISTINA.

INTERVIEWER: Did you say you want to go to college?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: So you were saying you would like to be a translator or something like that?

(interruption on tape)

INTERVIEWER: Just some general questions about what you do in your spare time. Do you spend it with your boyfriend or?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. I have to revise for my exams, I usually spend about 2 hours every evening revising and he tests me on the questions as well.

INTERVIEWER: So does he take your studying seriously?

INTERVIEWEE: Oh yes. He's really encouraging me to pass my exams so that I can start college so I can better myself.

INTERVIEWER: That's nice. He sees that as important in the end. So tell me about your relationship in terms of, is it an equal relationship?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. I think I'm a bit more outgoing than he is, but he is really.

INTERVIEWER: What sort of person would you say you were, how would you describe yourself?

INTERVIEWEE: Me? It's hard to describe myself really. I don't think I would say I was too outgoing but I'm not shy.

INTERVIEWER: Would you say you were ambitious?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. I really want a good career.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that makes you quite different from other girls then?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. There's girls here that have left school now and gone to work behind a till somewhere, behind the counter. I couldn't be doing with that, it would drive me up the wall.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think the difference is then between, I should think you come from similar backgrounds to many of the girls, what do you think makes it different for you then that you don't want to do those things, you want to go on?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know. I know I'm really ambitious, I really want to go on and make something of it.

INTERVIEWER: Have you always felt like that?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes from being young.

INTERVIEWER: So you think it's part of your mum's influence on you?

INTERVIEWEE: I suppose it must be.

INTERVIEWER: Does she take education very seriously then?

INTERVIEWEE: I have always had to come to school, there's no excuses, she has always made me go to school.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think about the girls that do leave and get married quickly or they go and have a baby quickly, because usually they don't get married, they go and get pregnant?

INTERVIEWEE: Well they've got no life have they really. Because all their money in the future is going to have to spent on that child. They are not going to be able to go out and enjoy themselves, travelling or seeing the world. Because they are going to have no money and they are going to have to look after that child and it's just the rest of their life.

INTERVIEWER: So why do you think they do it? Have you any ideas just in terms of you go to school with these girls and have grown up with them. Why do you think they go and do that?

INTERVIEWEE: They must be accidents. They don't actually mean to get pregnant.

INTERVIEWER: I suppose as well they think it's a way of growing up.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes and getting out of school, they don't have to come back any more.

INTERVIEWER: It's daft then, isn't it. Can we talk about AIDS again for a minute, have you heard of HIV?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: Do you know what HIV would be?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: But you would recognise it? If I said HIV to you what would you think I was talking about?

INTERVIEWEE: You have AIDS.

INTERVIEWER: Right, it's something to do with AIDS but you don't know the difference between AIDS and HIV?

INTERVIEWEE: No. Is that the actual thing that's carried? And AIDS is the actual disease that comes out in you. You can carry the HIV but not actually come out with it.

INTERVIEWER: So if someone was HIV positive would that mean that they were safe?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: So it would mean that they have got it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Do you know where the AIDS virus or HIV virus would be in your body, how you spread it?

INTERVIEWEE: It is in the sperm of males and in the fluid of females.

INTERVIEWER: Do you know whether it's anywhere else in your body?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: It's also in your blood. That's the reason about sharing needles. So it's in all of the liquid in your body. When they talk about safe sex on the adverts and posters, whatever, what do you think that's talking about?

INTERVIEWEE: Using condoms.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think it's about just using condoms? I mean if someone said safe sex to you, would you think of anything else apart from using condoms?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know.

INTERVIEWER: What would you think about, another set of things which is supposed to be safe sex which they haven't been pushing so much, is things that you can do which is not dangerous like the other parts of sex which is not just intercourse which we were

talking about before, things that most people would call foreplay, and in fact are probably quite important things, would you see that as an odd thing to have to do to have sex without intercourse?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: So it wouldn't be strange. I think you've got a healthy view of sex. So you and your boyfriend, your sexual relationship, it's not just based on intercourse.

INTERVIEWEE: Not at all.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think you get from that?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know.

INTERVIEWER: I suppose it's your first sexual relationship. So you do get pleasure out of the things that aren't just intercourse?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that you take any risks in your life, generally do you take risks in your life?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: So you are quite safe about what you do in general. I mean, do you go out drinking?

INTERVIEWEE: Not very often.

INTERVIEWER: Do you smoke?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: You sound a very together young woman to me. Is there anything about AIDS that you haven't been told about that you would be interested in, anything you are not clear about?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know.

INTERVIEWER: So you are happy about it all.

END OF RECORDING.