

LJH01 December 1988

Interviewed in her home, no-one else was there. An attractive, large young woman. This was mentioned to me by the person through whom I contacted her, but I often don't notice height, not a relevant category for me unless someone towers amazingly over me. She was quite tall I suppose, and we spoke of it when I asked her what her image of herself was - she thought sheer size might make her intimidating, so tried to make herself small, and be non-assertive. Although she thought she was probably not too successful in that. She was casually dressed (we were at home) but we did discuss clothing as a marker of group membership. The previous year she had been very into that, and listed the basic things required in the wardrobe of those 'in with the in group' that she related to, but this year it was not such a problem for her, she did not feel the pressure so keenly.

Very together young women, not sexually active, but clear in what her requirements would be of a partner. Extremely aware and worried about the risks of AIDS, and contraception, but particularly the first. Viz her quote on our BSA paper. Had a close relationship with a young (younger even) man for some years, and had both discussed at a certain point changing it into a sexual relationship, but she feared losing the friendship, and they had agreed not to do so.

Very interesting on peer group pressure, and indeed peer group construction. Seemed well worked out in relation to what she wanted to do in the future as far as college was concerned. Also wanted to have a number (5 I think) children, but not particular as to them all having the same father. Interested in having 'black babies'. Very activity oriented, doing Duke of Edinburgh's award, works with handicapped people, belongs to a theatre group, did belong to a youth orchestra. Did voluntary work with young blacks summer programme of the [YOUTH ORGANISATION] last year and hopes to do so again. Also doing a year [COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER ROLE], (out of London so she can be away from home) next year between school and university.

Parents, pa [HIGHER EDUCATION ROLE], and ma worker at [SEXUAL HEALTH ORGANISATION] plus runs her own [BUSINESS] with a colleague/friend. So she was terribly well informed about the issues around AIDS, sexuality, etc. in fact had had as she said it crammed down her throat for ages. [Maybe she didn't say that exactly - but lots of information on the topic instantly at hand for the asking, and a lot given without asking.] Risky behaviour smoking and drinking (parents did not know how much on both of these. Did not know she smoked until recently tho she had since 13 or so I think.) Also taking chances with her education by bunking off.

Very responsive, as you'll see from the transcript I often did not get the chance to finish my question. She thanked me for giving her the opportunity to think and talk about these issues which she had not done so consciously before. Would be amenable to re-approach, so if we wanted to ask for an activity diary. But probably not nec, tho I guess we could go for a re-interview next year (she'll be 18+) to see if any change on the sexual activity front, specially since she will be living away from home.