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degree in Research Psychology, supervised by D. D. Matthee

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**Versions of virginity: An exploration of university students' narrative
accounts of first sexual experience**

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Abstract

The research assumes a narrative constructionist and feminist perspective in order to explore stories concerning men and women's first sexual experience. Such a metatheoretical stance is concerned with the ways that lives are constructed and storied through language. There is a concern for the myriad voices, both personal and social, that speaks through individuals' stories and for the manner in which these voices are represented.

Three men and three women were interviewed to elicit narratives of first sexual experience. The analysis of interview transcripts tells first sexual experience as a rite of passage described in terms of certain mythic elements. That is, the experience of first sex concerns three stages. Firstly the individual is detached from the experience of sex while still a virgin. Secondly the experience itself is one that is ineffable and diffuse. Thirdly the individual must make sense of the experience. Participants' experience could be characterised as containing elements of demonic, heavenly or earthly myths about sexual relationships: demonic elements concerned the base, physical and painful experiences of first sex; the myth of heavenly love emphasises the mental and emotional connection between partners; an earthly myth tells sex as a predestined meeting of two partners.

The manner in which stories were constructed was different for male and for female participants, and these differences have implications for the power dynamics at play between genders in the context of sexual interaction, especially first sex. Further the research's storied and ritualised approach to these gender differences suggests the performative aspect of gender.

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Introduction

This is an analysis of the stories that six men and women have told me about their first sexual experiences. In these stories are not only participants' voices, but also several voices that may be attributed to aspects of the society in which the participants and I live. In these stories are the participants' personal voices, telling their individual stories, and there are also voices that describe first sex as a rite of passage, that sound like mythic gods, that speak as a male chorus. What I intend to do though is not only represent these voices, but to try to draw conclusions about what these voices imply for heterosexual sexual interactions and gender relations in general.

It is argued that research from a perspective that incorporates understandings concerning social structures, particularly those that embody constraining power dynamics, as well as understandings of individual meaning, is required to understand the concept of virginity in the context of first sex. The proposed study intends to build on my previous research (Ebden, 2000) by exploring the manner in which narratives of university students' accounts of first sex negotiate personal understandings alongside larger social narratives and by investigating the experiences of both men and women. The exploration is intended to contribute to literature describing the relational context in which sexual practices and sexual negotiation take place.

To these ends I will describe a narrative outlining the theoretical construction of virginity and first sex. This narrative attends to the nature of these constructs through history, across cultures and depending on gender. After gaining a deeper understanding of the theoretical context of the research, I turn to the practical process of the research itself. I aim to make all my methodological decisions explicit, before presenting brief narratives to represent the participants' stories. These narratives are then

related first to rites of passage and then to mythic representations and finally to the performative nature of gender roles. Finally I try to reflexively represent the assumptions that underlie the work.

This work is a highly personal representation that has arisen from a very personal position. In part because of this, my voice as an author will be obvious throughout the work. I see no reason to hide my idiosyncratic beliefs and understandings. Part of my project is to represent a number of voices. Not only the different voices that the participants speak with and through, but also my own. I want myself to be apparent, I want my voice to be heard, and so I have opted to discard the lingua franca of the traditional academic tenor, in favour of my more individual and guttural tone.

Chapter One: The stories people have told

Describing her first sexual experience, the title character of Margaret Atwood's (1986) *Lady Oracle*, has this to say:

"When describing the episode with the Montreal sailing instructor to Arthur, I took care to include some salacious details. I added a few convincing small touches as well, the pine needles sticking to my bum, his Jockey undershorts, the smell of Brylcreem; I was good at things like that. Of course I never went to summer camp in my life. My mother wanted me to, but it meant being shut up for two months with a pack of sadistic overgrown Brownies, with no escape. So I spent the summers lying about the house, eating and reading trashy books, some of which had salacious details. It was these I used in the story of my life; I had to borrow, because the first experience of the Polish Count was not at all erotic. My ankle hurt, the pyjamas turned me off, and he looked weird without his spectacles. Also it was painful; and although he was patient and instructive later, though inclined to give performance points – it was almost like taking tap-dancing lessons – he wasn't on this occasion." (p. 150)

Like *Lady Oracle*, we all have stories to tell. Every time we communicate a thought or an experience, this telling could be construed as a story (Crossley, 2000; Riessman, 1993). *Lady Oracle*'s entire life is the stories she tells. She tells them instead of the ones she has experienced. These stories include a mother who uses make-up to dominate, a father who disappears even when he is in the room, girls at school who taunt and tease, an illusive flasher, and the uncomfortable but comforting kilograms that she is overweight. She tells this version because the one about the Polish count is boring, and not nearly as "real" as the ones she has read in trashy books.

Also because it is not what Arthur, her politically active, paternalistic, husband wants to hear at all. In fact she has two stories to tell. One she tells to Arthur, a version that is constructed not to offend. It is intended to reflect the normal (in consideration of her audience), what any average person would expect, or want, to hear about the first time she had sex.

She is caught between the stories she has experienced and the stories she would like to tell, between one story and another.

Like Lady Oracle I have been "lying about the house and eating, reading trashy books". I have been reading books that tell me things about sex. I have been paging through the stories written by academia, people in the know, about HIV/AIDS, Victorian morality, men and women, virginity testing. What follows is a representation of what I have read, the theoretical fables about sex I have discovered and dusted off from library shelves. It is not complete, like any story it is a bit of a lie. It is the story I tell to ground the larger story of my research in, that I would tell to Arthur, if I were in the place of Lady Oracle. It is much dryer, and somehow not as real.

Also like Lady Oracle I have two, or more, stories to tell. This first one I compile from the "trashy books" I have read, and the other I tell to situate an individual, personal story among all these sordid tales. I will first address what history, culture and notions of gender, have to say about virginity and first sexual experiences. Having attended to these macro concerns, I turn attention to micro concerns: that of the individual's position in relation to macro societal tales. Here the notions of myth and ritual become useful, and my metatheoretical stance begins to reveal itself. That is, it becomes clear that the story is the thing. But first, a conceptual clarification.

Conceptual clarification

The term "virgin" describes a person who has not yet experienced sexual intercourse. That is, a person ceases to be a virgin after having sex for the first time. Thus the term is associated with the event of "first sexual experience", or the "loss of virginity". The state of not having had sex must be intimately related to what sex might be defined as. As such, the use of the term "nonvirgin" may be used to describe a person who has

experienced sexual intercourse in order to suggest the close association that attitudes toward virginity have on attitudes toward sexual interaction.

Sprecher and Regan (1996) present a continuum of sexual experience as related to beliefs and stories about first experiences of sex. Inexperienced virgins are those who have not engaged in sexual activity, but do not have experience with the opposite sex from which to make this decision. Adamant virgins are individuals who have actively chosen and enforce abstinence toward sexual activity. Potential nonvirgins are people who have not had sex, but would have sex if the appropriate opportunity arose. Engaged nonvirgins have had sex with a single committed, monogamous partner, or several committed, monogamous partners. Liberal nonvirgins choose to engage freely in sexual activity. Confused nonvirgins engage in sexual activity, but without reflexivity, uncertain of what this activity means in their lives (Sprecher & Regan, 1996).

Although the definition of virginity as one who has not engaged in sexual intercourse seems simple, it is not unproblematic. The apparently basic definition is coloured by social constructions related to the term, it is complicated by historical and political understandings, and cultural meanings linked to sexual acts. These understandings and meanings give accounts of what acts might be counted as sexual intercourse, what these acts imply about a person, about what actors might be expected within such interactions and what roles actors might adopt. In turn these social constructions are performed and interpreted by individuals in personal interactions.

Usually that act which is believed to signal the end of virginity is vaginally penetrative and heterosexual (Holland, Ramazanoglu, Sharpe & Thompson, 2000). This is a narrow definition that excludes many stories and silences many voices, most of which have been marginalized already

by the construction of heterosexuality as a norm (Rich, 1999). As noted, sexual intercourse may be defined broadly depending on the influences of historical, political and cultural constructions (Padug, 1999). However, mindful of the practical constraints of this research, sexual intercourse will refer only to penetrative intercourse between two consenting partners of the opposite sex.

In the following sections, virginity, first sex and sexual intercourse will be described as constructed in three ways: historically, culturally and in a gendered manner. To categorise these aspects of virginity as separate from one another is a largely artificial distinction. Gender constructs vary through time and across cultures, and can to a large extent be reduced to cultural rules and roles. However, gender brings specific connotations to the construct of virginity, and while historical developments and culture may colour these meanings in differing ways, it is useful to look at historical developments, culture and gender as separate influences.

History: women, AIDS and the male in crisis

Historical happenings can be understood as influential in constructing contemporary notions of sexual interactions. That is, notions concerning sex are historically produced and situated (Padug, 1999; Weeks, 1981). This production and situation in historical terms is related to the development of society over time. These developments are related to ideologies, both secular or political, and religious.

Virginity as a concept closely associated to sexual interaction, is also subject to significant change over time. This dynamic process of alteration may be related to two particularly influential historical developments. The impact of the feminist and gay liberation movements and the HIV/AIDS pandemic on constructs of virginity will each be considered (McLaren, 1999; Weeks, 1981).

Women's liberation and critique of gender roles

Weeks (1981) tells the story of Victorian morality and sexuality as based on a strict gender binary. During this period masculinity became defined within the realm of business and industry, while femininity became associated with the realm of the domestic. As a wife and homemaker within a protected domestic realm, a woman was understood to be passive, fragile and because of these qualities more virtuous and pure. As such, the notion of virginity as linked to purity is firmly associated with femininity.

It is possible to understand constructions centred on sexuality throughout the twentieth century as in part a reaction to Victorian repression. That is, contemporary attitudes toward sex are in part a reaction to the strict morality as applied to both sexes, but also against the inequity of gender roles especially in the context of sexual interaction. Medical advances lead to an increase in availability of, and public knowledge about contraceptives. The work of feminists, doctors and birth control activists hastened this change. This development created a backdrop against which the feminist movement arose to politicise the past and continued forms of oppression that women experience (McLaren, 1999; Weeks, 1981).

Women's liberation and the feminist movement brought about critique of gender roles. The feminist movement, as well as homosexual liberation movements, have lead to criticism of the traditional masculine position, which is taken for granted by both men and women (Lemmon, 1994; McLaren, 1999). That is, by calling attention to other political positions, those of women and of homosexual men, these emancipatory movements began to critique a phallogocentric worldview.

In the process of attending to the ways in which masculine assumptions have silenced other voices and the manner in which these subjectivities

could be given voice, the masculine gender role itself has come under question (Lemmon, 1994). In calling attention to an imbalance of power in the gender binary, change has had to occur to both extremes in order to address the critique.

Such social, historical and political changes have rendered traditional masculinity obsolete without providing a viable alternative sex role. In questioning the predominantly masculine assumptions that underlie many social and political constructions, a phallogentric perspective has become increasingly philosophically and politically tenuous (Lemmon, 1994). That is, the assumptions historically supposed by male thinkers, have come under question as a particular subjectivity that has the effect of limiting and marginalizing certain other subjectivities.

That a crisis in masculinity can be theorised suggests that traditional masculinity remains despite critique of it. A crisis is predicated on a traditional masculine identity that must be negotiated along with conflicting ideas that have arisen through changing understandings of gender roles. Media and other socialising institutions continue to propagate stereotypical masculinity, even though this identity remains largely contradictory and conflicting in practice (Lemmon, 1994).

From this perspective of crisis, the experience of contemporary masculinity may be described as difficult, unsettled and fractured. Cohen (1990) outlines a position littered with psychological and social obstacles. That is, masculinity is expected to incorporate more and more elements that stem from the opposite of the binary, femininity. Thus, masculinity is described as an uncertain and confused position, and in need of revision. Revision is most often constructed as a search for behaviours that satisfy the need for control and independence, while recognising interpersonal and emotional needs (Thompson, 1991). Such a process is usually

constructed as finding a means to satisfy traditionally masculine needs alongside more feminine needs, to merge the masculine with the feminine.

However, the focus on a crisis in masculinity ignores the corresponding crisis in femininity. Although the contradictions inherent to such a crisis do not appear to be experienced as conflicting, or as a crisis (Stewart, 1999), it may be expected that the historical developments that have disturbed masculinity might also unsettle femininity. In a sense, both men and women have begun a search for new ways to speak about their experiences and beliefs.

It is likely that changes in perception concerning gender roles would suggest change in the manner in which these genders should interact with gendered constructs, including the concept of virginity. Changes that affect sexual interaction between genders should impact on the formulation of virginity (Stewart, 1999). Further, when the "loss of virginity" and the experience of first sex, is defined to occur between a man and a woman, this event involves interplay of both masculine and feminine roles. In a context of crisis, when both roles are becoming increasingly unstable, this play might be expected to become increasingly problematic.

Giddens (1992) cites a survey by Rubin (1989) administered to male and female Americans between the ages of eighteen and forty-eight, concerning changes in sexual attitudes over time. This survey suggests that conceptions of virginity have changed, tending toward a more tolerant perception of sexually active women. This finding supports the view that positive change has occurred as a result of the feminist movement. That is, the imbalance of power that assigned men the role of active sexual initiators has shifted to provide women with this power as well.

However, Carpenter (2001) problematises this easy and direct result. Her survey of attitudes toward virginity among heterosexual men and women (as well as homosexual men and women and bisexual men and women) suggests that virginity is most frequently defined as heterosexual and penetrative. Individuals most frequently question this definition whose experience of the norm has been conflicting and constraining. Homosexual and bisexual individuals were more likely to have altered their understandings of virginity and what acts might count as their first sexual experience. As such heterosexuality seems to remain the pervasive norm, perhaps holding in place the traditional imbalance of power apparent in the interaction of masculine and feminine roles.

First sex in an era of epidemic

From the outset of the pandemic, the disease HIV/AIDS has been strongly linked to sexuality. Although the disease is transmitted through contaminated bodily fluids, and is not only a sexually transmitted virus, this mode of transmission engenders the most debate, publicity, intervention and fear.

At first HIV/AIDS was characterised as a "gay disease" believed to have started in the homosexual community and to be linked to homosexual sexual practices (Herek & Glunt, 1995; Weeks, 1986). The virus was also believed to have arisen from Africa, and to have spread from monkeys to African tribes people (Cerrullo & Hammond, 1995). Although it is clear now that the disease is not only sexually transmitted and affects heterosexual men and women, and although the origins of the disease are not certain, HIV/AIDS remains stigmatised and linked to the marginalized communities it was first associated with (Cerrullo & Hammond, 1995; Herek & Glunt, 1995). In this sense HIV/AIDS is "a disease destructive of otherness" (Baudrillard, 1996, p. 111), a disease that is associated with gay men, darkest Africa, and increasingly with women (Baudrillard, 1996).

The "True Love Waits" programme (Gray, 1999), and other such programmes, reflects an attempt to teach abstinence and virginity as a virtue from within a religious context. It teaches that, especially within the era of HIV/AIDS, virginity is sacred and sexual intercourse should be reserved for a special loved partner. Within the programme, virginity is related to spiritual purity and godliness. As such, it may represent protection against a disease that many religious institutions have described as a punishment, as Almighty condemnation for unclean behaviour (Weeks, 1986).

In the era of epidemic, it has been women that have been given the weight of the responsibility to engage in safer sexual practice. Women are supposed to elicit their partners' sexual history and demand that their partners use a condom. But, even when abstinence is promoted to men and women indiscriminately, this means of prevention fails to address the interpersonal dynamics that underlie the transmission of the disease. In many cases relationships invest the male partner with more decision making power, thereby rendering the female partner's task of initiating safer sex tacitly problematic (Strebel & Lindegger, 1998). Besides this obstacle, the avoidance of sexual interactions does not empower the individual to negotiate specific interpersonal dynamics of a sexual encounter, when they eventually do begin sexual activity (Stewart, 1999).

There are also an increasing number of women who choose abstinence or virginity, over sexual activity. This choice is usually based on personal reasons, to avoid sexual interaction as a means of protection against HIV/AIDS, because she does not perceive herself as ready for sex, or because she does not experience sexual intercourse as pleasurable. There are a growing number of individuals, particularly women, who choose abstinence after losing their virginity, for these reasons (Hinlicky, 1998).

Despite this, the promotion of abstinence as a means of protection against HIV/AIDS plays into the construction of the disease as a kind of punishment to those infected. If a person remains pure and innocent, then this person will not be punished with a fatal disease. That is, the promotion of virginity as a means of controlling the epidemic plays into the understanding that it is the impure, the promiscuous women, gay men and people from the Third World who spread the disease (Baudrillard, 1996). It is othered minorities that are constructed as the cause of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and abstinence as a means of protection may be understood to support this view.

Culture: fables for social bodies

Anthropological research has demonstrated that gender and sexual behaviour may be based on physiology, but that it is the symbolism that surrounds the body that defines the societal perception of gender and sexual interactions (Mauthner, 1996). Although gender roles and sexual roles are based on biological imperatives, on different morphological characteristics between men and women, these imperatives are interpreted in particular ways by every society. It can be argued that societal understandings permeate and determine an individual's understanding of their role as a man or as a woman in that society, and within any sexual interaction. Although the performance of gender occurs at the level of the individual, this performance always relies on culturally constructed meanings.

There seems to be a fairly widespread prescription against premarital sex across cultures (Rathus, Nevid & Fichner-Rathus, 1997). That is, virginity would be viewed positively in most cultures, for individuals who have not undergone a marriage ceremony. Further, heterosexuality is a norm that is pervasive (Butler, 1993; Rathus, Nevid & Fichner-Rathus, 1997).

Douglas (1966, in Goddard, 1987) suggested that the need to control the social body could be exercised through limitation and prohibition of sexual interaction for female society members. Such control of the feminine body represents the need to keep the social body pure, uncorrupted by foreign influences. Virginity is frequently prescribed only to women because it is women who bear children. Thus, in order to maintain societal purity and to avoid contamination from other groups, the fertility of women must be controlled.

Weis, Whelan and Gupta (2000) have surveyed the ways in which women in developing countries are required to remain pure and virginal, but at the same time are constructed as sexual beings. In order to satisfy these potentially contradictory roles, society defines sexual activity in certain specific ways. This allows women to engage in certain behaviours that do not conflict with these specifics. In Mauritius for example, sexual intercourse has been defined in terms of pain. A woman can negotiate interactions that are not defined as sexual, thereby maintaining the virtue of virginity, by allowing penetration so long as it does not cause pain.

As such, cultural meanings and understandings can be understood to be almost universal in their prescription toward virginity. At the same time the manner in which this stance is manifest in specific contexts is different across cultures. Further within each cultural context, the rules are flexible enough for individuals to negotiate a position that they themselves are comfortable with (Weiss, Whelan & Gupta, 2000). Although cultural prescriptions could be controlling and constraining, people can and do bend the rules.

Stories of the south

Where patriarchy remains a controlling influence, it seems that the purity of women must be ensured. To the extent that patriarchy is pervasive across the African continent, it is likely that virginity would be perceived

as a virtue across all African cultures. This may be accomplished by normalising virginity and by idealising sexual purity as a virtue for all women who are not married (Women's International Network News, 1999).

In the South African context, an emphasis on virginity testing in rural areas implies the continuation of patriarchal values. If virginity can be proven then bride price can be increased (Women's International Network News, 1999). That is, a woman is worth more if it can be proven that she remains uncontaminated by another man, and paternity of children can be ensured. Further, Møller and Sotshongaye (1999) speak of virginity as a teaching passed down to grandchildren, mainly granddaughters, from specifically one of the child's grandmothers, in an African extended family. Teachings about the subject express the necessity to protect individual as well as family honour. As such it seems that ascriptions of virginity serve as a means of surveillance over cultural, familial and moral purity.

Criticism of virginity testing is based on a view of the testing procedure as demeaning to the women who are tested. The procedure is seen as a violation of personal privacy, and a violation that is only allowed because women tend to be viewed as a commodity. Further the tests are sometimes carried out in public places, with many other women tested at the same time (Women's Network News, 1999), and this process may be seen as degrading and invasive.

It may also be argued that a proven virgin is more vulnerable to rape, because of the pervasive belief that an HIV/AIDS infected male who has sex with a virgin will be cured of the disease (Women's International Network News, 1999). This belief reflects the association virginity has with purity and cleanliness, and that the association is predominantly feminine. A link is suggested between practises that ensure control over

women as a type of commodity, and vulnerability to another form of control and violation, that is rape.

Although this description of control and surveillance of women seems justified from a feminist political perspective, the description must also account for more positive valuations of virginity. Testing of virgins is often associated with Nomkubulwane, a feminine divinity in Zulu culture (Bell, 2000). Such positive associations to divinity suggest that undergoing a virginity test need not be entirely negative. Cultural associations with a deity and the veneration of such a ceremony may reveal an underlying respect, rather than a disregard or contempt for virginity.

South African cultural notions thus both constrain and empower African women. That is the practice of virginity testing, stemming from positive understandings of virginity, may demonstrate a disregard for women (Women's Network News, 1999), but may also demonstrate a respect for women (Bell, 2000). The notion of culture as universal or essential is supported by the pervasive prescription against premarital sex, but the diversity of meaning around this prescription suggests that cultural notions are not essential but negotiable, especially at an individual level.

Literature concerning South African cultural understandings of virginity, relate generally to what has been called and will be termed black African culture. In considering South African culture, it is not easy to identify and describe a monolithic whole. Instead numerous groupings present themselves. Although this approach creates a fractured understanding that relies on othering, it is necessary to acknowledge the cultural diversity present in South African society. Such acknowledgement may be taken to extremes, dividing even black African culture into more specific groups. However, it seems apparent that there is a silence concerning the views of some broadly defined South African cultures' understandings of

virginity and first sexual experience. The above representation is by no means complete.

The manner in which the theoretical story of Southern African cultural beliefs about virginity has been constructed, suggests that black African culture may be more easily visible to examination. African culture may represent the obvious other, to the eye of authorities and investigators, who are usually Western. Such a culture may have been assumed to be fixed, based on deeply held traditions, and largely unchangeable. As such black African culture appears as an over represented and exotic other.

There is however a silence concerning the community of people of Indian descent (Bhana, 1987) that has not been accounted for, and also of the coloured and white population. Because these communities assume the appearance of great diversity or fluidity, it is more difficult to examine and describe them. Also the white population has been the observer, both in South Africa and around the world, and this gaze has seldom been turned back on itself. As such, these groups seem dispersed and diffuse, and are all but theoretically invisible. Constructions of virginity arising from these groups are likewise dispersed and diffuse.

Gender: his and her stories

Usually the term "gender" is used to refer to those characteristics of a male or female person that depend to some extent on social rules concerning what is to be a "man", or what it is to be a "woman" (Plumwood, 1989). These roles influence all interactions between men and women, including sexual interactions. As such, these notions do influence the ways in which virginity is constructed.

It has been suggested that notions of gender rely heavily on the biological body. Roles are sometimes described as dichotomous, as based on the distinct morphological differences between male and female. Although

this dichotomy is by no means necessary, it is assumed to be and Butler (1993) calls this the heterosexual imperative. In such a view, gender is based on, although cannot be reducible to, biological sex. Thus it may be expected that prescriptions attending to virginity may be based on such dichotomous thinking, and virginity will be described separately for a feminine gender role and a masculine gender role.

The meaning and necessity of the term gender is debatable (Gatens, 1996). The term creates a distinction between sex and gender, and this distinction has been useful in arguing against the determinism of gender roles. Feminists have taken this position of gender as socially constructed in order to draw attention to the dominance of masculine perspectives, and to suggest that this dominance need not be an unavoidable imperative. It is politically expedient to argue that it is society who prescribes gender, and not predetermined genetic make-up. This implies that gender roles are changeable, even though sex may not be (except by surgical means) (Plumwood, 1989).

Although the distinction may be useful, it may also be based on masculine assumptions, and is therefore not unproblematic. The split of gender from sex may be likened to a dualist split of mind and body, and as such an assumption that upholds a masculine outlook (Gatens, 1996). A Cartesian dualism has been taken to emphasise the importance of rational mental control over a disordered and irrational body. Since rationality is stereotypically a part of the masculine gender role, the split values masculinity above femininity. It may be argued that the position that sex and gender are separate thus ultimately undermines the feminist project.

However, the body is unavoidably sexed because of the societal context in which the body lives. There will thus always be prescriptions about the ways of being allowed and disallowed for certain bodies (Gatens, 1996). As soon as a baby is named "boy" or "girl", this child is treated and

expected to act in certain ways. It is not always useful then to distinguish between what the body's sex is and what the mind's gender is, since these are interlinked. Sometimes it is more useful to consider the role that the individual body plays in gendered experiences. It is also interesting to examine the ways that a female body is constrained and enabled in its expressions of femininity, and likewise for male bodies. A view of masculinity or femininity as performed takes into account the ways that embodied action can assume both social and personal scripts (Butler, 1993; 1997).

Her story: controlling the chaos

Virginity is a construct predominately defined as female (De Beauvoir, 1952). To the extent that femininity has been defined in terms of a connection with nature and natural flux and cycles, it remains in a sense beyond the control of the men who wield power. In order to attempt to tame this inherent chaos, women were required to remain chaste and pure. The chaos of nature must be offset by the control of rationality, the control of bodily desires. Because of the secret, hidden nature of female genitalia, and problems with ascertaining paternity, this control became exercised sexually (Paglia, 1968).

Holland, Ramazanoglu, Sharpe and Thompson (2000) describe the "loss" of feminine virginity as defined from a masculine perspective. A woman's experience of losing her virginity is defined largely by consideration of the experience of her partner, rather than of her own experience. For women the experience has little to do with a bodily interaction, and is more of an emotional or spiritual relationship. This experience is concerned with coping with a psychological or emotional loss.

Ebden (2000) describes this loss as one possible framing of the experience of virginity. It is suggested that women are able to construct virginity as a special, sacred gift to be given to a loved partner. First

sexual experience is sometimes then described as a process of loss. However, virginity is also described not as something to be lost, but something to be given up in favour of the pleasure of sexual experiences. Similarly Carpenter (2001) suggests that some women experience virginity as a part of a process toward sexual experience, or even as a stigma that a woman must rid herself of.

Virginity is thus often understood to be "given away" by women. It is given sometimes in the form of a special gift, and sometimes in the form of a rare and precious secret. In both cases a woman relinquishes something when virginity is "lost" (Carpenter, 2001; Ebden, 2000; Holland et al., 2000). But whether what is given, or lost is a gift or a secret, the process implies a relinquishing of some very personal possession. No matter how the experience is described, it seems to involve surrendering some form of personal autonomy and power.

His story: the necessity of sex

There is little literature concerning masculine virginity. This may be due to the cultural tendency discussed above to prescribe virginity for women rather than men. As such, the construct of masculine virginity is less well defined than for women. It is possible to infer the nature of masculine virginity from what constitutes the construct of masculinity itself. Masculine identity is often defined in terms of sexual activity (Hollway, 1989), and this implies certain things about being male and a virgin.

Lindegger and Durrheim (2000) suggest that masculinity consists of five dominant discourses. The male sex drive discourse frames masculinity as biologically determined, spontaneous and beyond control. The notion of conquest links masculinity with physical risk related to domination. Conquest may be understood as a means to define a man's worth, personally as well as socially. Male identity has also been linked to penetration. This notion seems to be linked to the idea of conquest or

domination, but is specifically applied to control of the female body, and also of nature. This framing relies on opposition to the feminine. Further, an idealised masculine body invests masculinity with power and control, linked to the body.

Holland et al. (2000) describe a man's loss of virginity as a profoundly embodied experience. For a man, first sexual experience is about definitively becoming a man by enacting a masculine role in a sexual context. The bodily experience of having sex for the first time in some way alters a boy into a man. This transformation necessarily involves bodily experience, and this experience involves quintessentially masculine elements such as conquest, domination, penetration (Lindegger & Durrheim, 2000).

As such, virginity seems less attractive from a masculine perspective. Masculinity is according to this perspective, at least in part defined by the bodily experience of sexual activity (Holland et al., 2000; Lindegger & Durrheim, 2000; Whelan, 1999). To the degree that male identity is linked to sex drive, conquest, penetration and an idealised body, a man's identity would become undermined by a lack of sexual experience. Virginity, abstaining from sexual interaction, is not a way of being that coheres readily with a masculine role.

The inevitability of the storyteller

Virginity may thus be viewed as historically and politically produced, and situated within culture. The construct is contingent upon broad social developments over time, as well as specific contextual notions dependent upon culture and gender. Such complexities underlying societal assumptions should be considered in order to understand what it is to be a virgin or to experience sex for the first time. Although this broad level of understanding is indispensable to insight into constructions of virginity

and first sexual experience, these constructions are lived and experienced at an individual and personal level.

It can thus be argued that research from a perspective that incorporates both understandings concerning social structures, particularly those that embody constraining power dynamics, as well as understandings of individual meaning is required to understand the concept of virginity in the context of first sex. The lived and embodied experience of an individual draws on, is influenced by and influences social representations. As such, it is necessary to understand the manner in which personal meaning and social meaning relate, without neglecting the role either has to play in the experience of virginity and first sex.

Storytelling and where it comes from: myth and ritual

The relationship between individual and cultural meaning, may be understood to play out in the relationship between myth and ritual. Human beings can be described as meaning makers, and often this meaning is presented in the form of a story. That is, individuals' beliefs and experiences are communicated to other individuals through language in a storied format. Such narratives rely on the manner in which the story is told, as well as the events that occurred to inspire the story (Fay, 1996).

If myths are the stories that culture tells people about their world, then rituals are the ways that individuals enact and embody these cultural beliefs. Thus ritual should be understood as the performance, the personally lived experience of socially constructed stories or myths. Campbell (1973) conceives of myth and ritual as interlinked and interdependent, suggesting that a ritual is an enactment or performance of the myth. In the study of ritual and myth, theorists have alternately posited ritual and myth as primary within the binary, but this theoretical

swing seems futile and unprofitable. Rather the two should be understood as inextricable aspects, necessary to each other (Bell, 1997).

Of myths and metaphysics

Myths are often understood as a society's means of communicating cosmological statements. They are the stories that a culture or society tells to make sense of their world, communicating metaphysical doctrines and laws about interpersonal relationships (Coupe, 1997). It has been noted how similar the underlying themes of mythic formulations across cultures are. Frazer (in Bell, 1997) suggested that all myths are permutations of a fertility myth, the story of a dying king, who later becomes renewed. Similarly, Campbell (1956) conceives of a monomyth, which may best be embodied in the myth of the hero. This monomyth involves an almost inevitably masculine hero journeying through distinct stages away from a known reality, through a struggle, to return again, bringing with him the prizes he has won through his struggles.

Many tales are told about the meeting or relationship of men and women. In myths, this union is often conceived of as sacred in some way. Stories may speak of "woman" being part of "man", as in the story of Adam and Eve. They may speak of the nature of men and women through different characters: the Virgin Mary, Ishtar, the Green Man, King Solomon. These stories rely on two essential beings, man and woman, yin and yang. Both are archetypically defined, in opposition to each other. Women are sexual, chaotic, bound to nature's cycles, passive, flexible, fluid, enfolding. Men are rational, controlled, rigid, aggressive, penetrating (Mann & Lyle, 1995).

In the Judaeo-Christian tradition, sexuality is repressed and restricted. The story of Adam and Eve, tells that Eve was created from a rib out of Adam's side. Later the evil serpent lured Eve into eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. Eve in turn lures Adam into eating the same fruit and

both become aware of their nakedness. Because of this knowledge, they are exiled forever from the paradise of the Garden of Eden, to the ambiguous realm of earthly pleasure. Eve is punished with the pains of childbirth she, and all her ancestors, experience. This myth shows a clear disenchantment with the body, and with all that is directly associated with it, including sexuality. It also shows a marked antipathy for the female sex, ascribing the base, corrupt and impure to Eve, the mother of women (Mann & Lyle, 1995).

In the Gnostic tradition there is an altogether different myth. This myth describes Adam and Eve as created together, from the same original source. A group of observing beings, who are something like the sexless, genderless angels, called the Elohim, try to persuade Adam that he was made first and is superior to Eve. In order to foil their plan, Eve escapes her body and comes to rest in a serpent in the Tree of Knowledge. She then persuades Eve-in-body-form to eat the fruit, and subsequently Adam as well. They then leave the Garden and go out into the world (Mann & Lyle, 1995).

It may be argued that the Christian Church suppressed this version of the myth. Such a myth was not suitable when the church arrived among the Celtic people, a culture in which worship of the Goddess was still in practice. The first version of the myth suggests that the female Eve, as well as the potent symbol of the Goddess, the serpent, is evil. As such, it allows the Church to advance the cult of one God and his Son Jesus above that of a feminine ontology. Whether you subscribe to such a conspiracy theory or not, this is the beginning of an understanding of a duality based on sex, and gender. In this duality one is suggested as superior. Thus, in the story of these two myths, begins distrust for the feminine, and sanction of the masculine (Mann & Lyle, 1995).

Concerning romantic relationships between men and women, Campbell (1973) suggests a typology of three tales that can be told from three distinct locations. The first concerns love that is enacted in the setting of hell, and chronicles of the difficulties of love, the pains of love. The tragedy of Tristan and Isolde's poisoning, in which both lovers die accidentally, epitomises this type of myth. The second type of tale situates love in heaven, describing love as ultimately impossible, indescribably beautiful and poignant. This is the type of love that Lord Krishna had for the mortal, married woman he loved, but could never be with. The third is the type of love sung in ballads about knights and ladies, and positions love on earth. This type of love is destined, fated to be, with both lovers ideally suited to one another.

Rites

Ritual may be understood as the performance, or enactment of the ideas expressed as stories in myths (Coupe, 1997). Rites have been considered as functioning as a means of expressing and embodying social values, laws and ways of being. Imber-Black and Roberts (1992) suggest that rituals have five functions, and that any rite will express one or more of these functions. Rituals might be intended to heal or to celebrate. Any rite depends on certain social ties, and is concerned with relating. The rite may express these relationships in the way it is structured, or even create new relationships as at a marriage or a crowning. Rituals can have a transformative or change function, both expressing that changing and helping that change to manifest, as in rites of passage. Further, any rite reflects the beliefs that are assumed by a culture or society.

Stories constructed to convey the ritual of having sex for the first time, might be described as inclusive of Imber-Black and Roberts' (1992) functions of relating, transforming and believing. The experience involves setting up certain relationships and ties (Weis et al., 2000). This relating probably contains certain beliefs about how the two characters should

relate to one another, and this may concern issues of gender (Holland et al., 2000). Further the encounter is often experienced as a move towards a new way of relating to others and to the self, expressing the function of change (Carpenter, 2001).

There are several genres of ritual, but the experience of having sex for the first time is probably best described as a rite of passage. Van Gennep (in Bell, 1997) suggests that such a rite occurs in three phases. In the first, the individual is removed from the social structures they have been a part of. The second phase is one of transformation, in which an old way of being becomes a new way of being. Finally, the individual is reintroduced to new social structures and included as a new member of that society.

These phases, of separation, liminality and re-incorporation can be described as different for women. Lincoln as represented by Bell (1997) names the chapters of a female rite of passage differently to a male rite: enclosure, metamorphosis and emergence. This distinction between rites demonstrates an emphasis on the manner in which rites of passage may be different in terms of gender. The male passage is constructed as a means to secure some quality that is lacking, that the male is separated from. For women, the rite involves an internal journey of transformation that she must then bring back to the world. A woman must find a way to successfully emerge back into the world once she has experienced her rite.

The story so far

I have suggested that stories of first sexual experience are influenced both by macro constructions originating at the level of society or culture, and by micro constructs at the individual and personal level. In order to extend this understanding, I have related this interplay of macro and micro levels, to the manner in which myth and ritual are related. As regards the experience of virginity and first sex, myths may be seen as based on a

mystic dichotomy of masculine and feminine properties, and on three types of love situated in hell, in heaven and on earth. The rites associated with these myths I have argued would take the form of a rite of passage, including the functions of relating, changing and believing, as well as a dichotomy between masculine and feminine experience.

I do not conceive of these myths and rituals as essential, necessary or unchanging. I do not suggest that there is an actual enacted ceremony associated with first sexual experience, based on certain widely held mythic stories. It seems clear that there is few practiced and believed rituals in contemporary society. Instead it seems that rituals are constructed and experienced in a very personal way by individuals. In the absence of some socially sanctioned ritual, individuals find their own means to enact, and to understand rites of passage (Hatcher, 1994).

My representation now turns to considering the manner in which the research was conducted. That is, the method I have used to explore further individual men and women's narrative of first sex within the theoretical context I have described.

Chapter Two: The story of the research

Motivation

The research was intended to build on my previous research conducted in my honours year of study (Ebdon, 2000), by exploring the manner in which narratives of university students' accounts of first sex negotiate personal understandings along side larger social narratives, and by investigating the experiences of both men and women's narratives. The original research focused only on women, without considering the stories of men, and I believe this juxtaposition to be interesting and relevant to understanding gendered dynamics at play in heterosexual first sexual experiences. Also the original research did not tell stories, and was in my opinion more detached from the personal expressions of the participants' experiences.

The exploration is intended to contribute to literature describing the interpersonal context in which sexual practices and sexual negotiation take place. Such research contributes to the field of social and critical psychology. It adds to understanding of the manner in which men and women interact in interpersonal situations, and is intended to be critical of perspectives that take for granted a masculine outlook. Strebel and Lindegger (1998) suggest that such research can contribute to structuring interventions into the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Research question

The research sought to find stories to answer the question:

- What are the meaning(s), both personal and social, associated with virginity as constructed through university students' narrative accounts of first sexual experience?

In gathering these stories, I hoped to hear narratives containing descriptions about the experience of being a virgin, and of having sex for

the first time as told by university students. Of interest was the interaction and inter-relation within a narrative representation, between commonly held cultural understandings of virginity and first sex, and more individual beliefs and opinions. Men and women's stories were collected in order to explore similarities and/or differences between gendered accounts of virginity and first sexual experience.

Theoretical position of the research

In order to attend to both social and personal meaning, the research adopted a constructionist perspective of a narrative approach, or "narrativism". Fay (1996) describes the position:

A proper view of the relation of narrative and life needs to capture what is correct about realism (that narrative form is not accidental, nor a mere representational device; and that our identities as agents embody narratives) without including what is erroneous about it (that each person's life *is* just a single enacted narrative of which the agent is the partial author the biographer a mere reporter). Moreover, it needs to do justice to the insights of narrative constructivism (that the narrative account of any life is continually and infinitely revisable) without making its mistakes (that narratives and the form of a narrative are mere creations imposed on material which is non-narrative). (p. 194).

Underlying this perspective is the understanding that language is constitutive of, rather than merely reflective of, lived realities. Constructionist research thus pays close attention to the manners in which linguistic practices create meaning within specific social contexts, particularly the manner in which institutions privilege certain accounts above others. Power embodied in language is thus a central concern.

The narrative addition to this stance focuses on constructed narratives as a framework of intelligibility that makes attribution of meaning to experience possible (Crossley, 2000). This does not necessarily imply an individualist account of meaning. Narratives from this perspective are not merely mental representations, but relational and social means of creating

personal meaning. That is, personal meaning is necessarily embedded within broader social stories. These stories are not only expressions but also structure a person's lived experience (Fay, 1996).

The further title of "feminist" may be appended to the work. This title is intended to elaborate on the already proclaimed ascriptions of "constructionist" and "narrativist". As feminist research, the work attends to the manner in which female voices are marginalized, silenced or erased, as well as the ways that the same voices sing, lecture, and laugh. In so doing, the research will elaborate on the assumptions, emotions, readings that underlie the work. My own personal experiences, beliefs and understandings will be made visible and clear throughout the work in order to validate and demonstrate the theories that are stated. In short, I affirm a stance that is sceptical of a "scientific" approach to research, that is aware of the limitations of language but is creative with these boundaries and that is always reflexive about action (Gergen, 2001).

As such, the work borrows from both the positions of standpoint feminism and of post-structural feminism. I identify with the concern for making women's voices audible above the buzz of patriarchal proclamations, a concern that is characteristic of standpoint feminism. I also firmly take up the position of a woman doing research on women as well as men, accepting the understandable bias this introduces. However I try to listen and to represent the many voices I have heard speaking to me in the process of this research, thereby aligning myself with post-structural theory. I try to be creative in the representation of these voices, in order to find a means to capture the expression of each voice (Gergen, 2001). In this endeavour I frequently resort to what might be termed creative, flowery, wafty and reckless language. This is understandable in light of my metatheoretical stance.

Although I speak in a guttural tone and resort to a less than orthodox representation of my research, I still attend to traditional and accepted categories of representation. I present the research according to the guidelines of the discipline, attending to a literature review, methodology, analysis, discussion and ethical considerations (Sandelowski & Barosso, 2002). My tone and writing style tends toward the poetic as a means of persuasion and of representation, but I try to follow a familiar and accepted structure.

The storytellers

I made use of purposeful convenience sampling (Kuzel, 1992) in order to identify acquaintances in the first phase of sampling. These acquaintances were provided with a brief summary of the aims and purpose of the research and with the researcher's contact details. Acquaintances were asked to pass this information on to participants according to the criteria outlined to them. Potential participants were thus able to contact the researcher directly, thereby ensuring anonymity. However most participants elected to contact the researcher through the acquaintances themselves, and in some cases these acquaintances themselves offered to take part.

In the process of the research I enacted many roles, I became many things to many people (Wilkinson & Kritzinger, 1996). To each participant I was an apparently knowledgeable and therefore powerful researcher. I was apparently a psychologist, to whom details could be divulged. I was another female, a possible sister and confidant. In some cases I was already a friend. And, especially to the male participants, I was a woman, who could be taken advantage of and used in various ways. This proliferation of possible roles created a feeling of instability and uncertainty for me, that was difficult to negotiate without considerable reflexive consideration.

Men seemed more reluctant to take part, possibly because the subject of the interview required a heterosexual man speaking about a potentially sensitive and embarrassing subject, their sexual experience, to a female researcher. This dynamic required that I be viewed simultaneously as powerful (as a researcher), and powerless (as a woman). This was potentially difficult for me, as well as the participants, to negotiate. Female participants were probably more at ease discussing this sensitive issue with a researcher of the same gender, hampered by fewer or less obvious power dynamics (Wilkinson & Kritzinger, 1996).

Six English speaking university students were contacted in this manner, three women and three men. The participants were all white South Africans, between the ages of twenty-three and twenty-eight.

In order of appearance, the characters are:

Estelle, who deserves her name because she spoke to me of magic. Olivia is named for the Shakespearian character of the same name in *Twelfth Night*. They are both concerned for their independence and also for the rulers in their lives. Like Kundera's character in *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, Tomas is involved in a search; a quest after something only a woman can give him. Michael is named for the dialogic theorist Mikhail Bakhtin, for his concern with "the meeting of minds". Cameron experienced first sex late in life, like the character of the same name in the movie *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*. And Jane, although less concerned with her femininity than her namesake Jane Eyre, is just as individual and autonomous. She is the beauty who discovered her first experience was with a beast.

Collection of material

One semi-structured interview of approximately an hour was conducted with each of the six participants. A pilot interview had been conducted in order to refine interview questions. This interview highlighted issues that

could usefully be explored (Chase, 1996). These issues included participants' experience of the dualities experienced within first sex: that is the positive and negative aspects, the relationship between mind and body, the distinction between making love and having sex.

The initial in-depth interview with each participant was semi-structured and comprised a central broad, open-ended question in order to elicit narratives (Chase, 1996) concerning the participants' sexual debut: "Could you tell me the story about the first time you had sex?" This initial question was followed by probing questions, directed at clarification or at gaining details concerning setting, events, and people involved in the narrative. These questions were structured to be sensitive to the participant's level of comfort with the sensitive subject matter (Bar-On & Gilad, 1994).

This elicited narratives structured close to that suggested by Labov (in Toolan, 2001) to be the presenting form of all narratives. That is the stories could be divided into abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation, result or resolution, coda, following the chronological sequence of the events on which the narrative is based. The questions I asked tended to follow such a chronological approach. After a participant had told about the experience of first sex, I would ask how the relationship progressed. If the participant first told me about the experience, I would ask them to tell me more about who their partner was and how they had met. I frequently asked, "And what happened next?"

Interviews were all audiotaped and transcribed. Transcriptions were verbatim and include notation of laughter and other non-verbal responses, as well as pause lengths. A description of notations used in transcription is included in Appendix A. This method of transcription was tedious, but rendered the words and performance of the narratives more fully. All

transcripts display the storyteller's pseudonyms rather than participants' names in order to preserve anonymity.

The interviews were emotionally taxing to conduct, both for me and for the participants. The stories I was told were shocking and difficult to hear at times, containing details of victimisation, oppression, as well as the occasional explicit detail. The process challenged my skills as an interviewer, to hear what the storytellers had to tell me, and to continue to hear them even when what they said revealed behaviour I could not have endured, that I found abhorrent or that would have hurt me (Chase, 1995).

I believe the process caused some participants, notably the female storytellers, to reflect and in some cases begin to redefine their experience. As such, the difficulty and sensitivity of the research seems justified in terms of transformative potential for the participants and myself, as well as in terms of more abstract theoretical discoveries (Rosenwald, 1996).

Analysis of materials

The initial step in my analysis of the collected and transcribed narratives was to read and re-read, in order to become familiar with the data. This process is frequently described as immersion (Kelly, 1999), an apparently controlled activity, but in this case, the experience was more that of drowning. Having read and re-read and re-read the transcripts, I was submerged in the stories, breathing in the ideas and thoughts and guttural reactions I had to the tales. I was flailing in a messy confusion of voices.

In order to begin to find my way through the emotive chaos I had seeped myself in, I began by constructing plot outlines for each of the storytellers. Using Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach and Zilber's (1998) typology, I began a holistic content analysis of the materials. That is, I sifted through

each entire narrative as the unit of analysis, looking at issues that arose from the subject matter communicated in the tales. Since this typology has been described as blurry, with one category not easily distinct from another in practice, this analysis also included elements of what might be categorised as a categorical form analysis. The analysis also focused on selected pieces of narratives, and more specifically on what the manner in which that exert was structured could reveal about the story.

It was then my task to demonstrate relationships between events and actions, and to represent these relationships in a narrative format. The constructed narratives were intended to fit both the material collected, and represent meanings that are not explicitly present in the material. A narrative constructed from analysis should offer insights into events and actions, provide explanations, and illuminate motivations and purposes (Oliver, 1998). The resulting meta-narrative is understood to be a co-constructed representation, interweaving interview transcripts with the interpretations of the researcher.

Why you can believe all this

Although I am prepared for the arising analysis to be read as "just" a story, and as make believe, I can suggests reasons why this story being told is one that should be heard. In order to draw you in, to make you want to believe this is something I made up, but something I made up with a reason, the research employed the skill of reflexivity to increase validity. Here Riessman's (1993) criteria of persuasiveness, coherence and correspondence were of relevance.

In addressing these criteria, the concept of reflexivity was invaluable. Reflexivity is the process whereby a researcher attempts to account for analytic decisions, based on a description of theoretical and personal opinions and stances (Banister, Parker, Burman, Taylor & Taylor, 1994). The account has been constructed with a view to being persuasive. The

narratives and metanarrative have been structured in order to persuade the reader of its veracity, but this persuasion is not without grounding both in theory, literature and the research material. A reflexive telling also explicates the manner in which the narrative has been constructed as a coherent whole. That is, I have tried to cultivate an awareness of my own assumptions concerning the narratives, and how these are informed by the beliefs of the participants, by individual narratives and by specific themes (Riessman, 1993).

With the skill of reflexivity I am able to see myself, the researcher as a character with a role to play in co-constructing the research material. I have taken the position that narratives may be seen as both personal and social constructions of meaning. As such, the interview transcripts and the constructed narratives will be viewed as co-constructed by the participants and the researcher (Riessman, 1993). Also the invaluable supervision of a more knowledgeable and experienced other will check the correspondence of my narrative to the participants' narratives is another source of validation. Transcripts are included in full in Appendices B to G as a further means of validation.

In representing each storyteller's tale, it was important to me to capture the voice of the participant, that elusive quality which made each story unique and individual. Each story arose from a lively performance within an interview, and had to be translated, first into written transcripts and then into a written tale. Each interview was an act of entertaining, with participants enacting an engaging and compelling performance. It was important and challenging to me to communicate this aspect of each story (Reissman, 1993).

After many readings and careful thought, I tried to extract parts of the narrative that I felt conveyed the most salient issues of each narrative. I then pieced together narratives using these extracts. As such each

narrative is constructed from extracts of the interviews and remains in the storytellers' words. The extracts appear in the order in which they appeared in the interviews, with a few exceptions. The stories all followed a Labovian conception of narrative as based on the chronological sequencing of events (Toolan, 2001). In some cases, extracts were shifted in order to retain this sequencing.

This necessary activity of selection and representation required I mediate each tale with decisions based on my preferences and opinions. Although no tale is ever a truth, it was important for me that I remain as "true" to the narrative as performed as I could. By "true" I mean as close to the sense and voice of each tale as I saw them. Of course each representation is necessarily my version of what is true to each tale (Reissman, 1993). These stories are to be presented in the following chapter.

Chapter Three: Story time

Once upon a time six people told me six stories about the first time they had sex. Here I present these six stories in very brief. I have used the storytellers' own words in order to render more effectively their own particular voices. Each voice is quite different and quite complex. These representations do, unavoidably lessen this complexity. Short of including whole transcripts it is impossible to include every detail of every story. I have tried to consider each teller's voice, the gist of each story, details of emotive import, things I thought were interesting, entertainment, length. I hope I have managed to pay due consideration to each of these and several other, issues.

Representing other voices

Although I try to reproduce the stories in as much of their complexity and with as many of their elusive and ineffable qualities as possible, they become my stories in this act of representation. I have listened to the pain, the confusion, and the pleasure of each storyteller. I have been touched by each telling and I try not to lose those elements of each tale's poignancy. But ultimately, these stories are me, speaking with the voices of each participant. I am speaking for myself through the storytellers' words (Wilkinson & Kritzinger, 1997).

In the act of representing each tale, I am forced to confront my own power as a researcher, and the teller of others' stories. I am necessarily an other. I am a researcher, while my participants are not. They have not been given the power to present my words to an external, authoritative and officiating audience. This is my role. I am also a female other (Wilkinson & Kritzinger, 1997). In the female storytellers, I recognise my voice easily. Although I could not deny that any individual is necessarily different from me, and each woman was different from me, I hear the femininity in their words as echoes of my own thoughts and experiences.

I have tried not to exaggerate this similarity. I have tried not to romanticise the tales told by women. But it is possible that I err on the side of sympathy to the sisterhood I imagine in the women's words. In the male storytellers, I recognise difference. But I try not to let this difference get me down.

There are numerous voices to represent. Without thinking too hard, or listening too closely, I hear my own voice loud and clear, and the voices of each of the six participants. Speaking through me is the voice of the know-it-all, academia. Speaking through all of us is the socially constructed feminine and the socially constructed masculine. It has thus been important that I create a polyvocal representation, that I allow my storytellers and myself, and all the people that speak through us a voice. Throughout, I direct my attempts of representation toward complexity, multiplicity and diversity, rather than allowing a single voice to dominate (Sampson, 1993; Wilkinson & Kritzing, 1997). Although I fear my voice will be familiar and apparent to any reader of this work.

Without further a do then, I present the stars of the show, the stories.

Estelle: A story of unrequited love, or how sex can break you into pieces

...I was with this guy, uh we were sort of, like brother and sister we grew up together from that it progressed it became, intimate...I was very very much in love...he was my first everything...I mean his lips were the softest lips I have ever kissed...ja, it was like magic...

...[T]he physical experience was just incredible because since both of us didn't have any experience it was sort of like we could you know experiment with each other and ...you know it was mutual consent in everything but it was more than that it wasn't just the physical...I there's no words for it you know I it sort of like something that you have to experience but it was sort of like it was peace like I mean I remember

afterwards like we were like lying we actually slept the entire night together and I have never ever felt so peaceful for my life it was like I was in my mother's arms sort of like you know I'm safe from everything and everyone...

I realised afterwards that for him it was not that he didn't love me but he wasn't in love with me like I was with him like a man should be with a woman he did love me but I think it was more caring of you know because we grew up together and all that ...

...[W]hat I experience made me believe one thing that I believe there is a difference between having sex and making love ...It took me six to seven years to get over this guy... and I closed the chapter by making love with him again...I had been writing to him and you know there were letters that were very angry there were letters that were you know sort of pleading...

I started to explain to him all those feelings that were going through my mind and what had happened through the past year (inaudible) and he started speaking to me incredibly I mean I was just sort of shocked um he was very much in love with a girl at that stage ... and he was holding me and we were lying in bed and he was holding me and he was talking to me about this woman and he said to me he was actually asking my advice now for me this was so very hard for me to sit there and listen to him talk about another woman like that...

...[W]hat had happened it was in a different time and different space um we had moved on we had grown up ...I got back that first feeling the feeling from the first time that that peaceful I hadn't slept so peacefully in many many years it was still there...that connection is always going to be there it will never break

...[T]here's no two people alike that feel love or understand love on the same on the same level love to me is its something that's very powerful something very very rare you don't find it any more...

...[I]f it didn't happen the way it happened I wouldn't be the person I am today I wouldn't see things the way that I see them you know...[I]t shows that we not as cold and selfish as human beings as the society makes us out to be or that society sort of makes us out to be...[T]hat gives me hope it gives me hope about a lot of things you know but uh on the other hand I feel that I'm missing out on something...

(See Appendix B for full transcript)

Olivia: On how being young and unprotected can get you fucked, or how I never built myself walls

...[A]t the time as well my parents (3) were (3) were arguing a lot so it was kind of, I didn't have (4) they were fighting a lot which made me want to be home less

I remember I had I always had this rule of kind of um. Not both having your pants off at the same time it was always it just made me feel comfortable 'cause that kind of you can't have sex with your clothes on it was impossible...I suppose I realised that it was getting to the point where it would be very easy to cross over into a place where I didn't think I wanted to go...

Um, the following weekend. Also got like exceptionally heated everything else and this time I kind of (3) did protest about pants being off at the same time but it kind of. My self didn't enforce it, and kind of, uh just let it slide. An, um I remember him. Kind of trying to penetrate, and I was like, fucking. Freaked out. Completely freaked out. ...[B]ut not actually saying, no I'm not ready for this no I don't want to do it, I had like, no

you don't have a condom no chance. I uh I'm not ready for the implications sort of...

...[T]he week after my parents were fighting again but my dad was at home, my mom, went out with a friend. ...[W]hen he got there on a Friday. He'd like said something to me, like. oh I went to the shops, or guess what I've got or something, ...then I realised yes, I did kind of, have another reason why I didn't want to go there, but kind of, I had already said no you didn't have a condom, now he's got a condom so now what? I've got no excuses...

...I was told to go fetch find my mom. ...she said no she's not ready to go home yet. And I'm like well I can't go home without you, so she's like go to Annabelle's house her friend that she's with, and wait for us there and then when I'm finished, kind of we can go home (3)...[S]o off we go to Annabelle's house...I remember, kind of (3) it was bizarre because its almost like we walked in the front door and it happened, kind of like he didn't give me a moment to kind of (4) I don't know its like he had been waiting the whole weekend for the opportunity to be alone with me, and that was his first chance and (laughing) he wasn't going to mess it up for the world...

Anyway (4) I didn't say anything, I didn't say that I was terrified, I didn't say, fucking anything. Because (laughing) all my excuses were gone. And (6) I mean I uh um I I I'm making it sound like I didn't want to. I mean, I was scared to but at the same time excited...

Uh it just, wasn't how it was supposed to be, it wasn't fucking romantic, it was nothing it felt like I had been fucked and got off of, kind of it was horrible...it was seemed kind of very mechanical and like not there was no foreplay there was no kind of real caring it was just sex (3) uh although we did care about each other it wasn't shown in that situation (4) ... I

don't remember ever making love to him (4) I don't (4) I don't ever (3) think I had one orgasm in a year and a half that we were together...

I had disappointed but not so much my mother my main concern I suppose was disappointing my father. And it wasn't I don't know if I felt like I had done something wrong it wasn't evil it was just I was supposed to be better than that ...I couldn't tell my friends either. I didn't tell anybody 'cause it was like I I suppose I was ashamed of it...I didn't see that as doing something wrong (3) in itself but kind of, that other people would see it that way and if I told my friends then next thing the whole fucking country would know and then I'd be like a slut you see...

I suppose th-he was relationship very jealous kind of (3) over protective ...[H]e used to phone me (3) every afternoon at three o'clock, finished school at two so it gave me kind of long enough to get home, and have lunch, he used to phone me every day at three o'clock and seven o'clock to check up on me, if I wasn't at home, to clock in I was in deep shit, kind of thing...I'd get upset when it became a fight, but I wasn't upset that he was limiting me ... I didn't want to be at home. And I was just to happy, to like, that he was taking me out, like away.

...[H]e broke up with me on a Thursday. On the phone. Again. And came down because there was the school play that I had bought tickets to (3) and he felt shit. And I remember crying, from the beginning, it was a Andrew Lloyd Weber. ...and him dropping me off at home, and us sitting in the car outside the gate... And I refused to get out, I was like clutching on to him. And he was like, like get out the car and starting to get irritable, like get out the car and eventually he gets out the car, gets, comes around, like helps me out the car, walks me to the front, door. And I was still fucking balling and hanging, like literally. Ah, its horrible. Like literal.

...Two years later. He phoned me up for coffee, and we landed up going for drinks and he tried to get me pissed, and begged me for two hours to please take him back (3) it was wonderful (laughs 2) eventually I said to him, the best thing you ever did for me, was dump me. I never said thank you, but thank you. Cheers (laughs 2)

(See Appendix C for full transcript)

Jane: The story of a girl being one of the boys

I remember sitting there and saying to him, I have something to tell you... And he went through everything, you're lesbian, you're got AIDS, you've. This, you've got this, and everything was no no, and he went, like the last thing that came to his mind was you're a virgin and I went yes yes...And he was like, that is no a problem, at all. Um, and because of that he was very, gentle, very caring...I remember him saying to me, afterwards saying something like. (1) I totally believe that you're a virgin and I don't mean to be horrible but are you sure you're a virgin 'cause you seem to know exactly what you were doing and I was like ja, I figure like at this age I should realise what it, entails

...[W]e went to the beach. And, there were, these five guys, um, later to discover that the youngest, was twenty-five and the oldest was thirty eight, and out of the five of them three of them were married. ...I was, kinda aloof to the whole situation, specially to the guys, well to the whole situation but specially to the guys, 'cause I just thought. This is this looking for trouble, we're eighteen years of age ...

...Um, but after about three days, I discovered that, other things were happening, 'cause the three mates I was with, their boyfriends were back home.... And as I said only after the first week of us being there, and I soon discovered that they were actually coming up a lot earlier, than um, than was intended. And the other thing was that...they were out for. To

have fun, I mean I was out to have fun but that wasn't then part of my definition of going out and picking up a guy and bringing him home for the night and screwing him. And so. I was starting to, not enjoying this situation, and I remember sitting at Brian's house the one day, I don't know where they were, and the one guy John, um, I was bitching chronically to him and um...and he was like, we're going to your house, you're packing your bags, you don't need this shit, you're coming to stay with us!

Brian it was different, it wasn't almost like, it was expected of me because he's older, he would already have sex, it wasn't anything like that, it just, was almost like this feels right to let it go further...I think his age definitely had something to do with it. I think there was, I don't think it was a major, aspect, I, found him very attractive, um, I found, his body very appealing, I found his personality really nice. His morals his all of that I really enjoyed. But I think I was also wooed a bit, by his age.

When I actually got to know [Brian's friends], and, it was amazing because they would still bullshit my mates, but the, after, the minute I moved into the house, all, pretences dropped. ...I grew up in a sense that I realised so much about myself was because, it was, sort of an element of. (1) I can relate really well to these guys and if you put the superficial part, of wow, the youngest is. (2) Seven years older than me, and the. ...and I am getting on really well with these guys, and what does that say about me, why didn't they get on... With my mates, what do they, what is different, it was all those elements as well that had an impact. Almost in me, ending up in bed with Brian

...[A]nd almost in a sense I think he wanted to say stay with me and don't, 'cause I mean that's what he would always subtly imply, stay with me, don't go overseas, but I can't stop you from going overseas... And then I went overseas...[W]e had decided that I would, we would end. (2)

Because it was just impossible, I mean at that point, there's no point in having that long distance relationship.

...And he said, he was going back to America, why don't I wait for him, and we can go over together...I had spoken to him on the telephone I was like, wow this is so amazing I'm going to see a mate of mine you know, gonna see a mate of mine from South Africa, I have never seen, I don't think I had seen any one that I knew, two years, you know, from South Africa...[We] [w]ent for coffee, and over coffee I happened to say oh ja my boyfriend, at that stage well he went into a rage

Eventually we got to the stage, where I didn't even argue, I was like in a zombie state, um. And he just ranted, and raved. I mean I, st- this guy who I had spent this amazing time with, who was this wonderful guy. Who was, romantic, and caring, and gentle, was this fucking monster standing in front of me...

...Um, but he harassed me for about, a month...[H]e, threatened me, and came into my personal space so hectically. That I have, no time for him, I still wish the worst on him, you know...I had a nice experience, I don't see why it has to be tainted because, of his behaviour there after...Ah, so it was two, very extreme situations from some one, who I still do not regret losing my virginity to him. Because at that stage he treated me really well...But I didn't know at the time that I was sleeping with a psychopath. (laughs)

(See Appendix D for full transcript)

Tomas: On the beginning of the authorised (con)quest for the thing that wasn't there

One night she phoned me we used to speak for hours on the phone. She asked me if I wanted to sleep with her. And I knew her pretty well by this stage and I knew that she'd slept with other nine men (inaudible). And uh (3) and I thought it was a bit dubious a situation, girl's fourteen. So I said

no, uh (3) then. You know, being fifteen, and libidos is very (inaudible), phoned her back. (laughs2) and I said sure....

...[N]ot the same night. A couple of weeks later (3) so I went back there one night spent the night (3) was all very, planned. We knew we were going to do it that night, and she knew it (3) was my first time (4) so we had dinner with the parents, strange parents....Went back into her room, there were candles and (3) uh (3) gorgeous gorgeous girl (4) really wearing sexy things. Just had foreplay for. About an hour or something (3) I asked her if she wanted to do it and she said ja and (4) she got the condom out, ...she put it on, she put it on me. Um, we started off in missionary position. For. Uh (3) wasn't long (laughs 2) (laughing) was about a minute, maybe two (3)

...I just remember, all I remember was staring into her eyes and (3) just this kind of (4) just like this vacuous, abyss that I was looking into, it was just like, she was giving completely, and utterly. It was just like, you know I felt like I was completely inside her. Uh it was quite strange, but beautiful at the same time

...[S]he was quite a fucked up girl, I mean she like had all these, um , what. She was exposed to sex at a very young age (3) you know, and. One of those girls who in high school, everybody else would call a slut. Um (3) she just liked sex. I don't know what she was looking for in a sexual experience (3) (clears throat) but she was very, um, explicit about sexual, talking about it was just like something. Um. But I think it kind of went hand in hand with her, drug (3) uh usage...[T]owards the end of the relationship she started to feel, very uh (4) like, violated, .like she'd given too much away (3) so that when she came to visit me and I, would start having sex with her she, would say no, and just wanted to lie there with me (3) um. And I understood you know...

...The friends part was probably the part where, uh, had a seed of where the relationship. Broke down was because my friends (inaudible). And they were all, possibly immature and so was I so. They, you know kept ridiculing her. And I couldn't take it anymore so, I broke it off...I, enjoyed talking about it with my friends because they. They told me, Tomas is a man, that's a nice place to be (6) I suppose (4) I suppose I felt more mas-, masculine, maybe (6) it was not so much the masculinity it was more of an (3) just the maturity of it. That really appealed to me (3) and the opportunity to be involved in something. That had, the potential for transcendence of reality, it was just a whole new experience, ...and then, it was just, the awakening of a new, part of me (3) 'cause it was it was the start of my sexual identity (3) it is a part which has blossomed which is something very powerful

...[S]o, because it was new I didn't quite know how to deal with it and I was quite arrogant at first. Now its just something that I like to (3) keep for those private moments... And it just really helped, you know to know that I (4) that I, that I was capable of doing that, had done it well...

In fact the first, after that, I'd never been in a boyfriend, girlfriend situation until (6) until last year (3) so, seven years (3) just. Walking around doing, whatever um, without actually. But always feeling this, deep hole, or kind of I need, love I need, that relationship...it was now its really a special thing, I remember and cherish, that that night. And the whole the relationship as a whole, you know I mean its just. It was the first one and it was just beautiful...Its, having the person near that you can feel connected to. And having that security and trust (3) and uh (5) what did you I think in a way it stretched my limits. And then (4) those limits haven't been, reached since...the limits of, of wonder and excitement...uh and there was always that deep longing, just under that. But it was still just easy you know, just something. And then I always, prided myself on the fact that I could just have sex, and its just sex (7) it

was still some kind of achievement thing, its like still kind of working out the physical aspects of like, getting good at it, practice, practice. Experiencing all kind of different positions and. And different girls and different cultures, and different tastes and different more of these things it was just kind of like searching, playing around I still have that longing emptiness (5) but at the moment I am trying to fill it with myself.

(See Appendix E for full transcript)

Michael: On the naked communion of minds

...[W]e always ended up hooking up together and stuff, but we weren't really together or anything, it was just, one of those evenings when the Grahamstown pubs get very, full and, you don't want to really go around with people any more...you know, you're a bit sick and tired of it all. And you run into someone that you know and you're about to (2) go back and have coffee at her. Because you're both sort of, refugees in the same way...I can't remember if we did have coffee...that was the precept uh...we were just talking, because we'd been talking most of the evening...

She kissed me I think (5) when you're a teenager you know you always want um to take the whole thing further, but you're scared to. And then when this older girl, pulled into me it was fine. For the first thing, the only reason we started talking was because we got on really well, I mean we read the same books we watched the same movies sort of thing you know, bright girl. And it was interesting, so, already we were it was sort of a mutual respect you know

...I was actually comfortable through the whole thing really, I was only uncomfortable the next day. When I woke up...I don't know, I remember leaving in the morning, like quite early. Had coffee and didn't really speak much and then, uh, left. Only because, it suddenly got so intense...no one's told you its going to be so intense, it's a really meeting, a

communion of minds and stuff, its not just... when that kicked in in the morning it was a bit terrifying so I left.

...[The next morning] colours are brighter (3) little jokes and things you sort of understand now. Connections, you know what I mean and um. References, all over the place (3) and I did really feel like part of a different society that I didn't really expect, I mean that's such an important theme in I mean, most literature and media I mean its such an important its an integral like corner stone of this art, and if you're outside that, as a young artist, you're not, going to appreciate the work fully, and that, for me, was probably one of the most important things, as well, 'cause I like to write, I'm a writer or, I like to write...

...[T]he minds involved far more important than the body is I mean its, the greatest erogenous zone or whatever its called. ...And um, ja I mean if you leave it, uh at the physical its going to feel ugly, its going to be over quickly, you both going to be unsatisfied with it. But if you extend it through those other planes and that's, difficult. Um. Ja its its um it aids that third space that sort of thing and that's impossible without the mind being there to an extent, ja... its something we have you know its something we should use. Correctly, but not that's all I'm saying you know I I feel uncomfortable if it isn't used correctly...

I learnt things. About women. Stuff like that. The body's anatomy, like, you understand the people you share the planet with you know, you what I mean. And that's quite a thing, I mean you've been locked away from them basically when people discuss things like that um. When you're at high school and, have no experience or whatever. ...That you actually knew that you weren't frightened with your ignorance any more the whole, experience I mean I've got a lot more confident and uh. It's uh ja, it's a positive thing. That um (4) not really sure (3) um, ja, little older little more wiser... I mean if I had any questions, I'd just ask, you know, it

wasn't like graphic you know, ugly, just graphic as in um very, direct. And I got good answers, which was fantastic.

...[It] confirmed another whole bunch of my suspicions about sort of, you know humanity just being humanity, and I mean she was so similar to me in so many ways girls and guys are actually it exploded the myth, that's what I think is the most important think like the kind of duality between like male and female you know, its just not reality.

...[B]ut ja, she was she was quite (3) interested I (4) but also, not to keen to settle down or whatever. I still had those schoolboy ideas of sort of like, getting together, for a long time, sort of just boyfriend and girlfriend. And um. Not that I think that's a school boy idea but you know, (coughs) doesn't happen all that often, she was just no no way like you know fast living city kind of thing, which was. And I didn't know anything about that...Maybe I scared her too intense, I mean obviously I must have been hell of an intense

(See Appendix F for full transcript)

Cameron: The story of an unexpected but very affirming night out, just like in the movies

Got to the point that I realised that. A (laughing) I would have to wait a really long time for that. And B that the whole, simple issue of sex would become one major thing....It would become. A little bit of a hang up and it would act, with less that uh, well actually, with very little confidence or. I would say, you know like, uh, a few mental complications that could arise from it, so I thought no no no. Lets just find someone who, I like and who I can, connect with...

Chatting with women did not come easily at all in fact uh it hardly ever happened, it started getting better, like, standard nine, you know like matric, getting a bit better. So. I entered first year, and uh, things with,

not a hell of a lot of knowledge on. Women, how women think, this that and the other. Worked it out over time though. Took some effort (clears throat 2) but then, everything does....

I went out to a bar with Tim, drinking a few beers, playing a few, you know playing some pool, after a while cruised off cruised over to a bar. Got some beers, chatting, you know (inaudible). And he uh, introduced me to this uh, girl...And um. Ja he was saying ja this this woman has incredible hands, she give a bloody good back massage. So he said, ah, like Cameron, you have to experience this...And uh, well he, uh he told her like uh I'm also pretty good at it as well, so uh, she gave me a back massage I gave her a back massage. Which she liked. And we like sat down at a table and. Massage can be just like basically um, carried on a bit and then, hands started t- started to uh, wander a bit (3) her hands I mean...

...[I]t felt a little strange, a little. Not like strange as in whose looking, but like strange, strange as in. OK well I definitely didn't expect anything like this when I came out and, trying not to look forward to much 'cause that always like got me into trouble in the past....Like a few, a few questions in my mind like, OK like, where is this going to end. Both in terms of that night and like further on. And I was trying not to think, not to think too much about the immediate future, trying to. Expect anything.

And she kind of um (3) I uh uh I told her it was my uh, my first time and she was like. Seriously? Like she like, she hadn't thought about that....She liked the idea.

She, well, ja, she um. She had fun showing me a few things....I don't know how to describe it (5) well for starters um, my body was shaking quite a bit. Although that has happened on a few occasions afterwards. Relaxes after a while, but, ja. You know like nervous energy before an exam?...Ja. And um. Ja, then (3) we talked for a while and um (3) fell



asleep (3) woke up the next day hi how are you, like ah (3) (laughing) went at it again.

Then, the next Saturday, had a. um birthday thing organised...And. Ja, it was the sexual, energy was still there and its (3) built up again. Um, the feelings started again...And the hands were, her hands and my hands were definitely moving around, and at the same time, trying to make it not allowed to work out what was going on (laughing) so it was quite...quite unusual. Quite, cool like a little rebellious in a way you know...Played, played some pool and then. (1) Ja, she grabbed my shirt and took me into the girl's bathroom. First time I'd been in there...It was almost not real life. It was almost something you see in a film. (2)

I pretty much thought, thought from the word go though I didn't know, that it was going to be a fling which confirmed that uh later on. The fling lasted for a little while and then, it ended...[I]t was real, if only for a short time, everything real is. (2) Is meant and natural and, right for then.

I realised that uh, sex was not nearly as big an issue as I had thought it in my head before then...Ja, but uh, it ah, 'cause before 'c- before that, logically, I'd known or, pretty much known, that I was attractive, sexy, that I was. In my own right quite a cool guy. Odd and weird certainly but, hey that's life. And it just uh. Made me feel that you know....Um, 'cause uh before that it was, it was just logic. After that it was feeling. If you walk down the street and you feel, attractive and sexy. OK maybe, you don't want everybody uh, uh watching you when you walk down the street though, you know you just walk down the street and even if nobody's there, nobody's looking you feel cool you feel, you feel great. Um...

There was one thing that was sadly lacking in that first experience though. Intimacy but uh....Parking off, on a roof. Nighttime. (1) Bottle of

wine looking at the stars with a woman just. Talking shit look at that ja
wadda wadda wadda wadda. Talk about this and that and. (1)
Ja....Romance is a good word for it.

(See Appendix G for full transcript)

Chapter Four: Ritual and myth

In my analysis I have constructed a coherent story about what is happening in the six stories I was told about first sexual experience. I suggest that the experience might be read as a rite of passage, and that there are three myths attached to this rite. I have things to say about each myth, and how it plays out in each narrative. Yet this is not enough. It could never really be enough. In constructing this metastory about my participants I was in agony. There is so much I have left out – some of the most poignant and affecting episodes – but I cannot make a whole out of such disparate paths of experience. I have told one possible story, but it is not the only one I could have told, or will tell.

Rites of passage

Bell (1997) describes rites of passage as those that accompany important, life changing events. They are often but not always linked to biological changes such as puberty, but reflect a more important social interpretation of what those changes mean. Van Gennep (in Bell, 1997) describes the path of a rite of passage as made up of three phases. The first isolates the individual from the comfort of familiar social structures. They are then led through a phase of transition and transformation in which some change comes about. Finally, the initiate is brought back, renewed and anew, to the society that they originally left.

The pathways walked by the six interviewees are not as well worn as that. Although each stage is apparent in their stories, it is not definite or clear. The beginning of one stage blurs into the end of another, and the endings of stages blur into beginnings. The path is not clear. It has not been walked by countless others, and is instead discovered as the initiate walks it (Hatcher, 1994). Van Gennep's path may be more distinct in its absoluteness, its objective and unchanging nature because all initiates tread the same way. These six people are floundering. Their path was not

worn down over hundreds of years into the bedrock of their culture. There are no more rituals and rites in Western culture, in white middle class South Africa, in Grahamstown. Or at least, none that are clearly demarcated.

There seems to be a distinct difference between men's stories and women's stories of first sex. In fact where Van Gennep (1960) describes the ritual process as involving separation, liminality and reincorporation, Lincoln, as described by Bell (1997), suggests an alternate path of enclosure, metamorphosis and emergence for women. Men's paths are described in terms that are literal and that tell a story about the world and social relatedness. But women are described metaphorically, likened to delicate butterflies brought back emerging from their cocoons. Women's paths are thus more tenuous in a world that values the obvious and definite.

Separation and enclosure

Using the theoretical categories suggested, men experience virginity as a separation (Bell, 1997), that is they are divorced from the usual social order. Michael, the writer, believes that "it's an integral like corner stone of this art, and if you're outside that, as a young artist, you're not, going to appreciate the work fully." Cameron, who experienced first sex late, at about the age of twenty, suggested "a few mental complications that could arise from it", from waiting for the experience. Both Cameron and Tomas were expectant, feeling that they had been cut off from the experience of sex. They are "horny" and "libidos" run riot.

The male experience seems to be of separation from an idealised way of being a man. Michael is concerned for his writing, for the pursuit he defines himself by. He is disconnected from his chosen art, so long as he has not performed a sexual act. Tomas and Cameron are restless in their separation. They are detached from an activity that they feel they should

experience and strain against their confinement. They are set apart from more a knowledgeable, more powerful position, that of being sexually active. In fact they are not able to define themselves as men. Part of being a man is being sexually active, and they remain inactive. They are not yet men.

The women are enclosed, and this enclosure is experienced in different ways depending on the circumstances of the enclosure. Estelle is ensconced in a warm and familial space created by familiar and trusted characters. There is a sense that she is there because it is meant to be and indeed she does describe her experience as "meant to be". Jane remains "aloof" as a protective measure against the men who "woo" and seduce her friends. Both Jane and Estelle experience this enclosure as "right" and "natural". Olivia's seclusion however is beset: by parents fighting, a boyfriend who controls her and friends who would call her whore if they knew how close to sex she had been.

The women are passive. They are enclosed, shut away by non-activity. They are shut off by the circumstances that are necessarily a part of their lives. Olivia cannot leave the tumult of her family because she relies on them for protection. Jane simply does not take part in the activities her friends do but this also results in protection. As such this state of inactivity is experienced as safe and secure in comparison to the activity of sex. For women, not having sexual experience does not question their identity as women, but rather protects it.

Liminality and metamorphosis

In this phase each individual prepares for the sexual meeting of two people in their first experience of intercourse. In each case the initial phases of separation and enclosure, set the tone for the phase of transition. All the narratives leave blanks in their description of this second phase, and these silences seem largely attributable to the

ineffability, the newness of the experience. Regardless of whether this experience is positive or negative, the space that each individual engages in this first experience is beyond words, beyond boundaries and essentially enigmatic. It is about the transformational experience of liminality or of metamorphosis. "It was just magic", says Estelle, and elsewhere "there are no words to describe it".

For the male rite, this first sexual meeting questions boundaries of reality itself. "Well one I was feeling (3) like is this real or is this just, not real", remarks Cameron. The all too solid walls that divide one thing from another begin to melt and merge. And Michael begins to see into his partner's mind, "'cause you create a new space". But perhaps the most expressive account of the transcendence of physical limits is Tomas' description of his possession of his partner:

"I just remember, all I remember was staring into her eyes and (3) just this kind of (4) just like this vacuous, abyss that I was looking into, it was just like, she was giving completely, and utterly. It was just like, you know I felt like I was completely inside her. Uh it was quite strange, but beautiful at the same time..."

For the women too this is a phase of mystical change, but the change occurs in an enclosed and personal space. For Estelle the space invokes an archetypal presence of unity, "I have never ever felt so peaceful for my life it was like it was like I was in my mothers arms ". She and Jane describe this as a process that they undergo, as "natural" and a "progression". While they are able to hold onto a sense of stability and rightness during their cocooned process, Olivia is not. While it is possible to affirm and enhance a sense of self, it is also possible to have this sense of self violently assailed. Olivia describes her experience as a guerrilla like ambush:

"[I]t was bizarre because its almost like we walked in the front door and it happened, kind of like he didn't give me a moment to kind of

(4) I don't know its like he had been waiting the whole weekend for the opportunity to be alone with me, and that was his first chance and (laughing) he wasn't going to mess it up for the world (4)"

Her partner does not consider Olivia's choices, and he violently takes over the process that should have had a natural flow, and that should have happened with respect for her space.

Return and emergence

What follows for men is a triumphant return to a society that celebrates male sexual conquest. Michael describes the return:

"[C]olours are brighter (3) little jokes and things you sort of understand now. Connections, you know what I mean and um. References, all over the place (3) and I did really feel like part of a different society that I didn't really expect."

Masculinity is in part based on the act of having sex. After having sex the first time Tomas is told "Tomas is a man". This is a feeling of having gained stature in others' eyes, as Cameron describes: "you know you just walk down the street and even if nobody's there, nobody's looking you feel cool you feel, you feel great." In some cases this newfound approval may be important enough to influence certain decisions, as with Thomas' relationship. It "[b]roke down was because my friends ... They, you know kept ridiculing her. And I couldn't take it anymore so, I broke it off."

Men are unproblematically accepted back into society. They have proven themselves in sexual conquest, and they are welcomed back into the social fold. This acceptance is crucial to male identity. Without it Cameron may have become subject to "mental complications", and Michael would have been sundered from his art. But once they perform a sexual act, their identity is assured.

Emergence is more problematic. Women must prove that they have been worthy to undertake the experience of sex. Estelle's ideal love is denied.

"I realised afterwards that for him it was not that he didn't love me but he wasn't in love with me like I was with him like a man should be with a woman". Jane realises that her lover was actually a "psychopath", "this guy who I had spent this amazing time with, who was this wonderful guy. Who was, romantic, and caring, and gentle, was this fucking monster standing in front of me". Olivia, whose experience could never be proved acceptable, has instead to deal with negative valuations from her parents, especially her father, and her friends: "like everybody knows and now they know that I'm kind of this, weak, person".

Women experience a passive emergence. They have undergone the natural changes expected of a sexual metamorphosis, and it remains for them to leave their cocoons. This surfacing renders the women vulnerable. They become subject to the valuations that an active and opinionated outside world may choose to ascribe to them. They do not simply emerge as "women", in the way that men become "men". Sex does not help define a feminine identity positively, rather it suggests the inherently suspicious nature of femininity.

The feminine is linked to chaos, and this chaos is especially apparent with regards to sexuality (Paglia, 1968). Women must be controlled sexually, in order to preserve social purity (Goddard, 1987), and this limitation seems to remain despite widespread critique in gender roles brought about by the feminist movement (McLaren, 1999). As such, sexually active women are not perceived as powerful in the same way sexually active men are. Women with sexual power are threatening to patriarchal norms. For the storytellers, their only defence is to construct the experience in their own minds as an event that they might justify first to themselves, and possibly to a questioning other. They find ways to tell themselves as acceptably sexually active.

Myths of the path

Attending this meandering pathway are three great myths of love. They are like watching deities that give place and direction and voice to the stories. They help the stories tell themselves. In booming voices the myths preside, telling what is real and allowed, and what is not. Campbell (1973) suggests that rites are the enactments of myths, that the two are inextricably linked. It is suggested that the myths that preside over the rite of first sex are the myths of demonic, heavenly and earthly love (Campbell, 1973).

The myth of demonic love

The myth of demonic love is epitomised by the story of Satan's banishment from heaven. Satan was an angel, a source of light among the heavenly host, who loved the one God so much he refused to bow down to mortal man's desires. For this love, for transgressing the one God's orders, he was banished forever from the beloved's presence, doomed to live for always sundered and in hell. The tale is told by one possessed, taken away from the heights and left with burning, brimstone and pain. It is a tale about the extreme mortality and fragility of the human body, the utter and inexhaustible contingency of corporeality. It tells the story that love will always end, in anguish and in tears (Campbell, 1973).

Those who experience first sex within this mythic vein, experience their bodies as the basic and necessary context of the experience. Cameron concentrates on the sensuous massages that initiate his first experience, while Tomas is explicit about positions and the "experiential level" of the experience, the positions he tried.

Apparently in contrast, the voice of demon love is also in Olivia's tale of pain and terror. "[I]t was horrible (4) nobody could possibly enjoy your first sexual experience, I'm sorry its horrible its fucking painful its terrible". Love and sex are hell, in the sense that they are profoundly

located in corporeal experience. Although that experience could be expected to be pleasurable, it could also be as painful as damnation. Olivia is blunt, "it felt like I had been fucked and got off of".

In Tomas' experience of "being inside" his partner are the terrifying echoes of possession. In order for demonic love to be enacted, one partner must be conquered physically. It is a mythic contest to find divine dominance, by taking over another's body. Olivia's partner literally takes her away from her warring parents, but also from her own sense of autonomy. Tomas describes it further: "It was just like this, battlefield almost, like we weren't fighting against the other person, it's just like. Involved in some, activity that was (4) raising your, your energy levels, or in all dimensions." He frames sex as a physically enacted war waged to win power and superiority. It is a violent struggle to assert ownership and authority over one's self and also over another.

The myth of heavenly love

At the other extreme is a heavenly love so pure it transcends the bodies of either partner. Lord Krishna is fabled to have fallen in love with a beautiful mortal, a married woman named Radha. In this young incarnate god's passionate longing and ardent desire for his mortal mistress, is the ideal of love that denies the importance of corporeal experience (Campbell, 1973). Love of the heavenly kind can only exist in the mind and because it is thereby banished to the realm of the ideal and spiritual, it can never be actualised and is fundamentally impossible. But it is eternally beautiful and poignant. It is true and whole and everlasting, but ultimately, desperately, and exquisitely damned.

Michael's story is one that turns on the myth of heavenly love. He is devoted to "communion of minds" and the "third space". It is the conversation that accompanied his first sexual experience that he values. "I mean if I had any questions, I'd just ask, you know... And I got good

answers". He believes that "the mind's involved far more important than the body is I mean its, the greatest erogenous zone or whatever its called." Thus it is important that his partner be his equal, the same as him, "I mean we read the same books we watched the same movies sort of thing".

The myth of earthly love

The third myth concerns a point of origin of love that is neither heaven nor hell, but somewhere in between. It is earthly love, sung of old by bards with harps, about knights and ladies, who find each other and celebrate the beauty of each other in mystic and passionate sexual union of body and mind. It is the eyes and the heart that control this type of love: the eyes to identify an object of worthy affection and the heart to connect to the wonder of the other's soul. Both mind and body are involved and necessary for such love. And because an embodied experience is necessary, this type of love requires the embodied subjects be in mystic harmony with each other. There is a sense in which such earthly love is inevitably unearthly, and is rather destined by godly rolls of dice.

Estelle believes that she has experienced this love. Her partner is a boy she grew up with, "he was like the most incredible man I have ever seen in my life I mean his lips were the softest lips I have ever kissed". Because of the closeness they feel, that of best friends or brother and sister, they are like two puzzle pieces, "you fit into each other you know". The experience is fated, "I felt that I was mature enough because I could feel all those I could it just it was the right moment". And because of this, the experience was "just magic".

The unearthliness of earthly love

All the storytellers describe the ways in which their experiences are not all they could have been. Occasionally they were "not supposed to be like

that". Sometimes problems "did not matter at the time", but there is always a conditional clause to the tales told by the storytellers. There is always something missing. Olivia and Cameron miss "romance", Tomas begins a search for the "limits of wonder" in subsequent sexual experiences, and Michael believes the experience was "slightly false", that it "deserve[d] time and, energy, and commitment".

Olivia and Tomas experience the physical pain of separation from their partners' minds. Olivia feels that she never made love to her first partner and that "it wasn't romantic", "it seemed kind of very mechanical". Tomas is confronted by his girlfriend's empty gaze, the deep brown eyes that proclaim an "abyss". She has "vacated" and left him her body. Cameron's descriptions of his adventurous and sensuous sexual experiences, speak of the unavoidable, base reality of the experience. He enjoys the interaction in the moment, trying not to think of the future, "'cause it was real, if only for a short time". Eventually he must understand that the association was a "fling".

What they all miss is the blessing of the god of earthly love. Earthly love is discovered to be an ideal that they did not reach. Olivia and Cameron realise that they did not "fit" with their partners. Olivia was controlled, her independence forcefully seized, and she desires a partnership that will value her contribution: "I only really feel comfortable (3) if I believe that the person cares for me if I know that I care for them". In the future Cameron wants to find someone "[he] could talk to who [he] could understand who could understand [him]". Marriage, or commitment is perceived as a means to ensure such a fit. Michael sees marriage and its "contracts" as a "reassurance", that his partner is committed to being "honest", and "naked" in her interaction with him. And Olivia views marriage as protection, in that "the consequences aren't, as bad, if you had to fall pregnant or if this had to happen or whatever, like the two people are going to deal with it together".

In the rite of passage that is first sexual experience, it is the god of earthly love that presides over the initial phase of the journey. Earthly love is an ideal that ironically does not seem possible in these necessarily earthly stories of love. Although the initiates begin the path believing and expecting that this myth is what they will encounter, they are more often met with the extreme of demonic or heavenly love. They are met with the split of mind from body, suggested by Cartesian analytic philosophy, so long ago.

Splitting genders

In these stories it is the women who find the discovery of the split between demonic and heavenly love difficult, the distance from earthly love demanding. It is the women who are emotionally and physically abused as Olivia is, "threatened" as Jane is, and "left in pieces" the way Estelle feels. The female characters that walk the path of this rite of passage must consider if they are ready to face the negative stigma of "whore", "evil", "slut" that will be flung their way should friends and family discover their dirty secret; or if they are prepared to be idealised into simplicity like Michael's partner. Once they have made the decision, they must be able to explain and prove and substantiate, while the male characters need only step onto the path to have their identity secured and affirmed. Without a doubt or a second thought, it is proclaimed to all that would hear it, that they are men.

Tomas' experience of his girlfriend "vacating" leads him on a search, possibly a search to understand where it is she disappeared. He "opened [him]self, completely in a sexual experience in search of, whatever". In remembering his first experience he suggests that "in a way it stretched [his] limits. And then (4) those limits haven't been, reached since". He experiences "longing" and "emptiness", in a series of one-night stands. And he is still searching.

Tomas' task is comparatively less difficult than for the female storytellers, though not entirely unproblematic. He recognises that his girlfriend has "vacated", but he resolves the mystery of this "abyss" she presents to him by beginning a search for the "limits of wonder" that were reached in his first experience. This search takes the form of experiencing his sexuality in as many forms as he is able to. He includes experiences of different women, and different sexual positions in this search. The assumptions of a masculine identity suggest that once a man is sexually experienced he is a man. Since Tomas has proved himself in this way, he is able to undertake the active search he describes.

This approach seems to betray a simplification of women and feminine identity. Tomas believes that he can discover the mystery of his first partner by conducting a search with any other woman. The female characters constructed in the men's stories are not complex. They are either "sluts", "whores", or they are "angels". Tomas' girlfriend is a "fucked up girl", she is a sexually experienced and explicit, a "diva". Michael's partner is his equal. They read the same books and watch the same movies; and although the answers to his questions must have demonstrated her individuality, this difference is erased. Cameron's partner is a woman with "incredible hands" who drags him into the women's bathroom. Her defining qualities and attributes beyond the physical are not elaborated.

Women are not able to deal with the split in this active and simplified manner. It is their male partners who make the decision that define their interactions. Estelle discovers that her partner "wasn't in love with [her] like [she] was with him like a man should be with a woman", that he loves her as a friend or as a sister, but not as an earthly lover. Although she states that "it didn't matter at the time", later she sinks into a depression because she felt "I was may as well die because there's

nothing else for me to do in this life". She explains the source of anguish and continued problematic further:

"[W]hen you make love you give yourself sexually and emotionally at the same time which means that you're giving up the biggest part of yourself and you're keeping very little for yourself so when the relationship ends or when it breaks up or whatever it you're in pieces and sometimes um or most of the time there's always pieces that you could can never put back together ...there's always something missing..."

The storyteller's partner undermines this ideal earthly story. Estelle tells the story of earthly love, of fitting and of naturalness, but in the end she must resolve the split that she sees between having sex and making love once she has realised that her partner was not in fact making love to her. She cannot bring herself to be "shallow" and "dirty", and pick men up in bars. She does not want to risk "ripping [her]self apart". But she feels that this is "restricting" a "biological urge" as well her need to "experiment" and "explore" her sexuality by having "a lesbian experience or a threesome". And this is a problematic she must deal with personally.

In women's narratives the men are ambiguous. Estelle's partner loves her, but is not in love with her. Olivia's partner takes her away from her tumultuous family, but in the process possesses and controls her. Jane's partner is a "psychopath", initially loving and caring, and finally a dangerous monster. These others are found to serve two spheres of existence, the physical and the spiritual. They affirm the women, but ultimately withdraw this affirmation. They are always found to be stuck outside of the realm of earthly love, caught in hell or in heaven. The next step for the women is to construct an explanation for why the love they have experienced has fallen short of the earthly ideal.

Framing difference

Women are excluded from the role of being assertive sexual beings. They are simplified into Eve-like characters, but this only further limits the ability of women to make choices about their sexual relationships. To understand this further, I turn to my previous research (Ebden, 2000), concerning women's constructs of virginity. In this research I identified three ways to frame virginity and sexual experience. The romantic frame sees idealised love as the only context in which virginity may freely be given to a partner; the pragmatic frame fixes virginity as a zone of immaturity and inexperience that should be relinquished in favour of sexual exploration; the internal frame requires that a woman be mature and ready in her self concept in order to successfully navigate the difficulties of engaging in sexual activity.

Loosely these frames apply to the three myths of the rite of first sexual experience. The pragmatic approach to virginity aligns with the myth of demonic love. Both are concerned with sensuous, corporeal experience and exploration, although the myth contains notions of the torture of such love, while the pragmatic framing sees only the hedonistic pursuit of pleasure. In the romantic framing I begin to see the myth of heavenly love. In its ideal and romantic striving, in its view of first sex as a valuable and cherished gift to be advisedly given, is the myth that relationships can be centred solely on spiritual and mental connection. And in the internal frame's preoccupation with readiness, is the myth of earthly love's need to keep the mind and body a whole entity, the mindbody.

This research suggested that the internal framing best equipped women to negotiate and navigate the complexities of sexual interactions with men. Few women can accomplish this feat. Few women can tell this story - despite the suggestion to the contrary by the male narratives. In the narratives of this present project, the phase of emergence is never unproblematic. Emerging, still soft and sticky and uncertain from the

cocoon of metamorphosis, the women are beset by unfavourable conditions. They are confronted, controlled, called names, confused. The earthly love myth is always a distant ideal, in all these narratives. It is not so easy to maintain an internal space of safety, surety and knowing, when this space is constantly under question by a male dominated chorus, speaking through culture, media, family and friends.

The Male Chorus

Jane's experience provides her with a certain affirmation. She is shown to be mature and independent, she is accepted as "one of the guys". She is "treated well" and her partner is "gentle" and "romantic". It is only later, when she is confronted with another side of his character that she is shown that earthly love is not the only possible mythic voice in command of her tale. He "threatens" her and enters her "personal space", potentially unbalancing the foundation of independence she has discovered from him. He calls her "naïve" and "changed". Although she retains her autonomy, refuses to go away with him, and will not taint her first experience of sex by associating the romantic partner with the "psychopathic" stalker, the extremes she encounters are a profound and unsettling confrontation of her story of earthly love.

Jane avoids negative valuations to her first experience by simple force of character. Her entire experience is centred on her "growing up" and of "taking a big step outside of her circle", and into that of the older men she has befriended. This chorus of male voices evaluates her as different from her "easy" friends by her "aloof" stance, and her lack of gullibility. Once she moves into their circle they "drop all pretence" put on to "woo" girls, and invite her in as "one of the guys". When her partner, begins to threaten her after they have separated, although she placates him, she states categorically "there is no fucking way I am going anywhere with this guy, he has lost it."

In fact there is an implicit chorus of male spectators in every narrative. It speaks through the internalised father figure that Olivia believes she will "disappoint", and probably also that her friends believe they will disappoint. It tells Estelle that picking up men in bars is "shallow" and "dirty", the way the man she had sex with made her feel when he told her he did not love her. It cheered and applauded as Michael left the room the morning after the night before, when Tomas phoned his best friend to tell him of his first conquest, and as Cameron walks down the street now that he is sexually active and can flirt with women. The older, male voice is the one that cannot abide a woman having sex. It is the voice that would protect her virginity and preserve her purity. It is the voice that encourages men to make a move, to agree to a date, to flirt and to coerce.

The voice of this chorus is most clearly embodied by Jane's partner's friends. They help justify a positive self image through the problematic of first sexual experience, because they treat her as though she is more mature than her friends: they are honest with her, they include her in their circle. She experiences this as affirming, she feels that she "grows up" during this experience. The male chorus approves of Jane, and in this approval she is given a means to value her first sexual experience. Later when her partner threatens her, she holds onto this means of affirmation.

She sees her partner as two people: a romantic man who treated her well and a psychopath. She literally splits him in two in order to retain the evaluation of the story validated by the male chorus. In this move, Jane appropriates the tactic of simplification used by the male storytellers to describe their female partners. Her partner is not allowed to be both hateful and lovable, demonic and heavenly. He must be either one or the other. She erases his complexity.

Using the same strategy of simplification, the chorus will not hear a man's story if it problematises the split of mind from body. Only coherent and complacent stories will be heard. These stories must therefore, all contain the words, "but it didn't matter at the time", or variations on this theme. These words are an apparent necessity to male stories of first sexual experience, since it is not permissible for a man to be dissatisfied with his experience. Though it seems that Michael's partner and he were drunk, that they had only just met, that his partner must have found it difficult to be "naked" and "honest" with him in such a meeting, he tells the story as though she could be and was. In his, and the other male stories, the potential for tension, discordance and contradiction is rife. But these disharmonies are magically erased and effectively silenced. They will get it right next time, and it is as simple as that.

Dancing across the split

Both the stories told by the men and those told by the women contain contradictions. The story is never easy or entirely coherent. Sometimes the storytellers speak of their experience as demonic, and sometimes as earthly and sometimes as heavenly. The male storytellers all remark on what is lacking in their experiences, but do not tell this lack with any sense of loss. The women speak of being disempowered, but also of being empowered. In the interviews all the storytellers perform the complexity of their narratives, through their tone, their gestures, their words. Again however, women performed differently to men.

Cameron is unable to find a word to describe what was lacking from his experience of first sex. At first he uses the word intimacy, but this is not quite right. He fumbles around a description until I suggest the word "romance". The very word that would express the ideal he sees as lacking from his experience is not accessible to him.

Cameron: There was one thing that was sadly lacking in that first experience though. Intimacy but uh.

Tiffany: What do you mean?

Cameron: (2) Parking off, on a roof. Nighttime. (1) Bottle of wine looking at the stars with a woman just. Talking shit look at that ja wadda wadda wadda wadda. Talk about this and that and. (1) Ja.

Tiffany: Some sort of, um. Romance? Um

Cameron: Yep.

Tiffany: You're not talking about anything sexual there so is it kind of um. (1) I'm not sure, um.

Cameron: Romance is a good word for it.

Cameron's difficulty in clearly defining what was missing as "romance", is a performance of his masculinity as prescribed by the male chorus. It is not a word that he needed in the context of his first sexual relationship, and although he tells a tale in which he too is on a search for this illusive quality, it is not a quality he is familiar with. It is not a quality that is sought after by the masculine identity as described in terms of sexual conquest and domination (Lindegger & Durrheim, 2000). Cameron has little experience in relationships, and therefore little experience of his definition of "romance". Still, in performing his story, he tells his experiences as chosen. He believes he will have to wait too long, that it is too difficult to find "romance". Thus the word slips from his vocabulary, although it is readily available to my vocabulary. I suggest that as a woman this word is more accessible to me than to Cameron.

In telling the story of the realisation men silence the experience of contradiction. For men the extremes of heavenly or demonic love are just as real, but are not told as incongruous or difficult. For men the realisation that they have not attained their ideal is not disturbing. They simply tell a story in which they have seen the shortcomings of the event, that may be repaired later. Men are able to concentrate on the positive aspects of the experience, and tell a story in which they have accomplished perhaps not the ideal, but at least another desired goal.

When I asked about what the men experienced as missing from their first sexual experience, they acknowledged the omission, but found a way to tell it as acceptable to them. Michael expressed the feeling that he could have spent more time becoming intellectually closer to his first partner. However, he still characterises the experience as positive, concentrating on the novelty of the experience.

Tiffany: Would you have preferred to have gone through that process of getting to know each other, before you had sex with her?

Michael: (laughs 2) It probably would have been helpful, but uh, not at the time no (3) no I was very happy at the time, I wouldn't change it. Now I think I would have (3) but ja.

Tiffany: At the time, you thought, it was

Michael: No, it was ja losing your virginity is amazing...

Michael could have seen my question as a challenge to his understanding, or as an excuse to reveal a deeper, discontented version of the interaction between him and his first partner, he chooses rather to elaborate on the affirmative experience of losing his virginity, that it was "amazing". Either the discontent does not exist, or he is not comfortable expressing it to me, or perhaps to any one. Either way, this silence betrays the presence of the male chorus in the interview material.

In trying to tell me what he had learnt from his first experience of sex, Cameron tries to express how he was affirmed by the experience. He believes that while he remained a virgin he underrated himself. He stumbles over the word "underestimated", unable to utter this negation of his now proven worth.

Cameron: ...Taught me that, um. For quite a while, and with no apparent reason and with, no apparent thought at the time, I had been. Underestim-esta-etsta-under thpub uh, sorry.

Tiffany: Underestimating

Cameron: Underestimating myself for, quite a few years. So then I um I uh. Tried to deal with that.

Here again, I suggest the shadow of the male chorus present. Cameron tries to express the view of the male chorus, that he underestimated himself, and this negative evaluation is proven negative after he has had sex for the first time. But this requires, that he, a potential member of the chorus, once had a negative valuation of himself. It is because of this disruption to the chorus' self-concept that he stutters over the word.

The simple structural move, of disregarding the contradiction in their story, does not seem as easy for women telling the story of their first sexual experience. Women witness their dislocation from the earthly ideal. In this witnessing they do not reframe their stories as positive by concentrating on what they experienced as affirming. Instead they view this confusion as a problematic, one that they must resolve for themselves, in their own minds.

Olivia refused to have sex with her boyfriend, using the excuse that he didn't have a condom. When she saw him next he told her that he had since bought condoms, implying that this excuse lent tacit consent. This leads to insight about her interaction with him:

Olivia:...then I realised yes, I did kind of, have another reason why I didn't want to go there, but kind of, I had already said no you didn't have a condom, now he's got a condom so now what? I've got no excuses.

Tiffany: What was the other reason?

Olivia: Uh I don't know (6) feeling like a fucking whore (laughs 3) excuse my language.

She is confronted with the brute physicality of her relationship, her tale as one of demonic love. She realises that she has a reason for not having

sex, that she does not want to be labelled as a "whore". And there is no way for her to ignore, or gloss over this realisation. It is present, and real, and painful and as blunt as the word "fuck".

Throughout Olivia's interview she used swear words to express the extremes of her emotions and opinions. It is interesting that this is the only occasion in which she expresses apology for this language. It seems that in this performance she has seen the manner in which the male chorus would value her actions, and expresses distain for this view. At the same time, such an expression of disgust leads only to further negative valuation by the observing male chorus, and she apologises for her swearing. Her performance expresses the tightrope of difficulty that women must walk in their experience of first sexual experience. They must be careful so as not to be assigned a negative reputation, but they must also find a means to express the story as their own.

Chapter Five: Performing difference

The central story of this representation of heterosexual men and women's experiences of first sex is that of difference. This difference, of men from women, women from men, is played out in the structure of the rite of passage that the storytellers experienced, and in the myths that preside over this path. It is difference told as essential and as polar, and it is a difference told by the male chorus.

Gender as polarity

Within many mythic traditions there are stories told of the sacred and secret side of sex (Mann & Lyle, 1995). This mythic communication constructs men and women as different and even further, as opposites. Relationships between men and women appear necessarily to involve a mystical joining of polar entities. Because myths are stories that cultures tell to communicate that culture's metaphysical beliefs (Coupe, 1997), the polar difference between men and women is given ontological status.

However the categories of male and female, constructed as a dichotomy, are by no means necessary. If a difference in physical genitalia is what is required to distinguish one gender from another, then the phenomena of hermaphrodite sexual characteristics should be evidence enough for at least a third sex. Even the distinction based on sex hormones is not so easy, since individuals called "men" have female sex hormones, and individuals called "women" have male sex hormones (Harding, 1998). And if it is some immaterial aspect, individual preferences on which the categories are based, then homosexuality and transgendered individuals should be evidence enough to question the dichotomy (Padug, 1999). As such the binary of male and female does not seem necessary, although this simplification to opposition may be inevitable. It should be understood as constructed, and constructed in such a way that it has become assumed as an ontological truth.

The stories told in my interviews were, to me at least, clearly different in terms of gender. Women seemed to me to tell markedly different stories from men. What I suggest is not that women are essentially different from men, but that the dichotomy constructed to distinguish one type of human being from another type of human being in terms of biological, sexual characteristics, is in evidence in tales of first sexual experiences.

But even this is not the full story. I hear Tomas' dissatisfaction with his "stud on the belt" approach to sex, in his continuing search for "whatever". I have collected studs myself, and tend to use the same metaphor about my attempts to understand my sexuality, a continued search. I am not as different from my male participants as I sometimes tell myself to be. Males' stories are not always as different from the females' stories as they at first appear to be.

The central difference does not seem to lie in story line. All the narratives spoke of a certain something missing. But it is only the women storytellers who experience this absence with an expressed sense of anguish or pain. Estelle describes it as "tearing apart". It is women who experience the mind body split as hurtful, while men perceive it as mildly disconcerting. Both have the same experience, but women are less able to view it as simply self-affirming.

Performing the dichotomy

I would suggest that the difference lies in the performance, not only of the narrative, but also of the gender that the storyteller defines her or himself by. The difference does not amount to levels of certain chemicals in the bloodstream, to shape of chromosomes, to preferences, beliefs, desires. The difference is in the manner that the tellers acted their gender as they told their story to me, and how they acted the role of "woman" or "man" when they lived the experience (Davis, 1997).

Butler (1997) speaks of gender as a performance. Gender is neither an essential part of what a person actually is, or a constructed reality about the person and society. It is neither the biology of chromosomes or hormones, nor only the metaphors and ideas that congregate around the concept of man and woman. Rather, the performance of a gender is a way of being, of enacting through a body, the group of beliefs about what is to be a man or a woman.

Gatens (1997) suggests an example of this. In public places women behave differently to men. Women keep their legs close together, their legs crossed, they keep their hands to themselves, and they take up little space. Men splay their legs apart, walk with long strides, and make physical contact with others. It is possible that these bodily behaviours are based on certain thoughts about what men and women are. The belief that women are more vulnerable leads to introverted behaviour, while the male assumption of self-control may lead to more confident behaviour in men. In these behaviours both men and women are following a script about how they should behave.

In much the same way, the storytellers embody their gender in the interviews. Men tell stories that erase the experience of being disappointed with their first sexual experience. They are blind to contradictions and dumb to certain words like "romance", but they celebrate the experience as an affirmation of masculinity. Women consider the experience more problematic, showing that they have considered the ways that they might be described as "bad girls", and tell the story to show their consideration. If they are to survive the disruption to femininity posed by first sexual experience, then this is necessary. It is necessary for Olivia to reclaim her lost independence and explain her partner as possessive and controlling. It is necessary for Jane to become

"one of the boys". It is necessary for Estelle to feel that she "rips" herself apart in meaningless sexual interactions.

I do not suggest a value judgement of men's experience of first sex as simply affirming. In fact it seems the easiest and more positive way of defining the experience. I do not suggest a value judgement of women's experience of first sex as problematic, or for the need to fight for a positive story with which to identify. I merely remark the difference, and suggest that this difference may be attributed to the pervasive power of a masculine perspective to define the experiences of both men and women (Anzaldua, 1997; Irigaray, 1997).

Observing difference: the male chorus

It is what I have named the "male chorus" that is the imagined observer for all the stories I heard. Although it was me, a woman that asked the questions in the interview, it seems likely that the participants assumed the host of men was present, in my knowledgeable researcher position; and also because they are all used to the chorus being ever present in their lives. It is this chorus that celebrates with the men, and sits the women down for a serious chat about what they have done (Gatens, 1994). This chorus is the all-seeing, ever-present entity that evaluates deeds and thoughts.

I hesitate to tell my female participants as oppressed. They demonstrate power and independence. Jane proclaims that she was at ease with her first sexual experience, "if [she] hadn't [she] wouldn't have let it happen". And Estelle says "[she] wanted to show him that [her love for him] you know [she] wanted to share that experience with him". Yet there is always the shadow of the male chorus, speaking behind even these two. Jane is affirmed by her partner's friends, and this is in part where her feelings of independence and power stem from, and Estelle is left relegating her experience of love and of fitting to a realm of magic, one

that is unreal compared to the anguish she feels at experiencing the distinction between having sex and making love.

In the tradition of Western thought there are several pervasive binary oppositions. These binaries are polar and dichotomous, there is one and then there is an other. There is male and then there is female. There is the quality of rationality and then there is the ability to be intuitive. There is the mind as opposed to the body, and the public as distinct from the private. Usually in these binaries, one pole is given more weight, more power, and more value. This pole usually corresponds to the pole that might be labelled as male, the pole listed first above (Woodward, 1997).

The point of view from which these binaries are constructed is male (Lindemann, 1997). It is bigger than any one male. The voice of the male chorus has decidedly deep register, a tenor even, but it does not belong to any one speaker. In fact more can be said of the speakers. They are probably white. They are probably western. They are probably middle class. They are probably older. They are heterosexual. For these are the characteristics of the men in society who have the most control, who have the most economic and political power over "others", such as "women", "blacks", "the poor".

Such men are generic (Lindemann, 1997). If I was to have an encounter with the Man from the Platonic World of Forms, I am sure he would be as I have described. These men are the norm, but not just the norm of the category male, the norm for all human beings. The word man is in fact, understood to designate not only a single masculine being, but also an entire race of people. And this entity might be understood as neuter. Every woman is also a man. Every woman is a variation on the basic structure of a human being, and this structure is generically male.

The view that the masculine is always the original goes as far back as the story of Adam and Eve, and continues in contemporary society, in technological advances. In the medical world, the male body is the silent, accepted generic. Women's bodies, in cyclic menstrual disarray, and in menopausal flux, are "others" to be studied and understood for their exotic flavour (Martin, 1997). The hormonal body is a powerful construct in the field of medicine. It is acknowledged that there are male hormones and female hormones, which distinguish and define male bodies from female bodies (Harding, 1998).

This hormonally centric view however, essentialises the view of men as static and stable, in possession of a simple and sufficient single sex hormone, while women are sucked sideways into a seeping flow of several hormones, sweeping and swaying through the sine curve of their beings. The generic male doctors and researchers of medicine are professional surveyors of such bodies. They attempt to find means to subdue them, through hormonal replacement therapy for menopausal women and through contraceptives for fertile, sexually active women (Harding, 1998; Martin, 1997). In this institutionalisation of power, it is the male professionals that create docile bodies of the variation on the human species, the bodies of women.

Here vision becomes a controlling influence. The world is not only phallogocentric but occularcentric as well. It is phalloccularcentric – if I may create a word to express this perspective. If men are the generic human beings, it is men that stand in the tower of the panopticon. Their bodies are invisible. They are the norm and need not be understood as something different or interesting. In the act of seeing, by photographing, by examining with the eyes, the scientists of the world hope to understand and thereby control a material reality. What can be seen, can be known, can be shaped and moulded, and made the way men and supposedly mankind, want it. In fact, the masculine controlling forces become

reduced to eyes, disembodied and watching the stars and planets through telescopes, bacteria through microscopes; bodies both heavenly and earthly (Haraway, 1997). But this gaze is not directed backwards towards the male body.

Mind-body split

Rather it is women that remain trapped in matter. Women are caught in too, too solid flesh that simply will not melt into invisibility. And the flesh they are caught in is described as "leaking" (Grosz, 1994, p. 203). Women's bodies are solid and real, not mental and intellectual, and this makes them suspect and suspicious. The female body is slippery and changeable, but it is not clean. It is in need of control. Because it is "open" and penetrable in a way that male bodies are not, it must be protected and stabilised (Grosz, 1994; Irigaray, 1997). It simply is not rational or ordered or stable; and this is infinitely mysterious.

Women are thus associated with the base, material end of the binary of mind and body (Grosz, 1994). I would not want to suggest that all women experience themselves as embodied. Neither could I suggest that men are incapable of embodied action or thought just because Descartes failed to cover all the angles. But it does seem that Descartes move to rational first principles stemmed from the distinctly, stereotypically masculine characteristic of rationality, and that this characteristic is prevalent in contemporary gender constructions (Lindegger & Durrheim, 2000).

In contrast to men's rational minds controlling a body like a machine, women are intuitive, their bodies chaotic, cyclic, natural (Paglia, 1968). For the chorus of male voices, watching and evaluating stories, women are Eve-like. They are imbued with sultry and sensual qualities that seduce the men they choose into the knowledge of sexual intercourse. Each male story described how a woman initiated the fateful encounter.

Michael's partner kisses him, it is Cameron's partner's hands that "wander" after the massage, and it is Tomas' girlfriend that suggests sex over the phone. Each of these female characters is knowledgeable. They are older and more experienced.

Heterosexual double bind

It is interesting that in tales of masculine sexual conquest, the heroes should relinquish control of the experience to women. Lindegger and Durrheim (2000) have suggested that constructs of masculinity drive the HIV/AIDS pandemic. They suggest that in a heterosexual sexual encounter, it is male identity and agency that will define the encounter. Here the concept of men as penetrative, as focused on their bodies, as conquering, as beyond control is of importance. This is borne out by Strebel and Lindegger's (1998) research among women who reported that their male partners required that they take initiative in safer sex practices. Yet it is, in general, men who are able to decide the direction and path of any heterosexual encounter.

This is a contradiction. Here is the double bind that plays out in heterosexual encounters (Harding, 1998). Men need to penetrate, to dominate, but they must wait for a woman's invitation. Like vampires, they can only enter a dwelling place once its occupant has invited them. Only once a woman has granted permission to a man, by kissing him, having her hands wander, phoning him, is a man allowed to engage with that woman in a sexual manner. And even under these circumstances, Cameron expresses uncertainty, that he was "trying not to look forward too much 'cause that always like got [him] into trouble in the past". Women are given the power to affirm or deny any sexual encounter. But if this belief were pervasive and enacted, then presumably the demonic phenomenon of rape would not exist. Or perhaps it is because of the construction of women all-powerful as regards the initiation of sexual relating that men must assert their power aggressively through rape.

Women are not that free to invite and to initiate. The women that Strebel and Lindegger (1998) spoke to had difficulty asking partners to use condoms, to remain faithful, to illicit a sexual history. The women I spoke to in this project were not that free either. Eventually their experience becomes painfully undermined by their partner's beliefs. Eventually they hear the chorus of men's voices, telling them what to do.

In the male narrative's move to suggest women as the sirens who initiate first sex, can perhaps be seen another discourse of control. Women characters are flat and simple. They are Eve-like sirens, temptresses towards the physical. Such female characters unproblematically permit men to conquer them. In viewing women in this simplified manner, the men's experience of penetrative conquest is validated and allowed. Rather than imbuing the female characters with the power to grant permission to the experience, these women are given only one voice and only one script. They will permit, they will allow, they will be the object that will be dominated.

The story of difference

Throughout this written work, I describe men as different to women. In the arena of heterosexual interaction, I assume that to be a woman is not the same as being a man. Although I would not want to suggest that this is not true, I am uneasy with the assumption. The feminist movement and political struggle is enough evidence for me to believe that the difference does exist (Gergen, 2001). But I am not comfortable with asserting the difference without some qualification.

I speak of the distinction between man and woman as pervasive, polar, and dichotomous. Each pole is described in archetypal opposites, giving the distinction a necessary, essential flavour. Men just are, rational, controlled, and intellectual. Women just are, intuitive, cyclic, natural

(Mann & Lyle, 1995). As such the duality of male and female becomes deity ordained and unchangeable. The view of such difference splits man from woman wholly and eternally. Men are trapped in the archetype of Man and women are trapped in the archetype of Woman. It is difficult to imagine how one polar opposite might communicate with another polar opposite. I see it as just as impossible for man to communicate with woman under these circumstances, as for immaterial mind to consort with material body.

I would rather not believe in this ontological formulation. I would like to believe that it is possible to enter dialogue with a man. And yet I seem to experience the chasm between genders at least occasionally. Actually I experience it on a regular basis. But I do not want to accept the void of difference as unchangeable. It does not seem to me that this is a fruitful means to pursue a revolutionary stance towards gender relations (Anzaldua, 1997). And I believe that such a stance is necessary, that change is necessary. The inequity between men and women is unacceptable. I want to see the story of difference as simply another story I tell. In fact it seems to be a story most people tell, most of the time. But if it is a story, a story that is performed, it can be changed (Butler, 1997).

I have spent many hours wondering how this story came about. It does not seem wholly acceptable or tolerable to all men. The male storytellers recognised a discontinuity in their experiences, they just refused to let it bother them. Giddens (1994) suggest that men are disallowed from romantic interactions with women because of the way that masculinity is constructed. This foreclosure is presumably just as intolerable to the men themselves, as it is for the women who are in relationships with them. So if men, for whom the story of male superiority works best, are not always benefited by the story of difference, then why tell it.

Chodrow (1994) suggest an object relations, psychoanalytic, feminist perspective. She suggests that male children are forced to realise that they are different from women who are their mother; and that they must continue to assert this difference throughout their lives. They must assert their independence by showing that they are not mother, not woman. This creates a binary of behaviour.

I do not tell this story to explain the difference story, merely to suggest that the possibility of explanation exists. There are probably as many explanations as there are perspectives from which to view the problem. In an increasingly plural academic world, the possibilities are endless. What is important about Chodrow's (1994) story is the suggestion of the need to assert difference. It is the need to say, that one category of being is not me and therefore must be different to me. It seems to me that it is from this position of insecurity in the process of creating an identity that one type of human being begins to feel that need to say that they are better to another kind of human being.

In the binary, the male chorus has had the opportunity to define both poles, one as self, and the other as not-self. The story of difference is told to assert power, to maintain the position in which the man-pole is able to name and define. This power differential does not allow for both poles to speak in their own voices. The framing silences women, and prevents dialogue between the sexes. Because men hold the power, because they are in the position to describe what a woman is in relation to them, women are not given the opportunity to describe themselves. It is possible for a woman to describe herself to herself. It is also theoretically possible for a woman to describe herself to another woman. But it is important that some form of equal conversation be possible between men and women, that both be allowed to describe each other to each other (Sampson, 1993).

I choose to bypass the difference problem. I do this by accepting difference, but framing it in a manner I view as tolerable. I choose to value the difference, and even to celebrate the beauty of each pole (Wilkinson & Kritzinger, 1997). Men are indeed different from women. Women are indeed different from men. But no more different than one individual is from any other individual – of any gender. But instead of viewing this difference as a thing to fear, and a reason to assert dominance; and instead of viewing it as an essential, celebrating both equally and thereby dooming men and women to separate existence, I choose to see men and women as complimentary beings (Anzaldua, 1997).

Here I am making a political statement. I mean that I foresee the potential for men and women to celebrate each other, to speak from the positions of equals to one another. To me it is obvious that I would not want to limit my social interactions by excluding an entire population from my conversation. I have valued my experiences of friendship and romance with men, and do not want to exclude all men from my life. I see masculine difference as a potential across which to begin dialogue, I see difference as a space in which to begin to notice new ideas and perspectives. I see this dialogue as both necessary and exciting.

Chapter Six: The gory details, or the confessions of a sex researcher

In my research, and in my life, I position myself as a narrativist, a constructionist and as a feminist. Each of these positions requires of me that I consider the effect that my assumptions and beliefs have on the way I see the data I have collected, and even how I see the world. I am required to be reflexive about this research (Gergen, 2001; Reissman, 1993). I make no attempt at objectivity, I have tried to be clear that this research is unavoidably, idiosyncratically my research.

This subjectivity is a powerful tool in the context of research of this kind. Understanding my own position has helped me build the story I have presented. Although my voice is apparent throughout the representation to varying degrees, I would like to try and draw back the curtain, and present some of the backstage workings of this presentation to my audience. I try to account for my political stance, the messiness and polivocality of the research and for my need to find a resolution to the war of the sexes. I represent these themes in three separate but interrelated stories below.

Rebel with(out) a cause

I became interested in research concerning virginity when I began to consider conversations I had had in past years with friends, girlfriends, about sex. In my honours year of study I was suddenly required to find a research topic, and so I turned to my so-called life for inspiration. I became interested in the choices that some of my friends had made in their first sexual experiences, and how these compared to my own.

I am the daughter of a Roman Catholic mother, brought up and confirmed in that faith. My parents have provided the example for my sister and I,

by having staunchly refused the temptation of pre-marital sex. But since all Catholics are potentially lapsed Catholics, and since girls will be girls, I ignored the teachings of Holy Mother Church, and the example of my parents, and had sex the first opportunity I got.

That is not entirely true. I resisted having sex with my first serious boyfriend for at least a month, but not out of a wish to remain a virgin. I don't remember why I did resist, and I don't remember the night I chose to have sex for the first time. I also don't remember holding my sexual purity in any great esteem, beyond feeling inadequate and silly at being inexperienced and ignorant. But many of my friends did. One particularly dramatic friend lamented her "deflowering". The discontinuity between my lack of feeling about the issue of first sex, and others' very full feelings interested me.

I have come to view my understandings of "losing" my virginity, first sex and subsequent sexual experiences, as largely political. In reaction to very clear and strict moral guidelines, I had no choice but to believe something different. I am by nature quite contrary, but in this instance I do assign myself more intention than that. I did carefully consider the morality of sex, and I believed the Church and my parents to be wrong. But I became curious when I saw the attitudes I had deemed to be illogical and unfounded, the result of institutional domination and control, reproduced in friends I thought would think much as I did, that sex was not as big a deal as that.

My beliefs have changed over the years. I have begun to see the big deal about sex. But I am a long way from converted to the views of the Pope, my parents, and other society members who prohibit premarital sex. It sounds rather like a thing in their mouths, "Premaritalsex". A dreaded and abhorred thing it is too. I am now oscillating between the voices I hear around me telling of this entity, and the view of it I formed in teenage

rebellion. This research is, as such, a kind of a reflection on the position I find myself in concerning sexuality. At the moment I am forced to see that sexual intimacy can be special, sacred, divine. But I have arrived at this view through some very earthly, very sordid, very real experience.

Although I have no final stance towards sex, my experience has taught me to search for the sacred in it. The voice I hear in every story, speaking of romance, connection, commitment, is in fact my own. Like in the story I have constructed, I have heard the myths of demonic and heavenly love, I have met their gods even. And still I choose to hold onto the belief that the myth of earthly love can indeed be enacted on earth. I believe in the God of Earthly Love, when perhaps I should be an atheist, or at least an agnostic.

The "gory details"

Conducting interviews concerning first experiences of sex is extremely sensitive work. Some of the stories I heard were quite difficult to hear, and so were probably quite difficult to tell. My first two interviews with Estelle and Olivia constituted a baptism by fire. Both had extensive, elegant and eloquent stories to tell. Both had a deep and emotive effect on me.

My third interview with Tomas shocked me. He was brutally honest with me, describing the entire process and positions of his first sexual experience.

Tomas: And she got it out (3) she put it on, she put it on me. Um, we started off in missionary position. For. Uh (3) wasn't long (laughs 2) (laughing) was about a minute, maybe two (3) I just remember, all I remember was staring into her eyes and (3) just this kind of (4) just like this vacuous, abyss that I was looking into, it was just like, she was giving completely, and utterly. It was just like, you know I felt like I was completely inside her. Uh it was

quite strange, but beautiful at the same time, um (3) then, I came and um, you know (3) she (3) she wanted to. No wait I I didn't cum in the missionary position I came when we started having doggy style. Uh (3) and then she, she didn't know that I had cum, she she got on top. Then she realised, I had gone flaccid. Said (3) she did say ah come on, and I said (3) (laughing) sorry (laughs 2) um. you know did, I was a little, my, my male ego was a bit bruised you know

All I have to say is "uh huh".

Subsequent to this interview I begin asking the storytellers to avoid "gory details".

Tiffany: I'm not looking for gory details.

Cameron: Uh huh

Tiffany: I just want, the experience. (1)

I begin to try to make a distinction between the graphic details I don't want to hear, and the "experience". But as I have tried to suggest, this distinction is not an easy one. Tomas' casual commentary tells of his basic, essentially physical experience. He couldn't have expressed the necessity and unavoidably physical nature of his experience any better than by reciting the positions he tried that first time in such an even and offhand manner, as though describing what he had for lunch.

Research is messy. And this research is no exception. Neither is it particularly extreme. There are feelings and emotions to consider, especially when considering the interpretation of life stories. I have tried to be sensitive to my participants' during interviews. I have tried to represent my participants' voices and stories. And it is not only the participants' feelings at risk, it is my own as well. I was also touched by the stories during interviews. My concern for my representation of them returns to me in dreams. And to betray even further paranoia, I must also consider the feelings of you, the reader.

A feminine confession

I am a woman. And so, understandably I identify with my female participants. Estelle moved me in her passionate exposition about the magic of sex, impressed by Jane's strength and shattered by Olivia's pain. Even the women I didn't meet I began to understand and empathise with: the girlfriend who gave her body to Tomas only on condition that her spirit "vacate" her body, the woman who probably argued with Michael but who is remembered as being the same as him, the woman who gave Cameron a massage and who was "a little on the large side" but "that didn't matter". I was angry with many of the men. As ambiguous as many of the men in my life story, I could not help but bear antipathy toward Olivia's older, army boyfriend, Jane's psychopath, the man who didn't love Estelle, Tomas who literally took over his girlfriend, Michael and Cameron for failing to see their partners as complex people.

In this move of identification and empathy I begin to see men's stories as different. As they often are in my personal life, men have become my 'other' in this project as well. This was not the story I hoped to find, or expected, or intended. But the experience of difference in relationships is too pervasive not to impact on my readings of these stories. I do not apologise for it.

I find men largely incomprehensible. In many respects I cannot identify and empathise with male experience. I begin to wonder how it is that I am able to engage with my partner now, and begin to see it as perfectly understandable that I could not have related authentically to past partners. I wonder if men and women have ever been able to co-construct experience within an intimate relationship, or any relationship for that matter. And I wonder why it is that interaction is so fraught, why women miss men's paths and men miss women's metaphors.

I do not understand how the men can tell a story so dismissive of what I, and apparently the women participants also, have felt with pain, confusion, and powerlessness. For the men "it didn't matter at the time", but for the women "it was not supposed to be that way". In encountering the gods of demonic and heavenly love, my faith in the beauty and hope of earthly love has been foundationally shaken. And I see the tremors of this same apocalypse quaking in female participants' stories. But not in the men's stories. To the men the earthquake is a simple breeze, and even if it were a gale, it would not shake their stories sturdy base, based on the basic. This is beyond my comprehension.

I have tried to understand the perspective from which the male participants had to speak to me. Perhaps, speaking to a female researcher, my male participants were unable to show their instability. The chorus of male voices I have identified in the stories do not allow men to express such deep dissatisfaction. In each story is a glimpse of the need to find earthly love, a glimpse at the possible pain they gloss over in their telling to me. Each story seems a marvel of avoidance. There is no anguish at the split of mind from body in their first sexual encounters. The glimpses I see are through the gaps they leave, telling me what was missing in their experiences. But these losses or absences are not experienced with regret even. It seems this is possible because it is taken for granted and acceptable that the split in experience exists, because this split can be resolved in the future, because men don't cry. And especially not on women's shoulders.

Conclusion

I have told the story of how stories (of first sex) are different for men and for women. I have spun a yarn, or yarns; about the ways virginity is constructed within individuals' stories of their experiences, and about society's tales concerning everyone in general. I have spoken of first sex as a rite of passage, and of the mythic voices that describe that path. I have described the demons that rip flesh, the angels that sing in lovers' minds, and the groundedness of an earthly fit. I have told the story that tells men as different from women, in the context of their first sexual interactions.

In this story there is a male chorus, a powerful masculine voice that has the power to say what is right and what is wrong. This male voice is in both men and women, but it is mostly men who benefit from speaking through the chorus. This benefit is derived because the chorus assigns greater value to masculinity than to femininity, because the voice of power is male. This difference story prevents women speaking to men, and even men speaking to women. One gender is separated from the other by a chasm of difference, filled with misunderstanding, violation and abuse.

I am idealistic enough to believe that a revolution is possible. Not the full scale, world wide revolution that would be required to destroy Patriarchy-with-a-capital-P, but perhaps a smaller one with an ever increasing number of men and women (with little "m's" and "w's"). I am not sure whether it is possible to change the voice of the male chorus by attacking it, arguing with it. But it may be possible for some individuals to find a loophole, and squeeze through. I think it would be possible to stop listening to the male chorus, one by one, but perhaps not to silence it. Not immediately at least.

What is needed is a revolution towards the erotic (Lorde, 1997). I do not mean a sexual revolution, a return of free love and flower children. That was quite a different revolution to the one I envisage. The phallocullarcentric world of the male chorus disregards the soft, the enfolding, and the cyclic. It describes the world from the top of a tower, a panopticon. It values the power of sight, the height of the vertical above the sensation of touch, the groundedness of the horizontal. It is time that we use all our senses, stop building only skyscrapers and start recognising the phases of the moon and the decadence of silk and wool on naked skin (Haraway, 1997; Lorde, 1997).

The way the world is now is one sided (Lorde, 1997). The way the world is now, a whole world sense has disappeared from mass view. It continues as an idea out of phallocentric sight, but it is excluded from governance, science, art, all pursuits of human kind that are constructed to only use their eyes (Haraway, 1997). The obvious result of this exclusion is violence against women, both emotional and physical. But the less obvious consequence is equally as horrible. What is threatened is another experience of being human, another way of being in the world. The loss of this other perspective, through disregard and dominance, can only violate both men and women of all cultures.

The presented research is not enough. What is required is more research to suggest similar political and revolutionary lines. Although much theory has been built up to begin this critique, more needs to be said about the present status quo, and about what changes need to take place. I have taken my lead from a body of feminist work and have suggested that gender roles need to be revolutionised. I have suggested something about what the revolt might be against, but future research should make use of this political agenda to help structure and define the revolutionary task. This is only a part of a beginning. The revolution is still to become.

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Appendix A: Transcription Notation

,	one second pause
.	two second pause
(n)	n second pause
(non-verbal action)	non-verbal action of one second
(non-verbal action n)	non-verbal action of n seconds
	duration

Appendix B: A story of unrequited love, or how sex can break you into pieces

ESTELLE: Um ok I was about, I was very young um about, say fourteen fifteen years old

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: I was with this guy, uh we were sort of, like brother and sister we grew up together

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: Like me and his sister were, very very close, and he and my brother were very very close, um we basically grew up together

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: We were in each other's houses every day and um, from that it progressed it became, intimate you know, obviously we were very very young at the time you know, and um.

TIFFANY: What do you mean by intimate?

ESTELLE: Like uh you know we sort of started having a a a relationship relationship. Like we having we have in you know primary school, or the beginning of high school so

TIFFANY: What like holding hands?

ESTELLE: Ja, um kissing, but sort of um, oral stimulation that sort of thing you know.

And then, the first time, wait was actually in his parents bedroom.

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: Um, it was evening it was no we had gone over to the house with my brother and all and we were staying a lot of the evenings. And we always used to sort of go off on our own tangent and talk and discuss things and you know all sorts of things. And that evening well we were my brother and his sister were in another room and we were in a bedroom and we were like, talking and fooling around sort of thing. And I was very very much in love at the time um and for many many years after I mean it took me like six seven years to get over him.

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: Um and um yeah it sort of happened, it was like um it was by mutual consent

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: In the beginning it was like sort of experimenting, and then, it was just. Like magic you know

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: It was

TIFFANY: (inaudible)

ESTELLE: Ja, it was like magic. It was

TIFFANY: Tell me about magic.

ESTELLE: It was an incredible experience um, ja I don't sort of realise all this until later on you, know, um oh it was his first time also. It was my first time and it was his first time and we had this um, maybe because we grew up together, may be because we were so close as friends

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: It wasn't just about the physical and the physical experience was just incredible because, since both of us didn't have any experience it was sort of like we could you know experiment with each other and and it wasn't like I wanted to do some things he didn't or he wanted to do something and I didn't you know, it was mutual consent in everything, but it was more than that it wasn't just the physical it was.

TIFFANY: So it kind of gave you, because it was both first time having sex it gave you (inaudible) to explore

ESTELLE: Right right right

TIFFANY: (inaudible)

ESTELLE: And it was it was no stress, there was like, no pressure um, obviously there was pressure from the side of uh what if your dad wakes up (laughs)

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: And walks into the room sort of thing you know but um, we were um, no it was the whole time it was perfect, it was like it was meant to be. (1) Um from um like I had better sex after that obviously

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: You know but if I had to compare, it to any other sexual experience I would have to say that like it's the best sex I ever had you know, because you know it was my first time and it was it was, more than the physical it was, that that emotional aspect that was there, you know, that made it you know, different, I mean I felt something that I had never ever felt before in my life, and I felt it in such a powerful level, I mean I never thought that you can actually feel, emotionally never mind physically, something so powerful, you know

TIFFANY: can you describe the feeling that emotional feeling

ESTELLE: It was, it was. (1) I, I there's no words for it you know I it sort of like something that you have to experience but it was sort of like, um, it was peace like I mean I remember afterwards, like we were like lying, we actually slept the entire night together, and I have never ever felt so peaceful for my life, it was like I was in my mothers arms sort of like you know, I'm safe from everything and everyone and while it was going on, it was um, I don't know it was like the sexual aspect was obviously incredible because it was like the first time, um. From the emotional side it was this powerful feeling of of, um, realising me as a human being being able to feel like that about some one else, and being able to feel the same powerful feeling, for somebody else. Because at that precise moment in time I felt that, you know what I mean, I felt that love, I mean I realised afterwards. That for him it was, not that he didn't love me but he wasn't in love with me like I was with him, like a man should be with a woman, but he did love me but I think it was more. Caring of, you know 'cause, we grew up together and all that

TIFFANY: Ja ok but you felt that you cared for him in a different way?

ESTELLE: Right right I mean I obviously cared for him we grew up together, but I, I was in love with him. You know it wasn't that platonic love, or that brotherly sisterly I we that we normally have, it was more than that, you know, which obviously again I realised afterwards, 'cause you know at the time, you couldn't, it would just

TIFFANY: So you came to realise that you had some deeper, not just brotherly sisterly love

ESTELLE: Right

TIFFANY: But he did

ESTELLE: Yes, he um, again like um, he was, he did love me, but he was never in love with me, you know what I mean?

TIFFANY: I'm not sure

ESTELLE: For him for him the love was, u,m the love that you have for one of your very very best friends, the love that you have, for your sister the love that you have, it was that kind of love

TIFFANY: Ok

ESTELLE: It wasn't the romantic being in love

TIFFANY: Ok

ESTELLE: You understand what I mean?

TIFFANY: Ja

ESTELLE: Whereas with me it was all that, because we grew up together, but it was more than that, I reached a level where I was romantically in love with him, you know that tralala sort of butterflies sort of uh, sort of love ok now I only realised that, afterwards, but at the time it made, no difference because it was love

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: You know what I mean, it was that love element, that that affection, that um sort of don't worry no matter what happens I'm not going to hurt you, you know um, I'm here to you know make you feel good about yourself, and er it felt like that, but the one thing I remember that it stayed with me forever, is that it was that magical aspect it was um. Sort of um. How can I I can't describe magic, it just felt incredible

TIFFANY: Just incredible

ESTELLE: It was just incredible it was it was um, an incredible experience I mean um. It sort of you, sometimes they say that we hold pieces of a puzzle, and

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: And at some point you find your piece and you match

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: It was like that it was

TIFFANY: Just like that

ESTELLE: It just you fit into each other, you know

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: And even the moment, the moment like felt right, and I've spoken to, a friend or two of mine um, discussing this, you were like so young, what did you know about this you know

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: And I, I mean I understand that, because I would also, I also have expressed views, like that for other young women, or girls, of that age but. With me I felt that I was mature enough, because I could feel all those, I could it just it was the right moment I mean I wasn't pressured into it, it wasn't it was something, that was meant to be at that moment, that was the right moment, and I think that was why it was so magic because, that's when it was supposed to happen and it happened, when it was supposed to happen

TIFFANY: And how did you get to that right moment?

ESTELLE: (3) What do you mean?

TIFFANY: Were you in love before? How did that right moment come about?

ESTELLE: No as I said to you, we grew up together I mean um. Him and his sister don't have a mother so they see my mother as their mother, so we were like always always together if I wasn't in their house they were in my house

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: And it was always that, that love aspect I mean there uh then even still today, we like brother and sister, you know what I mean

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: Um but then, having the relationship you know that sort of um high school sort of first relationship, or was it primary school, I don't remember, it was going onto high school

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: Um. (1) It just it just it developed from there, you know I just realised at some point that, this is something, that I want to share with him, I mean he was, my first everything you know. I realised that I felt something, for him

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: And I wanted to show him that. You know I wanted to share that experience with him

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: And it sort of, you know sometimes you just know when the right moment for something is, and I just knew at that precise time that, that was the right moment you know, I mean it happened a lot of times after that and every time. It was better and better and better

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: Because I obviously I was more in love with him and we were getting better at it and everything else (laughs) you know

TIFFANY: Ja

ESTELLE: Um but it was it was at just the right moment I just knew it was at the right moment for it to happen um.

TIFFANY: And the right moment came, because you were that close, in that kind of brother sister way um,

ESTELLE: No the right moment

TIFFANY: Because you, because you cared about him, and because you

ESTELLE: Ja

TIFFANY: Felt love for him

ESTELLE: Right and I not only I felt love for him, I felt the love he was giving me.

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: You know, what I mean um I felt, like a lot of time we were just, lying in bed together and sleep together. You know before that I mean OK

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: We just we, like even the four of us, would sleep all together you know um, and, we always used to hold each other

TIFFANY: So you kind of felt comfortable in physical contact

ESTELLE: Always

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: Its always like that, and I also thought he was like the most incredible man I have ever seen in my life I mean his lips were, like the softest lips I have ever kissed. And I still maintain that

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: I mean I kissed him last year when I was there, and it was, just the same (laughs)

TIFFANY: (laughs)

ESTELLE: You know he hasn't changed even though now he's like a, twenty four year old man you know

TIFFANY: uh huh

ESTELLE: The lips are like the same you know

TIFFANY: Was he older than you at the time

ESTELLE: Um. Let me just think his sister is a year younger than me, ja I think I think no, he's either the same age as me or, ten months older than me

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: So the same age, sort of thing. ja it was just um magic, I mean that's um that's the only word that comes to mind when, I think, about, my first experience its just Tiffany and ESTELLE: Magic

ESTELLE: Magic, it was magic

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: You know it was just right. And I never regretted, it I never thought that, I was too young for it 'cause I never felt, too young, and the reason for that is, I could appreciate, everything I was doing, maybe I didn't understand everything I was feeling at the time, but I could appreciate it. I mean I couldn't understand it to the same to the same extent I understand it today

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: But, I could understand it to the extent that I could understand it, you know what I mean sort of I knew what was happening I knew why it was happening, I wanted it to happen you know

TIFFANY: You kind of under

ESTELLE: It felt good and it sort of that also helped me to, complete a level, that I had to complete at that time, to move on to another level

TIFFANY: What do you mean by level?

ESTELLE: Um, I mean, the the way it was a stage, you know you go through stages in life

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: Um people say you have to experience certain things at a certain age groups and then

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: You move on to another level to experience something else, or to learn something else and I felt for me that time was, the level where I understand, um you know, where first you have (inaudible) um a relationship holding hands kissing, you know and then you have to move to the next level, more intimate level, and that's what happened

TIFFANY: Um ok. So it was just kind of a natural progression, like it was going to happen

ESTELLE: Ja it was definitely going to happen, I could never imagine my first time being with anybody else but him

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: I mean if I had to go back. I'd do it all over again

TIFFANY: So it was kind of easy, and comfortable, and. Just, just happened

ESTELLE: It no, it you see, saying just happened means that it could

TIFFANY: Oh oh ok

ESTELLE: Just happen with just anyone. I think that's the wrong wording, it didn't just happen it was, it was, meant to happen, it was a progression it was

TIFFANY: (inaudible)

ESTELLE: Yes it was a progression towards happening, because just happens means I go to a bar

TIFFANY: OK ja

ESTELLE: And I pick up a guy and it just happens

TIFFANY: OK ja

ESTELLE: This didn't just happen it was, it was building towards that, and it was meant to happen the way it happened sort of thing, you know what I mean

TIFFANY: It was meant to happen

ESTELLE: Yes

TIFFANY: Not just happened

ESTELLE: Ja I really believe that, I think that and, I think that if it didn't happened, that way, if I had some sort of other experience, I would be a completely different person to what I am today and how I see things

TIFFANY: Tell me about that?

ESTELLE: (2) Like, look from from my whole first (inaudible) um first experience there's like always good implications and bad implications. (1) Um, like for example I find it totally impossible, even today, I mean I'm 23 years old now

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: Um impossible to just go out, pick up a guy, and take him to bed. The one night sort of stand. I mean obviously you're going to go out and maybe, you know you'll lip lock for awhile or you know, that sort of thing happens, but I could never have one night stand going all the way through. (2) with the experience I

TIFFANY: Is this because you had such a magical experience

ESTELLE: No that's because I

TIFFANY: The first time

ESTELLE: What I experience, made me believe one thing, that I believe there is a difference between having sex, and making love

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: There's nothing wrong with having sex, it's a biological urge OK

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: But making love is a totally different different thing, because you don't just have the physical you got the emotional, and because I think my first experience was so powerful it wasn't, just the physical it was the emotional as well I always want that

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: I always want the bigger standard, so I find it I find it sort of, cheap for myself to drop my standard, which is a bad thing I mean, in a way it is a bad thing because, you don't always get that, I mean I haven't been intimate with anyone for. Almost a year now because of that

TIFFANY: Uh huh because you're always looking for, making love ratherb

ESTELLE: Right right

TIFFANY: Than having sex

ESTELLE: Right um. I will, it has happened where I was not in love, with some one but I was in the stage, of falling in love with him. So that element was still there, it wasn't there in the full but it was still there, and I mean it didn't work out at the end you know

TIFFANY: I was going to ask did you eventually fall in love with him?

ESTELLE: No no it didn't work out at the end, but it wasn't because, of the sexual experience it was because, of other factors. But what I'm saying is that it always has to be there that, that intimate, like I can't go to bed with some one that I know doesn't give a flying fuck about me and is gonna I mean what do you say to someone in the morning, do well wake up, look at me I'll make coffee and he'll say thanks for the night and good bye sort of thing

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: I mean even, if you do go to bed with someone, you make love or you have sex, you know you have sex I mean and. I uh like I remember like my first time, like the way he held me afterwards, it was just peaceful it was like, incredible you know

TIFFANY: So in a way your your first experience kind of, showed you what love making could be, and

ESTELLE: Yes

TIFFANY: And your um when when, you go into other intimate relationships, you're still looking for that kind of

ESTELLE: Yes I'm looking for that

TIFFANY: (inaudible)

ESTELLE: Yes I'm looking for that element

TIFFANY: (inaudible) that element

ESTELLE: Yeah I mean

TIFFANY: The magic

ESTELLE: I know I have found the magic again, in another

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: in another relationship, but again I was, madly in love, that's why I believe, that the same aspect that I found with him, ok compared. I could never compare the first time uh uh well I had sex before. Uh well after that I should, say but its been only two times that I've been that madly in love, was the first time and then. Was after that you know

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: Which I was about twenty or twenty one, at the time um. And it was the same magic, but differently, obviously because I had grown, I had learnt more um, the relationship was different um, my partner, was different

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: But that magic, that element was still there, you know what I mean

TIFFANY: I think so

ESTELLE: Like the second time, when we were cuddling, or sleeping together afterwards, that magic was there I still felt, peaceful I still felt loved.

TIFFANY: So is there, some sort of way that you're, kind of searching for this, kind of essential element in every sexual relationship you have?

ESTELLE: I think so I think so, I think so and that's why I find it so hard to just, have sex

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: My body needs it, and it, its asking for it its craving it, its like normal but. On an emotional level it would be ripping myself apart

TIFFANY: How would it be ripping yourself apart?

ESTELLE: Like, the one time I tried to do that, because I thought well let me see how everyone else can do it, what is wrong with me and I can't do it

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: You know and, I went to the extent where, where I went to bed with that guy, and everything just, felt wrong um. It just, I felt guilty, I felt dirty, I felt um. Not that he was treating me bad or anything you know, or he was forcing me to do things I didn't want to do, actually I said no and he stoppe,d you know

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: But I was feeling so like. (1) Uh a very shallow person, not that I didn't care about that person, but that there wasn't that element of

TIFFANY: There wasn't that

ESTELLE: Of love, it was scary because he was a friend, or what ever you know, but. It wasn't that aspect of me really really you know

TIFFANY: It wasn't the right kind of attachment?

ESTELLE: Right uh

TIFFANY: The right kind of...

ESTELLE: The magic wasn't there

TIFFANY: The right kind of magic well just the magic

ESTELLE: The magic, you see when I talk, I don't know why but the since since my first time, that word has just like stuck in my mind, and obviously, because I had I found it

again, after years you know and had had that relationship, its just, its just incredible but the other down side of that is that um not that the magic ends

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: Obviously the relationship withers, and you know, you having problems in the relationship and, things like that, is when you become intimate, to that level, when you fall in love, to that level and you give yourself, sexually, um when you make love you give yourself sexually, and emotionally at the same time, which means that you're giving up the biggest part of yourself, and you're keeping very little for yourself so when the relationship ends, or when it breaks up or whatever, it, you're in pieces. And sometimes, um or most of the time, there's, always pieces that you could can never put back together, you know, you know what I mean there's always um, some element, some pain there or there's always something missing and there's something missing

TIFFANY: that's what you're

ESTELLE: And there's some emptiness

TIFFANY: That's what you're kind of trying to avoid, when you are avoiding, just having sex with somebody, that, having yourself in pieces

ESTELLE: No, having yourself in pieces is, when what I said was that um, when you make love, like was my first time or

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: The second relationship, actual relationship that I had I was very very much in love right, so when you make love as I said, there's a difference between making love and having sex, so now I'm talking about making love, when you make love you give yourself. Physically and emotionally

TIFFANY: OK um

ESTELLE: And do you, with me, emotionally and physically I have to be one hundred percent there, so I give one hundred percent of emotional Estelle and physical Estelle, and you you keep very little, for yourself you know what I mean. That's why I think sex is better, because you you give your body, but you still keep your emotions, your emotions are still safe, whereas making love, is much more dangerous, but its much more pleasurable, as well

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: That's the downside of that ,you understand what I mean

TIFFANY: Um um, so there's this kind of dangerous element to making love because you've kind of giving so much of yourself

ESTELLE: Right right

TIFFANY: But the potential

ESTELLE: Right right

TIFFANY: For damage but there's still the, the magic

ESTELLE: right right

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: Right you've got it, that's it, I mean that's the way I see it, I mean everyone sees it differently

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: But that's the way I see it, and I truly truly believe in tha,t but knowing that, knowing that because I have been in pieces, and I know that in a lot of instances I will never be the same again, 'cause I say you can't put all the pieces back, you know

TIFFANY: Uum

ESTELLE: Some pieces just get, sort of, lost um

TIFFANY: But how does, how how does this, kind of the experience of the dangerousness and the negative effects of, possibly being in pieces did you experience that in your first sexual

ESTELLE: No I didn't know about it you see

TIFFANY: You didn't know about it

ESTELLE: No I didn't know about that. The first time was, just magic, I mean I didn't know the implications of, you know what falling in love was all about

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: I just knew that, I cared so much about this person, I didn't know that once the relationship ends or that you can get hurt to such an extent that it stays with you forever, I didn't know all that

TIFFANY: So how did you come to realise all that?

ESTELLE: (2) That was many many years of heart ache, I mean it took me six to seven years, to get over this guy. And to close that chapter I actually went back to to where he lived to see him to find him, and close the chapter and I closed the chapter by making love with him again

TIFFANY: Really

ESTELLE: Yes

TIFFANY: Could you tell me about that?

ESTELLE: (laughs) (2) Um. I was that wasn't the first time it was like many years after that OK

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: Um obviously you know our relationship, changed because I came to here, and things were different, but it was, I mean I was so madly in love with him I mean, I just wanted to kill myself, you know if I didn't hear from him or if he didn't write. And eventually I started realising this is the situation its not his fault not your fault blah blah you know sort of all

TIFFANY: Sorry just to clarify how long where you actually in a relationship with him?

Estelle: Oh years I mean, I knew him for years

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: I mean since we were, like, seven or something uh and we had a relationship on and off, since I was ten.

TIFFANY: OK until when

ESTELLE: Uh

TIFFANY: How long after you'd had sex?

ESTELLE: Oh how long after I had sex with him

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: Um, it wasn't long because we moved here

TIFFANY: Oh I see OK

ESTELLE: No no I'm actually lying to you I'm lying to you, we left there when I was thirteen and I went back.

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: I went back, that's when it happened. And then I came back here.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: Through all that I was in love with him you know um. (1) And then after that I went back, after we made love

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: I came back here, ok. and obviously, I mean I had started to sort of like, half move out of that, but the moment I saw him I knew that this was, it was bthis or I was may as well die because there's nothing else for me to to do in this life sort of thing, so it happened and I came back here and things became much much worse, um for me emotionally. I mean now I wanted to be with him more than anything else, and I had reached a level where, uh, like I was and A student at school, and my standard nine year I was I went into complete depressed mode I mean I would sit on a chair and just stare out of, space you know be spaced out

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: And my parents obviously realised there was something wrong going on and I remember my dad coming into my room one night. and he said to me. um I know that there is something wrong, but what do you want to do, do you want to study and go to varsity

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: And then be free of everything, you know sort of like this is your ticket to freedom to do whatever you wanna do and I'll never never interfere in your life ever again, or do you want to finish school an I'll marry you off and give you a house and that's it and I said to him no, I want to be independent, and that sort of. Lifted me.

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: And what other the other thing that lifted me, was the fact that I knew I was going to see him at the end of the year, my matric I think it was. And anyway so I went. (1) And I realised, now I have to move on with this, and I went back and, the first time I saw him was um. I didn't know what because we, I had been writing to him and you know there were letters that were very angry, there were letters that were you know sort of pleading

TIFFANY: So you kept in contact?

ESTELLE: Ja through out, um. Mostly with his sister because, because, he just he just, wouldn't write you know, and that that was even worse

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: But anyway, so um, I did go back and I the first time I saw him it was. Strange you know, I didn't know what to say to him, I was scared, I was so much in love with him, still you know. So. Then I sat down and I was chatting with his sister, and this and that, and I don't know how it happened, but we ended up in the room again, the two of us, um and we were playing backgammon, and we were chatting, and the hours was just going by, I mean we started chatting at like six o'clock and at about twelve o'clock his sister walks in he room. You know and 'cause she never sort of interfered when we were together

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: 'Cause she knew, we always were like the best of friends, sort of thing. And she said you know, her and her cousin were going to sleep in the room, and we can just like make our own plan. So then we started like, we stopped playing backgammon, and we started chatting, and we were lying in bed. And we started, I started to explain to him all those feelings that were going through my mind and what had happened through the past years and, he started speaking to me incredibly, I mean I was just sort of, shocked. Um he was very much in love with a girl, at that stage, which he had a relationship with, and uh, they had broken up, and he was very very much in love. And he was holding me and we were lying in bed and he was holding me and he was talking to me about this women, and he said to me he was actually asking my advice, now for me this was so very hard for me to sit there and listen to him talk about another women like that

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: And yet I don't know from where, I found the strength, not only I listened. but I gave him advice, on what to do to get her back. I mean I know it sounds crazy but it was, it was just the sort of relationship we had, and

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: That also helped me, to move on and then that night we made love and it was

TIFFANY: How was how did that help you to move on? The that conversation you were having?

ESTELLE: Because. He was very honest with me, as I was with him

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: And because it made me realise that what had happened, it was in a different time and different space, um. We had moved on, we had grown up. Um, and. The fact that, I knew, that I had something with him, that no other women would ever have. (2) At a mental level and a physical level and an emotional level. (1) I mean that love was still there, it wasn't being in love, but that love was there

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: And the funny thing is we made love. That same night. (1) Um and he was. We was sleeping together, and I got back ,that first feeling, the feeling from the first time, that that peaceful, I hadn't slept so peacefully, in many many years. It was still there, you know what I mean, that love was still there, and the fact that know I knew, maybe I wasn't in love with him anymore, but I will always sort of love him

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: You know how they say, cliché but true

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: 'Cause I know its true you will always always, you will always remember your first time

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: But you never forget your first love, that element is always there, and I'll tell you something else that's funny that, if I don't. Marry some one else, I know at some stage me and him are meant to be together again. I mean I'm not like, cuckoo now I mean I'm not in love with him, or anything like that, but this is something that I truly believe

TIFFANY: (inaudible)

ESTELLE: That I know that at some stage we going to end up being together

TIFFANY: is that because of the connect you felt with him?

ESTELLE: ja, I I its still like that now, now when I was there now, obviously we didn't make love or anything like that you know, um, but. Like the one night we started chatting at like eight o'clock and at about six o'clock we look outside and the sun is up so we decide oh we going to sleep so we slept together, you know, still hugging each other

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: And sort of thing you know but that that if uh we could have we could have made love that night, and we just, didn't. It just it wasn't about that anymore, it was more than that, that's why I'm saying that, like that first time when I, when I when I got closure was because I knew that that will always be there

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: Ja, even he can marry who ever he wants, he can have as many kids as he wants, but that. That connection is always going to be there, it will never break

TIFFANY: What is that connection about, I mean how did it I'm not quite sure what I'm asking. Um, it seems to be kind of an emotional closeness, and a physical closeness, but kind of. Could you tell me more about that connection you feel with him. Or kind of where it came from, or what it is

ESTELLE: That connection it. Its just (sigh) I don't know how to explain to you, the its its sort of like. Let me give you an analogy. Like chemistry

TIFFANY: Ja

ESTELLE: Ja you know like when two chemicals mix together, like water and oil, they don't mix

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: But take. Water and. I don't know, what mixes with water

TIFFANY: (laughs 3)

ESTELLE: (laughs)

TIFFANY: Must be something

ESTELLE: Wine

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: Water and wine. Mixes

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: You know and stays like that, water and oil you mix and then you see the oil come to top and the water stays at the bottom, whereas water and wine

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: Stays wine, its sort of like that. And its sort of also the fact that. Um, he was my first and I was his first. You know what I mean, and that made it, that's why the connection, is so strong that it wasn't that he was my first I was his first also

TIFFANY: OK so the connection was, that much stronger because it was the first time

ESTELLE: Right right you know most, men when they have um. Or most women, when they have their first time, the man, is like more experienced

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: With us we were on the same level

TIFFANY: OK so you were kind of

ESTELLE: We were not on the same level emotionally. Because as I said, I mean he wasn't in love the way I was

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: But we were on the same level, physically, spiritually, in every other way. And, we sort of moved on together

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: (2) So it was ja. (3) But going back to what I was saying, you know that there was good and bad. You know I think, what my biggest problem is that, if I haven't found it again I would always be looking for it, but I would have uh said to myself, look its impossible to feel like that again

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: So you sort of compromise, but the fact that I found it again and I know that its very very rare, and I know that I have been very very lucky, I have been very very lucky

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: From that aspect, not from the relationship aspect, 'cause he ended up being a doos any way

TIFFANY: (laughs 2)

ESTELLE: Um, but from that aspect, um and its very very rare

TIFFANY: What aspect?

ESTELLE: No and the emotional aspect, that making love

TIFFANY: Oh OK

ESTELLE: That making love, its very rare to find someone to or some make love to, not its easy to find someone you're going to make love to but its difficult to find someone whose going to make love to you back at the same time

TIFFANY: So its very important that it be reciprocal?

ESTELLE: Right right, um like. You might be in love with a guy, you know he likes you but he's not in love with you, so you going to make love to him but he's just going to have sex with you, its not the same. You know what I mean

TIFFANY: Why is it not the same?

ESTELLE: Because the magic is not there, in order for it to be magic, you have to. Love has to meet love, I mean love is a very very powerful emotion you know, like hate, you know. Now imagine two elements so powerful. Coming together, its an explosion, you know its like you're creating a bomb, um its like petrol and and fire. You put them together, their both very very powerful, put them together and there's whaaa, flames, its sort of like that. But now love and love, love is very very strong on its own, now imagine if you've got love by another person, and put them together, we talk about

TIFFANY: Its that much mare powerful when its (inaudible)

ESTELLE: You know why do you think that they say love, can heal like, lo uh. This is a bad analogy 'cause I'm not very religious, but for lack of a better one. They say that God heals us because he loves us, but the people that get healed are the ones that love him back that believe in him. Love versus love creates magic. Not love versus love, love combined with love, creates magic. You know what I mean.

TIFFANY: Um I think ja

ESTELLE: I don't I know it sounds very clichéd, but this is what I have, how I see it, how I experienced it.

TIFFANY: Uh I (inaudible)

ESTELLE: But I was saying

TIFFANY: But when love combines with love, then its because, its two loves its kind of becoming that much more powerful, but if its just, one love then its um (inaudible)

ESTELLE: Its not bad but its not magic

TIFFANY: OK is it also because, there's more chance of you losing pieces of yourself? If the other person doesn't, if you're both risking then

ESTELLE: if you're both risking then. (1) Uh. If you're both risking something then you know you're on the same level

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: You know what I mean

TIFFANY: Um ok

ESTELLE: Whereas. Say I'm in love with you, and you're not in love with me and I take you to bed, I mean it would be incredible for me, and then it would be terrible afterwards, because you're not going to react to me, the same way I'm reacting to you

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: You know like, my touch is not going to feel the same way your touch is feeling on my body, so, we not going to react the same, in bed or out of bed, with one

another, maybe on a physical level, or maybe it in a conversation I mean when you love someone, and say you discussing something about, anything, you're not going to say something to hurt that person you're going to take care

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: I I don't know if I'm making you understand what I'm trying to say.

TIFFANY: Um I think I'm understanding that. That if you, if the other person that you are in love the you then you're that, you're that, its that much easier to lose the pieces of you and that much easier to get hurt

ESTELLE: Ri right

TIFFANY: By the person

ESTELLE: Right

TIFFANY: If their not risking the same amount

ESTELLE: Right

TIFFANY: And giving the same amount and also risking losing pieces

ESTELLE: Right but now, you're right there, but what happens is when you in love with uh, with them and their in love with you, you risk more again, because the hurt is going to be so much more knowing you know hurt form your side

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: Because he hurt you and then you have how could someone who loved me so much hurt me, so you always risking more when its mutual love always

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: You know what I mean

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: Whereas. When you make love, or when you are with someone that, uh, you love and they just uh, sort of care about you but they not in love with you, yes you will end up getting hurt, but then you knew from the beginning that it wasn't, I mean sort of mutual, I mean you always know whether, you feel it, whether someone, loves you or he doesn't, whether someone cares for you or they don't . It's there and when you're in bed when someone loves you, um, when you make love, and its mutual, then you feel it even more. Like I had, an experience where, um. If I was with someone, you know my second relationship, in a lot of instances, I would say fuck what am I doing with this guy he he doesn't care about me, he doesn't love me. And yet when we were in bed. Every single time he proved to me that he loved to me. Not because of the physical, it wasn't because our sex life was like incredible and we were doing all of these funny positions and whatever else, it was the emotional aspect of it, like I felt, he made me feel completely, complete. And completely at peace with my self. Whereas when you have sex with someone, you get the the gratification and the satisfaction the biological satisfaction but you don't get, that peace

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: You know what I mean

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: And that's how I always knew, and that's how I actually caught him that he was cheating on me, through that through making love

TIFFANY: How explain that? Sorry can I just stop this and go to the bathroom quickly

ESTELLE: Ja

(tape interrupted)

TIFFANY: Ja it had something to do with, the feelings that you were feeling

ESTELLE: Right

TIFFANY: While you were making love

ESTELLE: Right right, um he was, I was feeling that guilt, how I was feeling the guilt was. He was trying to make up. To to, sort of making something up to me, you know, what I mean like he was, in that aspect he was different he was trying, whereas before, it was natural. It was, the feeling was just, well flowing you know what I mean whereas now I felt that he was trying to, to make something up to me you know, he was trying to, do things so much better

TIFFANY: How could you tell that he was trying, was it some sort of, sounds to me as though it has a lot to do so with some sort of, intuition, by kind of sensing the sort of feelings that are

ESTELLE: Right

TIFFANY: Right is that right

ESTELLE: Right. It was nothing that he did differently, you know. It was just. It was just something

TIFFANY: And when you feel that. Uh lets get back to your first sexual experience, what did you sense there, what sort of intuition did you have about, the feelings that were there, the emotions that were there

ESTELLE: I just felt love. I just felt, I mean at that stage I didn't know what being in love, was, so I couldn't compare it with his, or if I didn't know by myself what being in love is, how could I you know compare with some one else but I just felt love, I just felt that, um I was being loved that, it was mutual you know what I mean

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: And that's why I 'm saying like the second time was obviously much better, much more, 'cause I knew much better what was going on, I had analysed my first experience, I knew, and it was actually better in the aspect that now I knew, what being in love was

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: (2) And I was experiencing it, to a greater degree, than my first time, obviously

TIFFANY: So you actually felt like, um, having sex that first time, kind of increased your love that you felt for him, or

ESTELLE: Yes absolutely

TIFFANY: Did it, I don't know

ESTELLE: Absolutely, absolutely

TIFFANY: Deepened it or

ESTELLE: Yeah or, uh, made it I loved him more. Sort of thing, and that's why, when I left it took me six seven years, to find closure, and that six seven years, I didn't really have any relationship I couldn't, and I couldn't understand why, I mean went through a stage where I thought I was lesbian. I though my God Estelle what the hell is wrong with you. You know I was going bananas, and then everything just sort of made sense. But it's a lot of you know, sort of soul searching, and trying to find answers, that to questions that there is really no answer, you just, its just something that you feel, you know every body feels it, feels it differently, there's no two people alike that feel love. Or understand love. On the same on the same level. Love to me, is its something that's. Very powerful something, very very rare you don't find it any more that's why I'm saying that I was lucky, to find it the second time and that's why I'm also saying that I was very very unlucky, because I know that if I want to get laid again I'm gonna have to compromise. Basically

TIFFANY: And you don't want to compromise

ESTELLE: And its not that I don't want to, I find it extremely difficult to give myself to someone, I mean it's a big thing. Its its, I'm the sort of person who will a hundred percent in everything I do. You know. And how can I lie to you and tell you I give you a hundred percent when, I only give you fifty

TIFFANY: And you realise how, did you feel about sex before you had sex that first time. I mean how did you feel about sex, before you made love that first time

ESTELLE: I just

TIFFANY: Did you know any of this

ESTELLE: yeah my parents were very liberal, um. So they. I mean since we were very very young I remember my mom, when she had my little brother that died, she actually was showing me the stitches

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: From you know the stitch you have after you give birth so, they were very very open about it, um so I knew all about sex, I mean I didn't know, I knew the implications of you fall pregnant and things like that, but I didn't know the implications from an emotional point of view, which is impossible to know until you've experienced. You know but I do, I did know all about sex, you know and you know different positions and this and that which was like a big hooaha then you know making jokes, sort of thing

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: And the other funny thing is that. About love is that, when you really love someone, you don't like you want to please them so much that you don't mind, doing things that. You other otherwise might think oh my God that's gross I never do that in my life, Have you ever done that, when you see something and you say I'll never do that in my life, like I said I'll never. Ever give a blow job to a guy. Never I mean obviously, the first time, I didn't even go close to that sort of thing, you you know and I thought it was like gross. And with my second, relationship was I just wanted to do everything for him, anything to please him, and he would do the same. You know. And not just an example of the blowjob, just anything. You know things that I would say before that I would never do in my life, but on the same token I could never see myself, giving a blowjob, to someone arb

TIFFANY: Why is that

ESTELLE: (2) Because I think its gross as it is (laughs 1) and I don't know, I mean I, I wouldn't have sex with someone just like that. So giving someone a blowjob is even, I mean I find it, is even more degrading

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: Because its something that I wouldn't do of, I would do sort of like ever, and I only did it with someone I really really loved, so to go and do that. With someone arb. I would die

TIFFANY: So your thoughts about sex, kind of changed, as you experienced

ESTELLE: Absolutely absolutely. Um like, I as I said, I did things with this guy that, I never thought I would do, that I thought my God you know, how do they do that and it just it just happened, not only just happened, you, 'cause you sort of know what guys want what they, I would actually ask him to do it. And sometimes he would, sort of like, he would be shocked, he would be like, you know what woman would, and with us it was like, you know

TIFFANY: And to go back to your first experience, what were you thinking while that was happening, about the

ESTELLE: While making love?

TIFFANY: About the process, well about, the how you were, how you got there. You said you were

ESTELLE: I didn't think of anything at that stage, when when it was happening

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: I couldn't think of anything. It was, I was so overwhelmed, by the what I was feeling, I was like. I don't think I was thinking of anything, I couldn't think of anything everything was like. (3) I was in magic I I

TIFFANY: You were just

(side ended)

Estelle: I uh I just, I don't know I don't remember thinking anything I just remember.

Enjoying it just being, I felt like, it was just me and him and nobody else. I remember I used to, after that, I used to bunk like first periods of school and he would do the same, just to make love

TIFFANY: Wow

ESTELLE: Like his dad would like be off at work, normally I would walk with his sisters and he would walk with my brother, and for some arb reason my brother would go, and his sister would like go to school and then I would be there and then I would go to the flat you know, his dad had gone and you know. I would just it was just um I don't know. But as I said I was just feeling, I was I was so enveloped in that magic, in that well warm. There was a warm safe place to be. During and after and obviously, like the first time I just oh my god I'm I'm really feeling this. Like my body feels like, this machine that's gonna explode. So I mean, I I didn't know all that that I could feel like, that as a woman you know that we had all these emotions or all these sensations, stored up in us you know

TIFFANY: That was physical sensations as well as emotional feelings

ESTELLE: Absolutely absolutely

TIFFANY: That you were experiencing, and you were very overwhelmed by those

ESTELLE: Too much ja ja I didn't think of anything, and I remember like afterwards. When we were just laid there. I was just I was just happy I didn't want to think of

anything. I mean I. It seems as though I mean obviously like afterwards there were complications you know

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: You know sort of like fear you know what if the parents find out, their gonna say we're too young and this is the wrong thing to do, all those aspects come in to it you know, feeling a bit guilty you know, but. At the time, and every time after that, it was just, just, there you know, and the funny thing is that every single time after that was just, that in love or just the same obviously doesn't compare to the first time cause the first time for the first time you're experiencing, all those physical sensations, but you know

TIFFANY: For the first time

ESTELLE: Ja

TIFFANY: It's a very very new

ESTELLE: Its like my god (laughs 2)

TIFFANY: This can actually happen (laughs)

ESTELLE: Ja my body can actually is that right (laughs 2)

TIFFANY: (laughs)

ESTELLE: There's something wrong here there's something coming out of my body sort of thing, no but um seriously. It was it I couldn't think of anything it was just. I was overwhelmed, and so was he, obviously it was like it was supposed to do that (laughs) you know, ja it was just wow

TIFFANY: OK so your first experience was, um, you had very much a sense, that there was some kind of emotional connection, and um. Although you later found out that it kind of wasn't exactly the same you still had that bond, and you still feel that it is there today to a certain extent

ESTELLE: Um

TIFFANY: And um you it was very much. Kind of overwhelming and very much about the sensations that you were feeling in the moment, and about ,that time um. And it was very magical and

ESTELLE: Magic

TIFFANY: Ja just, very positive it seems like

ESTELLE: It was, it was very positive, um it had a lot of, as I said negative effects afterwards. Um but, I re, I don't regret it, I mean if I had to if they told me capture one moment in time that you would want to go back to, that would be it

TIFFANY: And you were very safe, and comfortable and

ESTELLE: Right and um

TIFFANY: Very warm

ESTELLE: At the time I didn't know what I was feeling, I didn't know that I was in love, because I, I just didn't know what being in love was all about

TIFFANY: Could you talk a bit more about, about the meaning that that first experience had for you. Seems to have kind of um, shown you the value of the of reciprocal feelings and connections

ESTELLE: Ja I mean

TIFFANY: (2) And um what else am I, the feeling that, feeling that there is some sort of love, feeling that you are giving as well as receiving, but could you just kind of tell me more about what that, experience has meant for you, since that experience

ESTELLE: OK uh its as I said sort of changed me, I mean if it didn't happen and if it didn't happen the way it happened I wouldn't be the person I am today, I wouldn't see things, the way that I see them you know

TIFFANY: you wouldn't see, um

ESTELLE: I wouldn't see that um. I wouldn't believe that there is such thing as making love, I wouldn't have made the distinction between having sex and making love

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: Most people don't see that distinction, don't even make that distinction.

TIFFANY: (2) And is that distinction, that distinction seems to be very important

ESTELLE: It is

TIFFANY: In relationships that distinction

ESTELLE: It is very important to me, to me its very important (sigh 2) you see people don't understand this, because there's very very few, and that's why I feel that I have been very lucky and unlucky in the same respect, that I um. There's such a big difference between having sex and making love, and people are not able, to see that distinction, because very very few people will have made love, or have made love and, they don't know about it. In the sense that they were in love and the other person wasn't in love and they never sat down to analyse or to think about that. You know what I mean

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: Um. On the other hand, I think that ah. I think that it's a very very good thing, because it shows that, we're not as cold, and selfish, as human beings, as the society makes us out to be. Or that society sort of makes us to be. Not makes us out to be but actually makes us act in that way there are instances when you can really really, care about a person, to that extent, that you can really find that, that that love that always that, that love that everybody's looking for, that everybody says, well its very materialistic today which is true, but you can find it

TIFFANY: So it showed you that the magic existed

ESTELLE: Yes, there is magic, that's it you found, the the perfect sentence, there is magic out there. You can't find it, it's very very difficult to find it, it's very very rare, but you can. You know

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: Not everybody finds that, but it is out there, and that gives me hope, it gives me hope about a lot of things, you know. But uh on the other hand I feel. That I'm missing out on something, on the fact that like what said to you, that I like I find it very very difficult to just have sex. I think I'm missing out, I'm missing out on a lot of things. Like I feel like now, I'm restricting my body from a biological urge that it really really needs, which is which can't be a good thing, it can't be a good thing, when your body needs something when your body need water you give it water, you know. When you body needs food you give it food, otherwise you don't survive, it's the same with sex, it's a biological need that, that your body needs, and I'm restricting my body from that and that that cannot be a good thing, and I see it like um sometimes tension, you know that they say that like sex is the best stress relief. Absolutely true. Um. I remember like um instances where I would have like a huge fight, with my family you know, and I would walk out and I would go to meet him, or whatever the case maybe, and we'd make love and I'd come back home I would be so calm that I would be able to work out all my problems. You know what I mean

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: And also, from the other point of view that I'm I'm missing out on something, the fact that, there's so much more to sex, that I can see an experience and, I don't like for example, I always wanted, to have like, um uh a lesbian experience, or or a threesome

TIFFANY: Um huh

ESTELLE: And from an emotional level, I find it impossible to do that, you know what I mean, I from a physical level it wouldn't be hard, I mean how hard can it be, but when the emotional aspect comes into it it's impossible to do it. And yet the thing that I have realised is that it needs, even sex, it needs, body and mind, if the mind doesn't work then the body won't respond

TIFFANY: OK so, in a way, just having sex it would just be your body, it wouldn't be your mind so

ESTELLE: No it would be your mind, I mean your mind is always there, if it's not there you can't have sex. Have you ever had an experience where, um, you are with a guy. You know, you're about to make love to him, and then he thinks of something, or something happens, and you can't do it.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: OK let me give you like, a real example that happened to me, like with this guy. We, we were in the process of making love, you know, he had the hard on, everything was like fine, and then he was inside me. And that's it, it just flopped, 'cause he thought of something at the time. You know what I mean, so the mind always have to be has to be there, whether its making love, or having sex

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: If the mind is not there then the body won't work

TIFFANY: (4) OK

ESTELLE: Its just what, the emotional level is a diff is the emotion, I mean love, is a totally different thing to the mind, I mean you can't make love um like. Me and you making love now and me thinking of business

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: You know what I mean, or I'm writing an exam in like half an hour, and I'm like having sex with you and I'm thinking oh my God what's this guy saying it, it doesn't work, so the mind is always there

TIFFANY: OK I'm interested in what you had to say, about feeling as though you restricting your body um, because you looking for the emotional

ESTELLE: Ja I'm restricting my body as I said to you in in experiencing, sex, be because I see sex as being. A play field. Not a playfield that's the wrong word um, its an experience, its something that you. Can learn

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: Learn something you can get something out of, you know what I mean it has something to teach you

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: Which you can then, pass on to other people um. It teaches you things about your body, it teaches you things about,, human beings and the way they interact with one another, and also obviously, you know like your side, like your biological you have to satisfy the biological side of yourself, um and I think like I mean, I'm restricting myself from that

TIFFANY: OK and

ESTELLE: And I'm doing it consciously, this is what just blows my mind. But it seems to me as though. Spiritually and emotionally. Um my body. Its sort of like I don't know whether spiritually and emotionally, I'm stronger, and that's why that level restricts my body, whether my body's stronger taking no, being able to say no, and dealing with the emotions, uh I haven't figured that out yet, when I do I'll come back to you (laughs 2)

TIFFANY: (laughs)

ESTELLE: I haven't figured that out yet, but I do know. I do feel as though I am missing out, as though, I you know, I should be out there, like you know if I want to have sex, uh wa, you know there are nights when I really really want to have sex. And I go out and I've had so many opportunitie,s I mean you can go out in Grahamstown and get laid anytime you want to basically. Um, and I don't do it

TIFFANY: Because, your emotional level is somehow stopping you

ESTELLE: Right, or my body is so strong, to say no, you know lets, think about

TIFFANY: Right

ESTELLE: Ja so I mean I don't know, sometimes I'm pissed off about that very pissed off about that. Because sometimes, in a relationship, you reach a level where you're still very much in love with someone, and their not really in love with you Um. And you you know you're getting hurt, and you know they might be playing the field or whatever the case might be, you want to get out of it, and experience something else, and yet your emotions are restricting you. You know what I mean. You still very much in love with that person. Its very, its uh. Its not straight forward its so complicated. I don't know sometimes, I think I'm totally fucked in the head.

TIFFANY: I don't think you're fucked in the head just because things are complex I think everything is complex (laughs 2)

ESTELLE: No true true, but I mean I see people, in a lot of ways I make my life complex, I mean, why the hell should I sit down and analyse my first sexual experience, and know, that all this are happening because, you know I mean, Because you can see that I have analysed everything that has happened in my life, because I am able to talk about it in the way that I am, um. People don't do that you know ignorance, ignorance is bliss. Its absolutely true, now why the hell am I complicating my life. I should have had my first experience, it was wonderful it, was beautiful, why the hell, and yes, I realise I was in love, I mean everybody realises that at some stage you're in love, why the hell must I

sit down and analyse all that and how they all fit together, I mean what sort of screwed up person, am I

TIFFANY: Well for what reason do you think you have sat down and analysed (cellphone rings)

Sorry

(tape interrupted)

For what reason do you think you have sat down and analysed? For what reason have you found meaning?

Estelle: I've done that for everything that has happened in my life

TIFFANY: So its just kind of a process you go through

ESTELLE: I. the thing is, I, I'm the kind of person that I want to know myself, because knowing myself means what are my strengths, what are my weaknesses, what I want, and I've always been like that, and that's why I always come across as being like sort of, because I've got this self, confidence because I know myself I will come across as like butch, or like this or like that, but its my self confidence. I never have that self confidence if I didn't know myself. You know what I mean

TIFFANY: um

ESTELLE: (3) And also because uh. I I I'm that sort of person. I just I just want to know how everything fits together. You know because, I know that everything's supposed to fit together, there is no such thing as something arb you know

TIFFANY: Could you tell me a bit more about the hope, you have been given from that first sexual experience you, you were talking about hope that there is actually magic out there

ESTELLE: Hope that there is magic, no what I said was, magic in the sense

TIFFANY: What ja sorry hop, hope in that you now believe that there is magic

ESTELLE: Ja um, I did go through a stage where I said fuck, no there's no love in this world, its very materialistic, and it's true. I do believe that. But you can find true love. Its very very rare, I mean nowadays its like impossible, but the hope wasn't that, the hope was, 'cause I sort of related it to human nature. Um human nature in the sense that, if people can feel like that about one another. Can feel that, powerful feeling. You know, of love, 'cause hate is also a powerful. Um, then that makes them better people. You know, love makes you a better person. And not just being in love just, love in your friends love in your family, it makes you a better person. (1) And you only able to, to receive love, if you are able to give it. And vice versa. (2) And its very hard because, nowadays you end up, you know trying to give love, and you don't receive any, and you tend to become a bottomless pit, you know. And you put your hands up, and you say well I have nothing more to give, yet at some stage you find the strength again

TIFFANY: So in a way, that, your first experience has empowered you, to feel the positive side of human nature, the, the possibility of love

ESTELLE: Yes, even though I'm very pessimistic, um, I take things very very seriously, and I always look for the worst. Hoping that I'm not going to be too disappointed. You know what I mean. Because when you expect the best, and you get, less than that, you are always disappointed. But I know that, there is uh, there is good out there. Even though I choose um, a lot of the time, not to see it. Um, a lot of the time, I'm a very depressive person, I know um, I'm I'm very pessimistic. Um you can see that through my writings, through um, a lot of the time I'll go out, and um you know and, I'll be drinking, and people will come up and oh uh Estelle what's wrong you look down, its not that I'm down, its that I'm constantly analysing and thinking about things, you know like, I can. Be playing pool, and chatting with you at the same time, and at the same time, I'm thinking about something else. I'm I'm breaking down something. You know what I mean. Which is a bad thing to do. 'Cause your brain is like, working twenty four hours a day, and you're always trying to figure things out. And ja. Shit

TIFFANY: (laughs 2)

ESTELLE: (laughs) Ja I know but yeah, it was, it was a positive experience, and I choose, I choose not to think about it, I haven't I haven't spoken about it, in many many years, um

TIFFANY: Why do you choose not to think about it?

ESTELLE: Because if I, keep thinking about my first experience I, first of all I will always try to measure, by that

TIFFANY: OK

ESTELLE: Which, really I have enough restrictions, as it is, believing what I'm believing. And secondly, it took me six seven years, to get over this guy. If I keep going back, if I kept going back to that I would never have gotten over him. That's why I choose not to think about it

TIFFANY: So your first sexual experience has. Had a lot to do with, kind of providing you with, or showing you, the hope the fact that there is magic out there and all the positive emotions and the experiences you felt for him

ESTELLE: Right even though there was negative aspects of the relationship, I mean he did make, things didn't work out, when we had broken up I felt a lot feelings of rejection and this and that, at the time because of the circumstances, but. The fact, when we speak about first experience, then we're not talking about the relationship as a whole. We're just talking about the first sexual experience. So its that's, another difference you know

TIFFANY: Ja

ESTELLE: You you can't look at the relationship as a whole. We talking about the first time

TIFFANY: Well I think the first time has had, has seemed to have had a very big impact on, the rest of that relationship or

ESTELLE: Absolutely, but what I'm saying is that, that doesn't change the fact that, um. I fall out of love, or that he might cheat on you, or that

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: That you might be treated badly

TIFFANY: (2) Um

ESTELLE: You understand what I mean

TIFFANY: Ya

ESTELLE: The fact that you have an incredible first time experience, the fact that you were in love and he was in love with you or whatever the case may be, doesn't mean that, throughout the relationship everything was hunky dory. You know. And it doesn't mean that that was a perfect relationship, and its never like that. Its never like that, because if it was like that, we would all, get married to our first sort of, experience (laughs). If, it was a positive one that is. It's still you know, every every single negative aspect of the relationship is there and positive for that matter, what changes is, the way wa wha, your experience changes in you, is the fact how you see the rest of the things, or how the rest of the things fit. In that experience or how that experience, has effected your other actions. Like, the biggest aspect of my first time, would be the biggest impact, would be number one the fact that I made that distinction between making love and having sex, um, the fact that, I find it very hard to just go and have sex, that I'm always looking for some, emotional, sort of thing. Um, and, the fact that, I believe that there is such thing as. As love. Even though, it it's very very rare. I mean I don't, I'm not a romantic. Don't get me wrong. I mean I if someone tells me their in love with me, I just laugh at them you know what I'm saying, kind of thing. And the other thing that I have learned is that I never ever say I love you to anyone, If I don't mean it. I have never in my life said I love you to someone that I didn't mean, it even if its for a friend, you know how you say to your friend, oh I love you sweetie. I don't even say it as a joke. I mean. If I don't if I don't believe it don't feel it I don't say it. I've said I love you three times in my life. To a guy. In a relationship

TIFFANY: So

ESTELLE: And that's very important because people have taken love for granted, you know

TIFFANY: It seems as though your first experience was very very meaningful and has had a lot of impact on the way you see relationships

ESTELLE: Absolutely yes, absolutely, but as I said there were a lot of negative aspects to it also, I mean from my point of view, the way I see things, because today's world, doesn't worry about that unfortunately, and that's bad for me, as an individual

TIFFANY: (2) Well I think I have, quiet a good sense, of that meaning that you have, gotten out of that that experience, that that of that, there is that kind of overwhelming positiveness to it and at the same time that it doesn't fit into this world, this materialistic world, and how meaningful, it has been because its shown you how incredible love can be and how meaningful and important that love is that you don't take it lightly, in that you have, only said I love you three times and

ESTELLE: Ja uh the thing is this, that um. As I said before, it changes the way you think about things. And the way you do things. It doesn't change how things happen in this world, but it what, by you understanding certain things, you can make a small difference, you know. What I mean that that, like I've met people, forty forty-five years old, that, have never, ever been in love their whole lives. And they will say that to you, one thing that I have never experienced in my life is being in love. That is sad that is sad I feel very very complete as a person, I mean if I had to die tomorrow, I'd die happy, 'cause in my twenty-three years, I've experienced love, I've experienced sorrow, I've had my good times, I've had my bad times, so I feel as though, in a lot of ways I'm completed, even though there's I mean, every day is a new day and you learn something new, but, like um. I I as I said being in love is people forty and forty-five years never experienced that. (2) And that also has to do with luck you know what I mean, that's why I'm saying I have been, very very lucky you know I mean. Don't get me wrong, I'm not, you you're not going to walk out, or go into champs tonight, that you're going to be in love with, you can find someone that you can have a relationship with, and you know sort of mutual things, and yes you will love him but being in love and loved back on that level, you don't find it, you don't find it anymore, sort of Romeo and Juliet love you know. You don't find it

TIFFANY: The magic

ESTELLE: The magic. That's it, you had it there and you know its funny I never never understood. I've read Romeo and Juliet. About ten times, and I've studied it about five times, as in like school work and varsity, and I never, it's the only Shakespearian play. That I would write an exam on, or a test on, and I would ace it, because I'm like terrible with poetry and Shakespeare and shit like that. And I never understood why that was so, and neither, could my teachers. But now I do. I mean I just grasp, what he was trying to, to say. The feeling that he was trying to convey, you know what he was trying to say to this world, I mean I could so very easily see myself, um being in love with someone, and I know that's romantic and its not going to happen in our time. But I could picture myself dying. For that principle. For that principle of love. Dying for someone I love

TIFFANY: Its that important to you

ESTELLE: Yes and I would I would die happy. (1) I mean I wouldn't even think twice. And I have felt that. So I feel very very fulfilled. Even though it has that same, magical, strong feeling, has destroyed me. Emotionally a lot of times, not a lot of times, but that was it it was (inaudible) being together. 'Cause that was like, that was like the end of (inaudible). And the other thing is I realised, is that when that magic is gone, and the relationship breaks. Because you have loved so strongly. You go into such a depressed mode, and you never see things like that again, never, and never let anyone tell you, that you can fall in love again, but every time is different, a new kind of magic. I mean I couldn't compare. I couldn't compare the magic I had the first time, with the magic of the second time, because its totally different magic, but they were equally as powerful. (1) And like I think that honestly, that was it twice, was like lucky enough and I know that it will never happen again. I just know it. And the other fact is that, like I knew like the second time you know when you find someone and you know that that's your other half, that's the person you're supposed to be with, 'cause that person completes you

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: I knew that, and that was lost. And I know that it will never happen again, 'cause when you find your other half you can't search for another half somewhere else because it doesn't exist. So what there's only one half that can fit you it's a puzzle, everything fits together. (1) That's depressing really depressing

TIFFANY: Um well it seems to, it you seem to have a very good sense of there being a dark side and a light side, you say that it can have all these negative consequences for

yourself, for you, kind of it seems in a way as though you rebuilt yourself so, you kind of became empowered by it because it gave you

ESTELLE: But you have to

TIFFANY: A sense of such beauty

ESTELLE: You have to because, there is. There is positive and negative in everything

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: There is positive in in. (2) Religion for example. OK, religion. People say what can be negative about religion, you know people loving each other, this and that and yet religion does have very bad neg, its negative aspects, it has divided the whole world you've got the, Muslims, and you've got the Christians, you've got the Catholics, and you've got the Greek Orthodox, you know and there's fighting between the churches, people are, you know Muslims go and kill the Christians you know because Allah told them to do that. But again there is positive in that, its just love

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: But it has hate as well, there is positive and negative in everything, you can't say that love, or just being in love is just positive, you can't say because you were not raped, just because you were not forced into your first sexual experience by peer pressure this and that. It was good or vice versa, the fact that you were forced

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: It only had negative, consequences. There's positive and negative in everything, say for example someone, that's been raped, for the first time, obviously its going to have more negative consequences

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: But there are people that are raped, it makes them stronger. (1) It it's how you choose, to fight it, how you choose, to accept it. I don't know if I'm making sense

TIFFANY: No no you are no I understand I think

ESTELLE: (laughs 2) I think

TIFFANY: No no I I kind of have good sense of

ESTELLE: Ja ja so so. I I can't say that I've got, like um my first experience gave me a positive tralala aspect to it, but at the same time I can't say that, it gave me a negative aspect either, I I chose to see, or you know, I chose to see. Because you choose to see things. Things are always out there for you to see and sometimes you choose to see them and sometimes you don't choose to see them. Um, I chose to see to sit down and see the positive and the negative (inaudible), and even with being in love, there is more negative aspects, to positive, yet. Being in love, because its so rare, you don't find it anymore, you don't find the magic anymore, that's what makes it so unique, and that's why everyone. Who has experienced love is very lucky

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: To have experienced that you know

TIFFANY: Um seems as though, um, there may be many many negative aspects to love, and possibly to your first experience. But uh there's still the kind of the search for the positive, and having viewed the positive, has kind of empowered you to search for that positive again and again

ESTELLE: Yes absolutely, I mean um, I was. In sort of a relationship, where, it became abusive, at some stage. But I couldn't break from that relationship because of love

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: Because of being madly in love I. Abusive not physically, abusive but emotionally abusive um

TIFFANY: Uh huh

ESTELLE: In the way that I was treated, I shouldn't have been treated that way, again not physically, OK, um. And yet I would try to justify it in every single way, love, I would justify it with love. So that's an aspect a negative aspect of being in love

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: On the other hand, being in love, gave me the strength, to want to, to change the person for the better. So there's positive and negative in everything

TIFFANY: Um

ESTELLE: What is bad about human nature is that we choose. (1) To live with the bad, or we remember the bad, the bad moments, more than we do the good moments. You

know even though the good moments are so rare, we wallow in our bad moments. I mean I do that, I do that all the time. All the time but its, its because the society we live in, the fact that, everything is like so negative around us, that we just, forget that there are good times I think

TIFFANY: (3) OK well, I think I have kind of covered, what I have needed to cover

ESTELLE: Cool

TIFFANY: Um is there anything else you would like to say

ESTELLE: No I think I have said everything (laughs)

TIFFANY: Well I suppose the interview is over
(tape ends)

Appendix C: On how being young and unprotected can get you fucked, or how I never built myself walls

TIFFANY: OK (inaudible). alright first question could you tell me the story of the first time you had sex

OLIVIA: OK when I have to tell the story I can't tell you just the day that it happened kind of thing so you have bear with me I'm going to tell you the whole story.

TIFFANY: No wonderful

TIFFANY: OK um I was in (5) don't know. Quite a scary thought standard seven I had just finished my standard seven year, and it was December holidays or something (3) and there was a party at my house (5) I don't know what for (6) no it doesn't matter we had a party like somebody's birthday my dad's birthday my mom's birthday probably my mom's something like that there was a big party, and, my aunt (4) came to the party but her boyfriend wasn't going to make it 'cause she had a friend anyway and she landed up inviting her son to come with her to this party and then at the last minute her boyfriend said he was gonna come, so she said to this guy no come anyway don't worry I know somebody that will like you (4) so that was kind of (3) this guy th-this guy that now rocked up at our house

TIFFANY: So it's your aunt's son?

OLIVIA: Aunt's, no. friend of my aunt's so. ok. My aunt was young and this women she just kind of met in the shopping centre somewhere and started talking to. Very bizarre, gets more bizarre (laughs). And then, anyway so this guy that I like don't know at all like rocks up at this party at our house (3) And um (3) I mean I suppose its already a bit bizarre 'cause I'm like in standard seven and its like a parent's party you know like its that kind of like what were they doing there but anyway lets not even go there. And I was obviously the person she was refereeing to when she had said kind of don't worry you won't be left I know somebody that would like you (3) but this guy was, I wish I could remember he was about six years older than me, so I was fifteen he must have been well he was in his twenties early like twenty twenty one or whatever. And he was in the army at that time like on leave out or whatever (5) it was his out weekend, anyway so he came to the party and it's kind of like it turned out that I did like him (laughs 3) and landed up spending the night, like chatting (6) uh ja (3) but I mean like flirting and whatever um (4) I remember my dad nearly having a fucking heart attack about it 'cause this guy was so much older than me and he he's like in the army and you know what guys in the army are like they just want to have sex (starts laughing) so dad's like having like a haffie fit mom's going like just leave the child (laughs 4) (3) and aunt's feeling very chuffed with herself because she's now introduced me to this guy now she knew I'd like him. anyway next morning he buggers well off (3) he bugged off early hours of that morning or something 'cause he had to be back in base or whatever for army next morning phoned me (4) and, like tried to organise to see me like over new years or whatever at the gold reef city. My dad had a fit wouldn't let me go landed up going on holiday earlier so that I wouldn't be in town so that I couldn't go, it was just like really bad dad's like completely going out of his way to completely make sure that this whole thing doesn't happen (4) sulked the whole holiday after the holidays get in touch with this guy again (3) and he comes to visit (4) and I remember my first reaction when I saw him, in daylight was Jesus Christ what were you thinking, he's horrible (laughs 4) so by that stage it was kind of (4) uh don't judge this guy by his cover, kind of, just see what happens. Nah nah nah. You liked him when you didn't know what he looked like (starts laughing) he can't be that bad

TIFFANY: So how many months had passed?

OLIVIA: It was about a month like the whole December holidays it was like coming back getting ready to go back to school (4) and I I remember and this sounds stupid because, like uh the day, the first day he came to visit I was busy working in the garden, with I like I mean I knew he was coming to visit so I'm cleaning the garden, in like sneakers a pair of jeans and a t-shirt but I mean who the fuck cleans the garden like that, anyway. So he rocks up in these like (3) fucked up shorts ripped like floral t-shirt which just

freaked me out. And like shoes without socks on (laughs 5) so I thought fuck ok fine the next time he came to visit me I was now wearing shorts, and a t-shirt, whatever and he came like all dressed in jeans and whatever it was quite funny 'cause it was like everybody was trying to adapt to the other one do you know what I mean, anyway but that's all besides the point, um I suppose what I've been trying to say was kind of parent weren't very fond of him always kind of very negative about it (3) whatever else um (7) uh from basically the beginning, of our relationship we were very kind of, if you want to say like (4) how can you put it I suppose sexually active but without penetrative and I remember feeling really shit because the first time it did happen was like, four months or something into the relationship, and it was that whole kind of Jesus it didn't take you long to jump into bed with the guy did it kind of (4) I don't know this sort of you were bit easy.

TIFFANY: Did you think that, after you had had penetrative sex with him?

OLIVIA: Yes.

TIFFANY: That you were easy

OLIVIA: Yes

TIFFANY: And it had been four months

OLIVIA: Um, it felt, you know what I mean, its like (4) um ja like uh uh o the impression I had at that time was kind of like from like movies where ever else was like, you had to wait years, and then you'd be together like for three or four years and then like finally decide to have sex because then you know then you were meant to be together or some crap. But the strange thing is before it happened if I look at the way I looked at sex and stuff. My parents had sex before they were married kind of thing and I was, conceived before they were married so I always accepted I never, deluded myself into believing that I would, wait until I was married I knew I wouldn't, I didn't have any intention to wait, either (4) but I still had kind of set ideas of, the per you had to care for each other and kind of (3) had to be some kind of, knowing that you were going somewhere kind of sleep with the person but, may before you get married but you're still going to marry them. Kind of thing (6) anyway so I suppose, at the time as well my parents (30 where (3) were arguing a lot so it was kind of, I didn't have (4) they were fighting a lot which made me want to be home less which meant I went off with the boyfriend more which caused more fights because I wasn't supposed to be with the boy, weird kind of fucked up situation. And what happened quite often was um, like (30 I wonder when my dad went, my mom and dad would go away like my dad would go somewhere for a weekend somewhere and then my mom would bugger off. And then I'd be like looking after the kids by myself at home. And he'd be down for the weekend so it was kind of basically free reign. And um (4) I suppose (3) um (6) kind of (7) I don't know which one would call it petting got heavy like exceptionally heavy and I remember kind of (3) always (3) having this kind of (3) god I feel like was such a little girl (laughs 2) anyway I just like remember how terrified kind of I remember I had I always had this rule of kind of um. Not both having your pants off at the same time it was always it just made me feel comfortable 'cause that kind of you can't have sex with your clothes on it was impossible (3) and I suppose if I think about it now I don't know how that actually worked practically was like, touch you you can put your pants on I don't know. It doesn't actually make any (laughing) sense seems a bit stupid. But then it it made perfect sense to me because like its impossible to have sex with your clothes on so its great, one at a time, 'cause I I suppose I realised that it was getting to the point where it would be very easy to cross over into a place where I didn't think I wanted to go. So I was trying to avoid that by, not giving, kind of run away with your impulses or whatever.

TIFFANY: So this was while you were, you were you described it as being very sexually active but not penetration?

OLIVIA: Ja

TIFFANY: Um so we're talking about petting um (3) what are you talking about exactly?

OLIVIA: Uh (5) ja I suppose I (inaudible) to you just now kind of like um (3) I suppose its obvious it started with kissing. Then, I mean (5) mostly and for a long time it was kind of just. Like mutual masturbation or whatever but then it, (inaudible) and I think it might have been the day that (5) the week before we actually slept together (3) was the first

time we had oral sex and I remember fucking shitting myself, I mean oh my god you can't do not because I thought it was disgusting or whatever else but I was kind of self conscious about my own body kind of like. Going down there (laughing) with your head is kind of like a bit bizarre for me sorry (laughs 2) I was like a bit freaked out, and I remember him still saying are you ok with this kind of like (4) not completely understanding which was very odd. But I mean, I suppose (6) I don't know I suppose all my relationships previously I can't say that I was never, been, sexually active in any way. But this was (3) and we were. Sexually active then would be kind of like touching breasts or just kind of, rubbing a person's penis no kind of masturbation no kind of actual, reaching that point of orgasm anything like that. So for me this was kind of like, the first kind of any experience of, actual if you want to say sex kind of thing (3) although I had touched before (inaudible) a whore (laughing) I was actually probably

TIFFANY: You mean you freaked out

OLIVIA: Ja, it was just kind of like (6) where you going? Like uh I didn't understand (laughs 2) I just couldn't I thought what no you can't tell me actually want to do that (laughs 3) its just weird and I felt like, kind of I don't know you get that like bizarre thought like (6) uh oh don't even go there I remember him asking me the one day (3) and its really kind of I mean this is also why I was feeling uncomfortable I mean its like its really close to your arse and you kind of pee out there and its just too disgusting you know (laughs 3) so one day he said to me. Its really bizarre I feel stupid saying this, he asked me which way do you wipe your arse. I was like what. No no forwards or backwards, 'cause he just wanted to know if there was like any chance of kind of I don't know (laughs) (laughing) it was like my god I can't believe you asked me that (7) the most bizarre thing I've ever been asked in my life up till then

TIFFANY: (inaudible)

OLIVIA: (4) Stupid twit (3) anyway. I think that was the week before (3) I may be very wrong (4) no, that was how long (inaudible) weekends that was two weeks before. That's the day. That's when I kind of said to him. No. I remember it got like very heated kind of oral sex or whatever whatever and, I think he. Afterwards, he wanted to take his pants off as well and I was like no no that's not allowed kind of, not comfortable with it. And I remember him like getting a bit upset but eventually like listening to me, and that was that for that weekend or whatever (4) and the following weekend, that was the night, the following weekend my parents oh my god they were never there (3) their fault (laughs 2) anyway. Um, the following weekend. Also got like exceptionally heated everything else and this time I kind of (3) did protest about pants being off at the same time but it kind of. My self didn't enforce it, and kind of, uh just let it slide. An, um I remember him. Kind of trying to penetrate, and I was like, fucking. Freaked out. Completely freaked out. And it was, I uh like remember like going off to him kind of like you don't have a condom now you're not coming near me, kind of eventually saying to him kind of, not ready to be a mom. Kind of no (3) but not actually saying, no I'm not ready for this no I don't want to do it, I had like, no you don't have a condom no chance. I uh I'm not ready for the implications sort of

TIFFANY: But you weren't ready and so no way

OLIVIA: I mean now I can say that at that time my main concern was kind of you don't have a condom (inaudible) (4) and, I suppose that's what I remember for then and then, the week after my parents were fighting again but my dad was at home, my mom, went out with a friend. And stayed out until the early hours of the morning (3) and the weekend, when he got there on a Friday. He'd like said something to me, like. oh I went to the shops, or guess what I've got or something, so obviously because the weekend before I had turned him away 'cause he didn't have a condom, he was flipping sure that he had (3) and that kind of like (3) then I realised yes, I did kind of, have another reason why I didn't want to go there, but kind of, I had already said no you didn't have a condom, now he's got a condom so now what? I've got no excuses.

TIFFANY: What was the other reason?

OLIVIA: Uh I don't know (6) feeling like a fucking whore (laughs 3) excuse my language. No I suppose, ja just that whole kind of (4) it's a bad thing. Their all going to think you're a (6) I don't know. I suppose, I suppose now if I look at how I felt afterwards (4) I wasn't even, I mean you always hear, and I did at the time and I actually realise

afterwards for myself that, really before hand like like uhhhhh you should have sex so young because you're not emotionally ready, and ugh, I thought crap. But after I had actually gone through the experience I thought no I'm not, I can't deal with this kind of like, if I was older maybe I would still have these kind of external judgements coming in on me but I would be stronger in myself to be able to deal with it, and I sort of know that I wasn't.

TIFFANY: To deal with the valuations of you being a whore, and a slut. Whatever (inaudible)

OLIVIA: I suppose I didn't really know what I thought about it myself even, so I only had the external information to work with. And kind of, that made it very difficult to make myself feel better because I didn't have an opinion really, although I knew I was going to have sex before marriage but kind of, didn't happen the way it was supposed to. And the actual experience itself didn't help much either. I remember afterwards, it was eistedfodd at school. Going to the library, and I hadn't taken part in eistedfodd for years. And I was reading through poetry books and the one was this, either the braless poet or the strapless poet, it was like hectically feminist kind of poetry (3) and the one was this whole kind of, I can't even remember what it was talking about, it was (3) just pain, it just like, feel the pain. And I remember choosing that and saying there that's what I'm doing for eistedfodd kind of. And showing it to him afterwards and he was like completely freaked out. (3) like then he was concerned about my reaction kind of how I felt you know what had happened (inaudible) and I said no, no I'm fine (4) anyway I suppose. What happened. I was told to go fetch find my mom. So I went to her friends place no she was at Harvesters. The pub there. The local pub, and (4) and we went to fetch her there 'cause he was obviously driving (3) and (3) she um bought us each an irish coffee. and I remember it was disgusting (3) and (inaudible) she said no she's not ready to go home yet. And I'm like well I can't go home without you, so she's like go to Anna's house her friend that she's with, and wait for us there and then when I'm finished, kind of we can go home (3) so off we go to Anna's house. Sitting waiting for my mom for hours (4) and, I suppose that (laughs 2) was not a good idea (3) I remember, kind of (3) it was bizarre because its almost like we walked in the front door and it happened, kind of like he didn't give me a moment to kind of (4) I don't know its like he had been waiting the whole weekend for the opportunity to be alone with me, and that was his first chance and (laughing) he wasn't going to mess it up for the world (4) um (3) ja (3) the whole kind of. Kissing being pressed up against the wall whatever and then. God in my mother's best friend's bed. Charming. Anyway (4) I didn't say anything, I didn't say that I was terrified, I didn't say, fucking anything. Because (laughing) all my excuses were gone. And (6) I mean I uh um I I I'm making it sound like I didn't want to. I mean, I was scared to but at the same time excited and kind of (4) I mean like aroused to the point where it's like why not and its just like this little voice that's saying like well, this why not I mean if your parent's find out their going to kill you, and kind of (5) ja that voice is quite easy to ignore in the moment (4) ja and I didn't have an excuse. And then

TIFFANY: So the way you were feeling at the time, um. You were scared, you were frightened, all of your excuses were gone so there was a certain amount of powerlessness. Um, but at the same time you were excited. It was something you wanted, you were aroused (3)

OLIVIA: Ja

TIFFANY: The voices went away

OLIVIA: Ja (8) and (5) it was horrible (4) nobody could possibly enjoy your first sexual experience, I'm sorry its horrible its fucking painful its terrible (laughs 2) but I suppose, now I mean the way I feel afterwards kind of, there was no real foreplay. Kind of (3) (laughing) like no wonder it was so sore but anyway its besides the point I mean Jesus Christ is he mad (laughs 6) (laughing) it would be sore now for goodness sake (laughs 3) (4) um

TIFFANY: So what was horrible and terrible about it?

OLIVIA: Shame I mean. I actually wonder now, 'cause I'm thinking g what did he actually do, to make it, it was sore and I mean that's obvious everybody knows its going to be sore. And but I mean (4) oh (3) I suppose, he didn't realise himself. Although he

had slept with somebody before she had sleeping with half the fucking country so I don't think he realised himself kind of how (3) how gently he actually needed to be with me you know what I mean, and. Um (4) kind of, when he started he kind of just like fucking put it in. like just trying to force it I was like oh my god I like remember like yelling out like fuck that's painful stop kind of thing, and then after that he kind of realised like (4) and did it slowly but I don't know what was worse (laughs) prolonged pain or one (laughing) stabbing piercing pain (laughs 2) like fuck just, get this over with I'm just going to lie here until he gets finished and gets off I can have a fucking good cry or something this is sore. But. Ja I can't it wasn't like pleasurable in any possible way (3) it was, ja anyway (3) it didn't take very long (4) I remember (5) its very strange I remember going afterwards to the bathroom. And I was bleeding. But I can't remember my mom coming home or how I felt then. I can't remember kind of I mean think now that I must have felt kind of guilty and stupid and you know that feeling like everybody knows what I've done (laughs)

TIFFANY: Um huh

OLIVIA: But I can't actually see it I can't remember it. Visually in my head I can just imagine that that's how I would have felt.

TIFFANY: What can you remember feeling?

OLIVIA: I don't remember the day afterwards or the rest of the weekend at all but I just remember, kind of going and looking at the poem and feeling awful and feeling like I had disappointed but not so much my mother my main concern I suppose was disappointing my father. And it wasn't I don't know if I felt like I had done something wrong it wasn't evil it was just I was supposed to be better than that (4) I don't know how to explain this it was very strange, kind of like (5) like everybody knows and now they know that I'm kind of this, weak, person or whatever (6) very different (3)

TIFFANY: You felt disempowered? (3) taken advantage of?

OLIVIA: (7) I suppose it was always there I remember the one time, kind of (3) a condom broke or fucking what happened. No no it was there it was after like the first time oh whatever. My period was late, but like like a month late or something hectic it was horrible. And I remember freaking out and the one day he said to me oh what if well if you are what are you going to do about it. But I I don't know if he actually said what are you going to do about it, but that was all I heard. You, what do you mean me, kind of like me, what about you you kind of like so so like you're fuck me and then leave and then I have to have kids by myself? Great, don't worry I'm in standard eight, like I still have two years of school left. You know school (laughs 4) (laughing) children go to school (laughs 3) (laughing) they don't have children (laughs 2) like (2) I supp ja so then I did feel kind of alone and kind of like (5) I don't know. Initially that wasn't my issue whether I was used or no I felt like I had betrayed other people. And that's where the relationship did develop I did feel like I was used. Because I suppose that was just the way he was kind of not attentive or whatever else (inaudible)

TIFFANY: Could you talk a bit more about the betraying others?

OLIVIA: (5) Oh god I can just think of my dad that as always that's as far as the conversation goes, it kind of just no I couldn't tell my friends either. I didn't tell anybody 'cause it was like I I suppose I was ashamed of it, I wasn't, like terrified of anybody finding out, although I didn't see it was bizarre because I didn't see that as doing something wrong (3) in itself but kind of, that other people would see it that way and if I told my friends then next thing the whole fucking country would know and then I'd be like a slut you see, never told anybody. God and I remember months later when my friends did find out. Like the huge controversy oh god you're having sex (laughing) evil evil woman kind of like.

TIFFANY: So you were living in a community that, would have labelled you slut or whore um, knowing that you had sex? It wasn't something that (3)

OLIVIA: I sucked out of my thumb?

TIFFANY: (laughs) (laughing) That's not what I was going to say (laughs)

OLIVIA: (laughs)

TIFFANY: What I mean is its not something you misperceived or,

OLIVIA: No I I mean no my friends did react kind of, (inaudible)

TIFFANY: (inaudible) something you got from sort of other, source so, other sort of social (inaudible)

OLIVIA: No

TIFFANY: Or voices. Drawn directly from the people that

OLIVIA: And the thing is my parent's wouldn't have kind of hated me or disowned me or anything but it was just because they'd been in their same situation, they kind of had always during my whole life kind of said to me just be careful don't kind of just do you know what I mean it was a huge thing that I had been told a lot

TIFFANY: Uh huh

OLIVIA: (4) And, that's I suppose why like my dad was the huge thing because he'd been telling me like my whole fucking life about how, um. That's how I was made (laughing) kind of thing and like don't do it don't do it and with them fighting so much and everything else its kind of like look how miserable we are because we had sex before marriage (laughing) just imagine how miserable you're going to be (3) ja.

TIFFANY: So it was very definitely a lesson that was communicated to you from, society and from your parents? Don't have sex before marriage?

OLIVIA: Don't know if it was so much before marriage it was just like right now, I was always just too young for it. I don't know (3) I don't know ja. I mean I suppose the friends that I had, I mean the one (4) the one friend was like (3) nerdy kind of (4) ja wouldn't even let a guy like fucking go near her. Until she was twenty or something so it was really kind of bizarre (5) so (8) I suppose I just had a very kind of conservative kind of group of friends there the funny thing was there was a friend also was like, going through, like starting to have sex or whatever the same time as I did. And it was strange because um (4) I mean obviously you haven't been taught about sex you don't know anything really about it, so (3) so you're doing this thing that is actually foreign to you. So if you want to talk about it you're like now interested so you're starting to read things or whatever, so like between her and I although one or the other didn't now that we were both sexually active kind of thing started the conversation the topic would come up a lot. And the other friends I suppose that's how they picked it up eventually it was like going ok you guys must be having sex because its all you can fucking talk about (4) (laughs 4) although I never said anything

TIFFANY: Was it something that preoccupied you a lot? like you were bringing it up in conversation

OLIVIA: It did actually, which is quite bizarre (4) I suppose someone talking about it is kind of to get affirmation that no you're not that evil, kind of (3) trying to get other people's views on it without having to say look I've had sex kind of do you hate me now (laughs) you know. Kind of like see the reaction to other things so you can (inaudible) (4) I don't know its sort of safer than being rejected which is what I was convinced would happen. And I suppose it did happen to a certain degree (3) um (3) I remember huge argument that I hadn't told them, hah god I can't believe you did that (laughing 3) it was very strange me running after her like walking up towards the classrooms from the field. (laughing) please don't tell anybody (laughs) kind of like (3) ah. And I was pissed off 'cause it was the other friend that had said something, and then her folks had found out or. I don't know, like, they found out about her and she kind of like took me down with her like look I'm not the only one, she's also doing it, its like fucking thanks. I remember, the one day, everyone was gone and my mom. I think she was, it doesn't matter I won't even go there. Anyway she had buggered off and knowing that she left she wouldn't come back until like the next day or whatever, and. Um, we were in my room, and my mom came home unexpectedly ha god did I shit myself. He landed up putting my shorts on. I think inside out to just to make it even better. But like my mom kind of got home and came into the house and she saw him leaving my room. I remember that feeling of like getting dressed and like having to go through, and I remember saying to her mom yes we were misbehaving but its not what you think, kind of like, trying to say no we weren't having sex in the meantime we fucking well were, and she knows. and we were planning a holiday. Like (3) I think it was maybe two weeks or something like a soon while after to go and stay with his sister near Kimberley somewhere (3) and I was like so worried that now my mom's going to tell my dad the first thing I said to her was like you're not going to tell dad kind of please don't tell him (3) and I was like (laughing) can

I still go on holiday? (laughs 2) fuck (2) ja (inaudible) just going to like kill me on the spot so I (inaudible) my dad is going to hate me, he's never going to let me leave the house again and he's going to kill this poor guy. Like oh fuck stations, I'm in shit. I'm evil oh god and there was that horrible feeling like, now the world knows, oh no (laughs 2) (laughing) my mommy's going to tell everyone and I'm in trouble (laughs 2) can't look at her again kind of feeling.

TIFFANY: So a big part of what you were feeling was uh, what other people were thinking about you whether your friends accepted you whether your parents would accept, what you had been doing

OLIVIA: Oh but I knew they wouldn't so that wasn't really a worry it more kind of oh god let them not find out 'cause I know they not going to accept you

TIFFANY: OK

OLIVIA: So that was more of a concern kind of how do we keep it quiet. Yet still try and get yourself to feel better, but without having support from friends or family. You had to kind of try and do it yourself.

TIFFANY: And (3) you felt you needed support because. It had been a horrible experience?

OLIVIA: Ja (3) I don't know I suppose that whole I felt so like alone with nobody to talk to (4) uh ja it was horrible jeez it was horrible (4) I mean you've got this huge whole crisis going on and its just you

TIFFANY: Why was having had sex a crisis? In what way was having had sex a crisis?

OLIVIA: I don't know I just felt so sad (3) just I don't I mean a lot of it was that fear of like oh I suppose that I'd disappointed myself, as well, it was that kind of (5) I don't know (3) very sad it was horrible uh uh I mean I wish I knew what that poem was I mean I've been thinking about it since kind of like (3) (inaudible) that's black the place I was was like ugly and black (4) and I mean its not, you know its not like he treated me like shit or whatever (3) kind of, it wasn't a one night use and abuse or anything like that but it was still horrible. Uh it just, wasn't how it was supposed to be, it wasn't fucking romantic, it was nothing it felt like I had been fucked and got off of, kind of it was horrible

TIFFANY: How was it supposed to be?

OLIVIA: Not that sore (laughing) for starters (laughs 4) I don't know like in deluded movies are bad, don't watch movies they lie (3) I don't know, kind of (3) supposed to just happen, not like ok you said last weekend if I have a condom you'd have sex with me so come on go on (banging table, inaudible) (3) like ok, that's just wonderful, and I suppose not on your mothers best friend's bed for god sake. When you're worried about bleeding on there I mean, like having sex on his t-shirt so you don't (3) (sighs) (3) um

TIFFANY: Its just a bit sordid?

OLIVIA: It was seemed kind of very mechanical and like not there was no foreplay there was no kind of real caring it was just sex (3) uh although we did care about each other it wasn't shown in that situation (4)

TIFFANY: You did care about him?

OLIVIA: Ja

TIFFANY: What did you think about the relationship that you had with him

OLIVIA: Oh God (laughs 3) oh no (laughs 3) ok let me try and remember when it was good (laughs)

TIFFANY: (laughs 5)

OLIVIA: No I just you asked me that and I had flashes of like (5) god, ah fuck (3) his mom was away for a weekend and I was at his house and we were on I think my sister or my brother's came with us for the weekend I don't know why, but they were staying there as well, and we were sleeping in his parents room, and their bed made a noise so we had a mattress or something on the floor and I remember lying on the floor, with him on top of me. Like (3) no he oh I think he, kind of foreplay didn't exist in his vocabulary. It just kind of didn't. and like (4) I remember lying there and him kind of just trying to bulldoze his way in again. And my saying ok that's fucking sore like actually you can't do that, so instead of like stop stopping and like kind of, stimulating me anyway, it was, or just stopping and saying listen I'm sorry don't you feel comfortable with this whatever you know like marched off, go fetch fucking baby oil like kind of ok like don't care if you

enjoy this don't care if you want to don't care if you kind of like, very upset right now, this is going to happen kind of thing (inaudible) ok great (3) I suppose that's the one thing I remember but I I can't remember

TIFFANY: So that attitude he had, towards (3) just fucking you because he had a condom and that was your excuse last time that kind of continued throughout the relationship?

OLIVIA: Ja. I mean I don't know if it really did or if I just felt that way but then I didn't see it like that. I don't remember ever making love to him (4) I don't (4) I don't ever (3) think I had one orgasm in a year and a half that we were together (8) yes and I remember when I did, he still said to me (3) oh you look quite ugly now or something because I was like flushed or something. And I thought ok I just love this this is great (laughs) um (3) ja I suppose th-he was relationship very jealous kind of (3) over protective wasn't allowed to wear make-up wasn't allowed to wear tight tight tops he used to stay I used to see him over weekends because he stayed far away and (3) he used to phone me (3) every afternoon at three o'clock, finished school at two so it gave me kind of long enough to get home, and have lunch, he used to phone me every day at three o'clock and seven o'clock to check up on me, if I wasn't at home, to clock in in was in deep shit, kind of thing. I didn't do any sports. 'cause then I wouldn't get home in time to fucking get my phone call would I, so like basically although he was never there I felt like my life was completely controlled, I remember one day I went shopping with my mom. And the way my figure type was I had thin stomach, big hips, so like best thing, small tops and like jeans or something that covers. Uhem. And I said so I went shopping today he said oh really what did you buy no I got some shorts and, nah nah nah tops oh ok what do they look like. No two body suits nah nah fucking he went off, went ballistic. My mother was so upset with me I remember him scream at me telling me I may as well walk around fucking naked because, this is how much I'm covering, kind of like, and that I was dressing like a fucking whore. I was so upset I remember we went to Spur for supper that night and I couldn't eat anything I had a toasted sandwich because they forced me to buy food. Anyway so it was, it wasn't I suppose very pleasant, and (3) I suppose retrospectively. And time I suppose as well kind of like you think, Jesus ok so I have to put up with the rest of the world kind of looking down upon me, for what again, ok so to be treated like this (4) ok makes perfect sense. Great (3)

TIFFANY: And at the time what were you thinking?

OLIVIA: (4) (sighs) (13) I was stupid (3) I suppose. I'd get upset when it became a fight, but I wasn't upset that he was limiting me I was upset because we were fighting (4) I think I was kind of as well but it didn't actually occur to me that kind of like this isn't normal (9) ja (6) and I suppose I did spend every waking minute with him, kind of over weekends because I didn't want to be at home. And I was just to happy, to like, that he was taking me out, like away (inaudible) (5)

TIFFANY: So you didn't want

OLIVIA: I don't know

TIFFANY: To, um, jeopardise the relationship in any way because it was getting you out of home?

OLIVIA: (3) Well that maybe, but I didn't think of it like that. Uh and I remember even after we had broke, when ah I mean he broke up with me, I remember him even fucking cheating on me but anyway that's beside the point. Um (5) ah I mean it tool me years to get over him, I balled, I begged, I fucking, I could not accept it, and (inaudible) I was flipping miserable and unhappy, but kind of. I don't know if I wanted him because I thought you fucking slept with him now, you're fucking supposed to marry him (laughs) (inaudible) maybe that's why I put up with all his crap (3) I don't know (3) it didn't occur to me that I could leave, I suppose (3) just, just like this contract had been signed and sealed and it was just kind of oh well now this is what's going to happen, you know kind of deal with it. Or not deal with it, it was just accepted, it wasn't kind of pressed from the beginning (inaudible)

TIFFANY: Were you. Were you happy in that acceptance? Because it didn't occur to you to leave but. were you happyn where you were?

OLIVIA: (4) I don't know, I was, I mean I know towards the end of the relationship (4) I basically knew that he had like a huge hots for, a woman that he worked for, and I knew, kind of that he was going to land up with her. And then I started getting upset, but I mean that's like jealousy (inaudible) I didn't have (3) man, and although, I uh huh, sometimes I wasn't happy with the way I was being treated like that flipping baby oil night, or like. Other things that happened, I was unhappy about it (3) I mean I didn't think it was perfectly normal for basically to be raped, by your boyfriend I mean I didn't, I mean if you want to put it as hard (laughs 3) guess who was very not happy with that. Um, but. Uh. Ja it didn't occur to me kind of like, oh if you don't like it you can leave, or kind of I hate you I'm unhappy (5) I mean. Its not like I, feel, I was going to say its not like even remotely, uh you could say about you know now with Tom, kind of never, was like that. Never kind of (4)

TIFFANY: The way you (inaudible) the need to stay?

OLIVIA: Not the need to stay, but kind of, like so unhappy, I need to leave and all this (5) I never had this so unhappy (inaudible) its just kind of this is where I am (4) (inadible) actually

TIFFANY: And what did you feel for him?

OLIVIA: (8) I loved him, well, I don't know if I could call it love now, but I did then

TIFFANY: Um

OLIVIA: And that's all I knew (3) um (3) its fucking stupid I remember he asked me, um. Kind of like, to marry him and whatever else no, I not going to, you can't get engaged when you're still at school kind of, lets not make a joke about it, everyone already thinks it's a joke (inaudible) kind of like, and I remember saying to him ok the day I get my matric final marks. If I pass, yes, kind of. Then you can ask me again (3) so I mean I was pretty serious, and I remember kind of. The times that I was worried with maybe I was pregnant or whatever kind of (4) ja kind of, not thinking of giving the child away or whatever. And trying to work out how it could work, and like plans of ok how to deal with the problem. But (4) I was going to say something else, I've forgotten what (4) what was the question, oh the future ok, um (3) like (3) I remember (3) I know him for a fact like he asked me to marry him I said yes ok if I finish. When I finish school kind of thing, and I knew that my parent's wouldn't like that, would be happy knowing, you know I knew that if I married him, and if I was with him kind of my dad wouldn't pay for me to study

TIFFANY: Uh huh

OLIVIA: And I promise you it got to the point where kind of. Oh God and like this revolts me, about myself (laughs) that (3) I actually gave up, 'cause I mean by that stage I really wanted to do psychology or whatever. I actually gave up (3) everything that I want and said ok fine, my dad won't pay for me to study but that's fine, I'll kind of work as a day mother and look after other people's kids or whatever at least then I can get some money to together ok, so this is fine it can work. So I basically gave up my entire life. Kind of to be with him (laughing) which is pathetic (3) but ja, I was more than willing to (5) ja (6) anyway (4) I feel like a fool. I feel like a fool now, because, I suppose you can see it, like clear as daylight, but I suppose and, I mean, at that time, in my life I didn't understand like what's the big deal when my parents shit themselves 'cause he was so much older than me, but that is the big deal, the big deal is that you don't know who you are yet, you can't (3) kind of (3) power dynamics are wrong (4) you do what they want to do, kind of (5) you have to stand up for yourself, you don't know what you want or you think what they want is what you want (5) ja (5) I don't know

TIFFANY: (7) Looking back, what has the experience meant to you?

OLIVIA: (9) OK I'm going to answer that in two stages. A little while ago, I regretted it, (inaudible), like I'm sorry that that was the first person I had sex with (4) it wasn't, the way I would like to remember it (5) now (5) (laughs 3) (3) and now I know it can be better so I. It doesn't hurt as much but its still I suppose. Its uh its uh it's a bit of a pity that it happened that way but I realise that its not kind of, the first time is not the only time and its not kind of your last chance, to get it right. And then say, I mean for example like, so if you guys love each other or whatever whatever, the way its supposed to be. Kind of doesn't mean that its never going. Or that it can't be right (3) (laughs)

when you actually I was going to say don't worry I found A eventually so it got a lot better afterwards 'cause at least something (inaudible) (laughs 2) (5)

TIFFANY: Um (3)

OLIVIA: I suppose now (3) like the only time I ever felt loved in that whole kind of. Thing with him I remember one day he said to me something about oh I was his lover (3) And I remember (inaudible) thinking what a bizarre word to use to describe me. And he said but you are you know. And I thought my god (3) I'm somebody's lover (laughs 2) (laughing) its kind of like. What (laughs 3) but it felt good in a, like, because it was to me (tape ends)

I was going to say, on the way here, in the car, you know like. Um be careful Olivia (inaudible) um. I like I've got huge insecurity about kind of like being competent, sexually and like inadequate and all this crap

TIFFANY: Uh huh

OLIVIA: And I was I was like thinking about it on the way (3) back today, and I thought, you know (3) I think, the reason that is is kind of like, if you start having sex at the age of fifteen you're kind of taking on the traditional pattern especially if you're with somebody so much older than yourself.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

OLIVIA: Plus (3) because the whole foreplay years of your life if you want to put it that way is kind of skipped, you don't really learn that. You sort of like, like completely jump the learning phase straight into sex (4) so its that bizarre kind of like (3) you're so stuck in a role that you learnt kind of years ago, that (3) ja I don't know its like, sort of like the whole concept like you don't know any better or never learnt or kind of never became an individual

TIFFANY: (inaudible)

OLIVIA: Ja. Never became an individual, before you, kind of, bizarre, anyway that bothers me a lot (40 and like I suppose, going through all of this I'm like, (sighs) making this little list in my head instead of telling my children don't have sex before marriage, or its not a good idea to go out with a guy so much older than you. I want to tell them, kind of like, why. 'cause nobody ever tells you why. Kind of why its not a good idea. Its not a good idea because, you going to experience this, that kind of like, you're going to be unsure of who you are, you going (inaudible) (5) I don't know, ja

TIFFANY: Its not good because you, don't learn who you are you (3) don't get to know yourself, you don't,

OLIVIA: And you feel guilty and terrible like the whole world hates you (3) you you (9) have I mentioned you don't get to find out who you are (laughs) 920

TIFFANY: Why is that so important? What is important about that?

OLIVIA: (3) Lets see lets see (2) (laughs 3) I'm twenty three. And as my friends continuously point out. (laughing) I still don't know who I am (laughs) (3) kind of,

TIFFANY: So are you trying to say you shouldn't be having sex then, at twenty three, 'cause you also don't know who you are

OLIVIA: No what I'm trying to say and I suppose at the end of the day (5) 'cause I I mean I went through teenage years as kind of like finding your identity that's why we so value our (inaudible) and are troublesome to our parents, 'cause you're trying to find out who you are, and I never did (4) (inaudible) (3)

TIFFANY: So in a way (3) you're first sexual experience or the relationship that surrounded the first sexual experience, had a big impact on you identity and, who you are today, or who aren't, today?

OLIVIA: No, I mean, ok I also said I didn't know who I am, but at the same it taught, being in that relationship did teach me a lot about myself, it did teach me, 'cause when I broke up with him I remembered feeling, I was so upset, and my friends said to me don't worry just be yourself. And it was the worst thing she could have said, I looked at her like, thought, well I don't know what that is, like (30 I don't have any friends left, I don't have anything, I don't know who I am, I don't know what I loved him, 'cause I gave up everything, I gave up all my dreams, I gave up everything. And I suppose that's, since then I've been hardarse about things like that. Like kind of, you will not stand between me and my career, like forget it, and like silly things (3) kind of a man must tell me not to wear make -up, or tell me what to wear and I want to hurl. I go through the roof (4)

TIFFANY: (coughs)

OLIVIA: Which then causes a whole new, other (inaudible) of problems (3) (inaudible) no I mean ja, obviously it had a huge impact (40 but. I mean I suppose, you could almost like, need to be, ok so you still don't know who you are so you still like in this passive role (3) where you kind of just do what other people say, to a certain degree and uncertain ways which you are not always aware of yes. But in other ways I am sort of conscious not to do that. Its this bizarre kind of reason

TIFFANY: I'm not sure I understand

OLIVIA: Like the examples I gave you about, like clothing and what I want to do with my life, and, that in that kind of ways I'm definitely, like won't budge (3) but, I, in other regards, which are like more subtle. And I don't know if its just got to do with that relationship, but, um um uh maybe it might be (inaudible) anyway like, um (60 where you not (inaudible) I suppose (4) one thing that I did learn is which makes this a problem, it kind of don't rock the boat (30 just keep them happy. And so if I feel

TIFFANY: (coughs 3)

OLIVIA: That some things going to kind of (30 upset somebody then I kind of (5) ja, try to avoid it, but uh, ja (3) ok but this doesn't

TIFFANY: And you saw yourself doing that in the first relationship

OLIVIA: Ja, but in that relationship he was very kind of, emo. Abusive in every kind of way that you can imagine. Kind of from physically abusive to verbally abusive so it was kind of (3) sort of taught, like you will not kind of (3) if you don't know what I want you to do the I'm not going to love you or something I don't know (3) because I had slept him he obviously had to love me so I had to make sure that (3) (laughs 2) (4)

TIFFANY: And is that something a pattern that you see repeated, or something that you feel stays with you

OLIVIA: (6) Ja. Except (3) whereas then (3) I was, it didn't occur to me to be unhappy or it didn't occur to me that I could leave. That that bothers me I've like lost. Now I can leave when I am unhappy, and I know that there's something better (3) but its still its I find it difficult to kind of (3) um its its very easy to fall into that type of behaviour, that kind of

TIFFANY: OK so you, created certain (3) expectations in you. About relationships or, has put in place certain patterns but its also, given you insights, about what you can want

OLIVIA: Ja

TIFFANY: And what you can do

OLIVIA: (3) Ja, what I could do if I could actually do it (laughs 4) ja (3) something like that. I haven't quite got the strength yet, you know (3) I know im supposed to (3) (inaudible) (4) (inaudible) (4) I don't know, I don't know (inaudible) (7) I didn't know it affected me so much still actually (3) ja, not something I think about very often (4) you know (inaudible) perhaps you never (15) oh do you want to know how it ended? He kissed that women he was working with, no first what happened is a friend of hers reversed her car into her by mistake. And knocked her over, so he stayed and consoled her. And then landed up kissing her (3) then he. And he, did you phone me or actually break up with me in person, I think he phoned me, and I was like freaking out I still (inaudible), crying crying crying crying. Then go to school the next day didn't eat, didn't do anything, I was terrible. My mother had to force toast down my throat (3) and I like just wanted to throw up you know what I'm saying. And then. We were supposed to go to a school concert (10) no that was the real end. He came down to talk to me, or something (4)

TIFFANY: So the phone call that made you so upset you couldn't go to school and didn't want to eat, that was just to tell you he'd kissed, this woman?

OLIVIA: No he broke with me

TIFFANY: Oh (inaudible)

OLIVIA: He broke with me over the phone, then he came down I don't know why if it was to talk to me or to fetch something or (4) anyway he came down (8) I think I phoned him at work or something. So I knew I was begging, but my toothbrush or something was left at his house. And he came back and said, oh like we can try again, and he, ja. I had phoned him at work or whatever and said like balling please don't leave me and all this shit, then I remember him saying oh he saw my toothbrush and felt bad.

And like, saw the light or whatever and then he came down that weekend, after we had broken up and came back basically begging me to take him back and all this stuff, and I still remember making him go down on his hands and knees, and kind of like, promise, I mean literally made him go on his hands and knees (laughs 3) and tell me no he'd never do it again and promise me, and then, tell me why he wanted me back and all this stuff, like it helped but any way. And then, um, so eventually I thought ok fine, I believe you. Ok great, its fine. We can (inaudible) and get back together, and I remember my mom, she was very good friends with a psychic. And the psychic said to my mom, that. We'd be together for a very short while, he'd pull up his zip and leave for good. So I was like, my mom told me this. And I was very uncomfortable about that, because that meant like, well this doesn't mean that we've been having sex you know (laughs 3) like. Like even the fucking psychic knows, now the whole world really knows, you know.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

OLIVIA: And then like, um (3) I still remember talking to him about it like after he came back and saying, ok well like now we're not going to have sex, because if we have sex then you're just going to pull you're zip up and leave, it was kind of trying to avoid that happening

TIFFANY: Uh huh

OLIVIA: Obviously, eventually everything got so heated that, kind of, that didn't last very long, kind of like one week. And I only ever saw him over weekends (laughs 5)

TIFFANY: (laughs)

OLIVIA: But its like (inaudible)

TIFFANY: (laughing) (inaudible) willpower

OLIVIA: No, I had very yes, well I suppose I still do but that's beside the point. And. Uh (3) and he pulled his zip up and left (laughs 2) basically. So. I do now believe in psychics (laughs 3) and he slept with me in bed (inaudible) and I remember the night that he broke up with me (3) we had to go to a, he broke up with me on a Thursday. On the phone. Again. And came down because there was the school play that I had bought tickets to (3) and he felt shit, so he came to watch it. And I remember crying, from the beginning, it was a Andrew Lloyd Weber.

TIFFANY: Um

OLIVIA: I uh crying from the beginning, the whole way through, the whole way through interval, at one point he looked at me and he said I love you, I could have killed him. I love you but I don't want to be with you, kind of like great thanks a lot (3) any way (3) and him dropping me off at home, and us sitting in the car outside the gate. And, him like waiting for me to get out. And I refused to get out, I was like clutching on to him. And he was like, like get out the car and starting to get irritable, like get out the car and eventually he gets out the car, gets, comes around, like helps me out the car, walks me to the front, door. And I was still fucking balling and hanging, like literally. Ah, its horrible. Like literal.

TIFFANY: What were you feeling then?

OLIVIA: Hanging on. Like holding, like no you can't go and like crying and like please don't go please I will do anything kind of like (3) I don't know I was feeling like (5) I was feeling like I was going to lose the only person I was supposed to be with. And I suppose because I had slept with him kind of anything that bad (inaudible), because this is supposed to happen. (laughing) this is supposed to work for gods sake (4) I don't know, I made a total fool of myself (laughs 3) complete fool of myself (3) and, I remember phoning like a week or so later, feeling fine. How's the new girlfriend? (3) no before he dropped me off at home we were walking in a parking lot talking, and. At the Pick 'n Pay (3) and. He (inaudible) and I still remember I said to him, kind of like, I hope that every time you have sex with her, you think of me, and now that I've said that, you will (laughs 3) It was that kind of like very bitter (4) horrible (4) ja I don't know

TIFFANY: So it was very painful for you

OLIVIA: Ja and I and I also remember when I spoke to him on the phone, like I, I spoke to him after, he was like, said to him, I just want to tell you now that kind of, she's and Aquarian I'm and Aquarian you know a lot a like, you got me when I was young so I was willing to give up my freedom and kind of, I kind of did, what you wanted, me to do, but she's older and she's more independent and she's no way 'cause he was very jealous,

and I think, there's no way she's going to allow you to do that to her. And I said you're going to fight like cat and dog and you're going she's you're going to drive her mad. And she's not going to stop for you (4) it was funny. It was, about five months later. He phone me (laughs) and told me exactly what I said would happen he said, so I aren't going to say you told me so (laughs 2) it was like. No (laughs 2) (3) and I've told you this a hundred times but my crowing glory was. God. Two years later. He phoned me up for coffee, and we landed up going for drinks and he tried to get me pissed, and begged me for two hours to please take him back (3) it was wonderful (laughs 2) eventually I said to him, the best thing you ever did for me, was dump me. I never said thank you, but thank you. Cheers (laughs 2)

TIFFANY: Did that feel good?

OLIVIA: Oh God yes (laughs 2) (3) but I suppose that if I hadn't met somebody else would I have had the strength, you know to (inaudible) (6)

TIFFANY: So you feel like (3) giving up that. That you were able to (3) I don't know gain you're strength some how? That you were just going along with him and by getting out of the relationship you learnt more about what you wanted?

OLIVIA: Ja definitely, I think (inaudible) it was nice to know afterwards that I could see, ja. But I was at times so drawn into it. it took me a year, to get out there. And I was only there for a year and a half, so I mean. But I suppose it was my first serious relationship and the first person I slept with. Nah nah nah nah nah, kind of. What do you expect (4)

TIFFANY: So

OLIVIA: Don't sleep with someone before you're older, and don't don't sleep with someone whose years and years older than you (laughing) and listen to your mommy and daddy (laughs 2) they don't talk shit. Even if they don't tell you why (4)

TIFFANY: Um, so basically it a bit kind of off the topic but you spoke about never having made love with him.

OLIVIA: Uh huh

TIFFANY: Um, does that mean you just had sex with him?

OLIVIA: Um it means that (3) when (3) when we were together it didn't feel like (3)

TIFFANY: What I was

OLIVIA: It wasn't tender and caring and soft, and it didn't feel, loved, and beautiful or, like you expect making love to be. I didn't have that. It was always kind of (5) I don't know, I suppose its because he wasn't really. Interested, I mean. That's also not completely fair but I can say that I never did feel loved. Kind of just kind of, and a lot of that I suppose also has to do with never just felt right because it never was just right, it was always something that was bad, that had to be done, hidden. Kind of quickly or whatever else, it wasn't something that could just be beautiful 'cause it was ugly (4) so I suppose it it could never be beautiful

TIFFANY: So the feelings, and the, thoughts that you had about the physical act of sex, influenced what that, experience was like?

OLIVIA: Ja. I mean I could like I can say I means its not like. Lets give an example, knowing if he did care about me and did kind of (3) I remember I used to be very like, I used to be I suppose I still am, bit like obsessive about like, body image and whatever. And I remember the one day. Like being completely naked and he was standing me, in front of a mirror and telling me, kind of look (4) what's wrong with you (3) so I mean its not (3) its not like he was nasty and destructive and kind of, you know what I mean trying to be ugly, you know it was almost like it couldn't ever be beautiful because it was a mess (7) ja. Not the only thing I (inaudible) (laughing) but anyway (inaudible) why, I mean, you know (8) um (4) you realise that the longer you tape the more you have to transcribe (laughs 4)

TIFFANY: (laughing) OK is there anything else you have to say

OLIVIA: (laughs 4) Um, I don't know. I'm feeling kind of, like (3) lost in thought (7)

TIFFANY: Where are you lost?

OLIVIA: (6) (inaudible) (3) Um (3) I remem ugh (3) that relationship did screw me up (3) a lot (3) and it screwed up my (inaudible) as well (inaudible)

TIFFANY: How, what do you mean ready, when were you ready?

OLIVIA: (4) I jumped the gun. Didn't take the time to enjoy and appreciate (40 where I was and (3) I mean I'm not really answering your question either but (3) to get back to that overlooking, all out kind of (5) jumping into sex straight away and exploring other things as well (7) I remember when I started going out with A (3) major problems, that, that (inaudible) that I had from like years before. With whatever, kind of still, with me (30 and I suppose it is still now (3) except that if I feel, cared for and comfortable with the person, that (inaudible) don't seem to come up, but as soon as I feel vulnerable, or like don't know where I am or whatever, then I like latch back on to that screwed up sixteen year old relationship where, felt completely inadequate and unloved (laughs 3) and bad (30

TIFFANY: Why do you think you latch on to that

OLIVIA: Actually when it comes down to it the only time I felt like the sex that I was having wasn't evil, in some way or other was when I was with A. when I was getting married, so I mean it fitted in to what was allowed. So even now (4)

TIFFANY: So you're saying really you don't believe in premarital sex

OLIVIA: Apparently but I sure as fuck going to have it (laughs 11)

TIFFANY: (laughs)

OLIVIA: Just want to be loved. Don't care if you're married or not but I think its like that, my my morals are more like kind of (30 not saying don't have sex but for me I only really feel comfortable (3) if I believe that the person cares for me if I know that I care for them

TIFFANY: Why do you think, that that caring (3) provides that comfort and why is that comfort so necessary for sex, or making love

OLIVIA: (inaudible) 'cause it doesn't matter 'cause they love me

TIFFANY: What doesn't matter?

OLIVIA: (laughing) Whether I do it right or not I don't know, kind of. Their not going anywhere so if you screw up its ok, but also I mean obviously it also has other implications kind of like (5) like if, the consequences aren't, as bad, if you had to fall pregnant or if this had to happen or whatever, like the two people are going to deal with it together its not like oh shit, now I'm in trouble or now I'm stuck with this person or,

TIFFANY: So there is a sense of vulnerability that goes along with having sex

OLIVIA: Well for me

TIFFANY: And, loving or caring (3) kind of allays that, vulnerability to a certain extent

OLIVIA: Ja

TIFFANY: For you

OLIVIA: (3) That's a very good question, difficult to (inaudible) you know if you're (4) you if somebody loves you owes you a little bit more than somebody who doesn't (5) not much (laughs 3) (20) we had a girl, that was staying in our house (inaudible) and I remember going through this long, like what I said I would tell my children, complete explanation why somebody old is not a problem. But then also in to a major thing like things you should consider (inaudible) could be a problem, why you need to be careful. And I didn't realise how much how passionate or how much I really, kind of (3) how ja. A bit like I feel hurt and got bent you know what I mean. And I, our idea, oh I could realise that kind of oh its not. (inaudible) not you fault, its his fault, now I could see it was kind of just (#) now I'm going to say it again, I wasn't ready (laughs 3) (4) can't give yourself to somebody else if you haven't (3) if there isn't a self. I suppose (6) I mean (inaudible) (3)

TIFFANY: How do you feel?

OLIVIA: Hum?

TIFFANY: (inaudible)

OLIVIA: (laughs 2) (7) Please put me out my misery, stop now, unless you have more (tape ends)

Appendix D: The story of a girl being one of the boys

TIFFANY: Could you tell me the story about the first time you had sex?

JANE: (3) How much detail do you want, or like, just. Who the person is, like where you met them (inaudible).

TIFFANY: I'd like to know details about where you met them, how you knew them, um. (2) what the circumstances were um. What you were thinking and feeling. Those sorts of details, I don't need to know any, gory terrible details.

JANE: (laughs 2)

TIFFANY: And you can tell me as much as you're comfortable with.

JANE: (2) (clears throats) Um. (4) I was on my matric.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: Um, on the coast. Um. Met these guys on the beach. (1) And. Um. Well two of the girls I was on the matric rave with, were, interested in other guys. Um. Ja and we were invited to their house for a braai. Uh, through chatting to one of the guys i. (2) Discovered or found that I enjoyed his company and enjoyed him

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: And. (2) (clears throat) (6) And then. (2) Due to circumstances that. Happened with the female friends that I was with. Um. Conflict that happened between us, one of. This guys friends said suggested that I move in with them, because I don't need to put up with that shit, I moved in with these guys, um, and

TIFFANY: You moved in, to stay

JANE: To stay just

TIFFANY: At the beach

JANE: Just for the duration of the rest of my time, ja.

TIFFANY: OK

JANE: Um. (2) And. Seeming we had kinda got together I shared a bedroom with him. And. Ja. We ended up sleeping together. Um. (2)

TIFFANY: By sleeping together you mean just sleeping together?

JANE: No

TIFFANY: No

TIFFANY: Having sexual intercourse. (2) Um. I think I was fucking shit scared although I knew exactly what to do, um, even though it was my first time. I mean I was. (1) Eighteen years old, eighteen and a half years of age. And. By that stage I knew exactly what the hell, took place, but still was very scared. Um. The guy, that I slept with was ten years older than me. Um. And, although I wish the worst on him now, I never really regretted, him being my first partner because, he was very compassionate very understanding, um. I remember sitting there and saying to him, I have something to tell you. And he went what, and I went (inaudible) I couldn't tell him

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: And uh. (2) And he went through everything, you're lesbian, you're got AIDS, you've. This, you've got this, and everything was no no, and he went, like the last thing that came to his mind was you're a virgin and I went yes yes

TIFFANY: (laughs)

JANE: And I thought you were dying (laughs 3) And he was like, that is no a problem, at all. Um, and because of that he was very, gentle, very caring, (clears throat 1) Um. (1) And I think probably for the first. (1) Pff five minutes into it, I was very aware of what was happening, the process that was happening, but there after, just sort of, wow, this is nice. Enjoy. Um. And only kind of, all the realisations of him being caring and gentle and all of that only came afterwards not, um. While we were having sex, um. (9) I remember him saying to me, afterwards saying something like. (1) I totally believe that you're a virgin and I don't mean to be horrible but are you sure you're a virgin 'cause you seem to know exactly what you were doing and I was like ja, I figure like at this age I should realise what it, entails, but uh, ja. (inaudible)

TIFFANY: Um, could we go back, first of all to the whole situation, what was, what was it like, meeting this person. Like on a beach one night

JANE: (clears throat)

TIFFANY: Suddenly staying there, suddenly staying in this guys room, like, uh, I mean what was that like?

JANE: OK. We arrived in at the coast, and the condition was, we were staying in a flat, there were four of us. And we all had boyfriends at the time, and, the condition was, well we were there for two weeks. First week we would be there without the guys second week if our guys wanted to come down, if we wanted them to come down they would come down. And. And we went to the beach. And, there were, these five guys, um, later to discover that the youngest, was twenty-five and the oldest was thirty eight, and out of the five of them three of them were married. Um, but, and they were playing soccer on the beach, and you could just see the soccer ball coming closer and closer and closer, and I said to them, if that ball comes here their not getting it back, because it was just one of those situations they could see, young females and they were like

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: Ooh lets kick the soccer ball over this way. Um, and the whole thing happened, soccer ball came towards us. Um, and then the girls went to putty

TIFFANY: (laughs)

JANE: Like. Oooohh! (1) And I think we started chatting to them and I remember. Um, it was immediate, I think they said they were going back, back to Brian's house. Um, the guy who I, slept with. And they were going to have a braai, or just have some drinks and that. And so we went with and I remember driving down a hill in the town with, the guys, jumping out the window, and jumping out the boot, and (laughs) (laughing) I remember we lost a pair of sunglasses somewhere along the way as well, um. (1) I think we were conscious that they were older. (1) Um. (1) And all the girls that I was with had definitely had intercourse already and, I think for them it was more a physical attraction to me, it was, oh my god I know exactly what you boys are after and, stay away. (1) Um, and then later that night, we went to the braai at their place, and, one of the, one of the friends that I was with, she actually, um, found Brian really attractive. So was trying to chat him up and all that and I was, kinda aloof to the whole situation, specially to the guys, well to the whole situation but specially to the guys, 'cause I just thought. This is this looking for trouble, we're eighteen years of age and although I'm used to hanging out with older people. These boys, the stories, I mean the one guy. He was. He worked for the police, he would be called up, he'd be sent to a farm and he would, kill. Whoever was on that person's farm who that was not meant to be there they were all from the city. A town just outside the city actually, they were from. Um

TIFFANY: Sjoe

JANE: But his story was, that he was, he worked for the police in the child protection unit, so all their stories were. Incorrect of what they actually did, it was to, woo the girls, um they knew it was matric rave, they knew that there would be loads of young females around. The most, evident part of it was you could see the the little stripes on their married finger, that the sun had burnt it because it was so white that it had gone red from the sun!

TIFFANY: Oh no!

JANE: And it was like no, we're not married, none of us are married, whatever. Um. (1) And I think they were also (inaudible) Brian's house was um, in the expensive part of town and it was exquisite exquisite exquisite house and I think they were blown away with that as well, that its all, these guys are rich, and etcetera etcetera. Um. And we had been there for about, (clears throat), three days. (1) Um, the one, friend of mine, who I had warned numerous times not to have sexual intercourse with people because she'd get a reputation with people, back home. And who always thanked me for my advice

TIFFANY: Um

JANE: But who always went ahead and slept with every Tom Dick and Harry. Had slept with a few guys had slept with one of these guys who I later discovered was married, (clears throat 2) Um, but after about three days, I discovered that, other things were happening, 'cause the three mates I was with, their boyfriends were back home. My boyfriend was, at the time in another city. So he wasn't coming down at all but their three boyfriends were coming up. And as I said only after the first week of us being there, and I soon discovered that they were actually coming up a lot earlier, than um,

than was intended. And the other thing was that. As I say, they were all, sexually active already. And it was just like, they were out for. To have fun, I mean I was out to have fun but that wasn't then part of my definition of going out and picking up a guy and bringing him home for the night and screwing him. And so. I was starting to, not enjoying this situation, and I remember sitting at Brian's house the one day, I don't know where they were, and the one guy John, um, I was bitching chronically to him and um. You know saying, I don't need this shit, and we were meant to come and have a good time, and I mean god do we always have to have boyfriends with, can't we just have a good time by ourselves. Next minute he stood up and said, come! And I went where the hell are we going? Got in the car and I said, could you tell me where we're going John, it was like, we're going to your house, you're packing your bags, you don't need this shit, you're coming to stay with us!

TIFFANY: Sweet!

JANE: (laughs 2) I was like, yes, true! (laughs)

TIFFANY: (laughs 3)

JANE: Went to go pack my bag, came back, left a note saying I've moved into Brian's house. (clears throat) Um. And actually know that I think about it, there were five bedrooms in that room in that house and I actually the first night, I stayed in my own bedroom. Um. (1) And, I really really started to get one with these guys. When all the pretence and all, 'cause I think they had kinda realised that there was a distinction, that these girls were basically hores

TIFFANY: (laughs)

JANE: Now that I say that, I didn't think that at the time, but they were in for an easy time and, they could see that I wasn't

TIFFANY: uh huh

JANE: Um. I don't know, I enjoyed, really enjoyed talking to them, for instance. The one guy John. Um (clears throat) Just sitting and chatting to him and talking to him, about this guy that I had been going out with from another city and had been going out with him for three and a half years, I could count on one hand the number of times we'd probably lay naked together, with each other. And, um, he made me re-, look at things a bit differently and realise, you know he would say I'm influencing you at all Jane but, you say you love him, and you said, you know, that he's an amazing guy, but, if you love someone, the natural process is to want to have sex and, it seems like he's afraid to, and it wasn't that he was saying, God you should have had sex, he was just saying

TIFFANY: Um

JANE: Have you ever questioned why, he, (inaudible) he doesn't seem to be like typical young man with hormones that are raging want to get into your pants, why is that, is it because he has utmost respect for you, or is it because he's got issues, or you know, what is it?

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: And just made me look at things, I mean I think. That I and I only spent I think a week instead of two weeks, there, or no I spent two weeks there but within those two weeks I think I grew up, or I I. I became aware, it was almost I felt as, if, I took a big step outside my circle, which was my life, and I realised my, god, in some ways a lot of naiveté that I'd had had

TIFFANY: Uh huh

R; Um. And one of the first things that I realised that I had to change was to break up with the guy that I'd been going out with. Which I kinda did when I went to visit him two weeks later. Um. I don't know I think the more, uh, Brian and I started speaking. We really had a lot in common, ja, he was ten years older than me. And it wasn't so much we had a lot in common, career wise or, career path that I wanted to take or anything like that. It was more foundational, sort of, values and morals and things like that that we had very much in common. Later to discover that he's a fucking psychopath. Um. (laughs 3)

TIFFANY: (laughing) OK, I'll ask about that later!

JANE: (laughs 2) Um. (2) Ja, he. I remember. (2) He was there in his parent's, which his parent's use when they come down. The house was like a three story house, and the top floor was just, it was called the captain's cabin and it was, parent's bedroom. Um

and a huge bath, and it was like, the bath looked onto the ocean, the, um, shower looked onto the ocean, if you lay in bed you could see the whales in the bay

TIFFANY: (inaudible exclamation)

JANE: It was really really beautiful. Um. And, I think, all of those elements did add to the whole experience as well, um. (3) (clears throat) (2) It was interesting because, when I had been with a guy. Like kissed, or, or, or really did anything else, more than kissing, with the guy I had been going out with. It never once for me as well as him I think, it never once occurred to me to allow this to go any further because it wasn't like, he was. Harassing me, I want sex I want sex and I don't. um, with Brian it was different, it wasn't almost like, it was expected of me because he's older, he would already have sex, it wasn't anything like that, it just, was almost like this feels right to let it go further. Um. Ja, and I think the most important thing that stands out in my mind, two things that stand out in my mind was that. Me being incredibly, nervous but also like. Almost in a way embarrassed, to tell him that I was a virgin. Because. I'm eighteen years of age, and most girls have lost their virginity long ago, you know. Now I think back and think, you know you should have actually been quite proud that you were still a virgin at that age. Um

TIFFANY: But at the time it was quite difficult

JANE: Ja it was almost like, uh a slight embarrassment. And the other thing is not during, but afterwards realising, and I think even a while afterwards, not like in the day afterwards or whatever, realising that. (1) I'm glad that he was my first partner because. Because of the way he handled the situation, and treated me, you know he could have been quite callous but he wasn't at all.

I; You mentioned a feeling of fear. Um.

JANE: Did I?

TIFFANY: You did. You said that you were afraid and then. It went away or um

JANE: Um, no it wasn't that, that fear was um. (2) You mean doing the actual

I; Yes

JANE: Making having intercourse

TIFFANY: Yes. I think you said scared actually.

JANE: Ja it was wasn't it was. I was scared to tell him, no actually let's change scared to embarrassed to tell him. But um. The initial sort of. The part that I was used to which was kind of oral sex I think that didn't bother me at all but. Um, I not used to, but was more au fait with, um. But, just before we had, actual penetrative, intercourse. Um. It was, a, momentary apprehension, like hah!, you know what is this going to feel like um, and then for the first, while after he had penetrated me sort of sitting there thinking, OK. (1) This is, a new feeling. OK

TIFFANY: (laughs)

JANE: (laughing) Now I know what this feels like and off we go, and it it was fine, it was, because, I I'm the type of person who. (clears throat) Who um visualises things. Um, so I probably, in my mind, um had sex, about, I don't know, x amount of times, and had visualised what the process was, what it wa- you know, me actually, I do I apply that to every aspect of my life.

TIFFANY: Um

JANE: Um. So I kinda knew how I would, not behave in that situation, um. (1) in all, in all its sense or what ever you want to say, but I knew how I would behave, you now, like the motions of it and all that and I think that's why Brian ended up saying, are you sure you're a virgin (laughs)

TIFFANY: (laughs 3)

JANE: Um. Ja

TIFFANY: It sounds all very natural and very easy and like you were quite comfortable.

JANE: Um, it wasn't like. It wasn't as if. (1) We went to the same bed, and I knew that this the final product was that we would have intercourse and I was shit scare that it was going to go to that

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: It was just a very natural progression that I felt comfortable with, I f I hadn't I wouldn't have let it happen. But I felt totally comfortable with it, I didn't feel pressurised

or anything like that. Not intoxicated, ja. (1) At the time it was a very very amazing and special feeling.

TIFFANY: What was amazing, or (inaudible). Could you talk a bit more about that?

JANE: Um. (5) 'Cause the first thing when you said what was amazing about it, uh, age came to mind um, eh, (laughing) I can't remember back that far (laughs) but I do

TIFFANY: (laughs)

JANE: (laughs 3) Not the specific feelings in detail, um, but. (1) I think his age definitely had something to do with it. I think there was, I don't think it was a major, aspect, I, found him very attractive, um, I found, his body very appealing, I found his personality really nice. His morals his all of that I really enjoyed. But I think I was also wooed a bit, by his age.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: I think that did have a small, impact on the whole situation you know. Oh, he's twenty-eight kinda, you know, uh

TIFFANY: You were kind of impressed, and flattered that, a twenty-eight year old was interested in you?

JANE: Ja (laughs 3)

TIFFANY: (laughs)

JANE: God knows why. I think I think it wasn't only Brian in a sense, it was. (1) it was also that my opinion of these guys was, Jesus, you guys, you're fucking married and you come down just to have good time. When I actually go to know then all, and, it was amazing because they would still bullshit my mates, but the, after, the minute I moved into the house, all, pretences dropped. Scot told me, I'm a killer, literally. You know, they all told me their occupations, the three of them said we're married, um. And it was almost as if I became one of the guys, and, you know, they told me what their aim was, to go out and screw the chicks, and I had no problem with any of it you know, um, that my wife is so anal that I haven't ever been able to go on a holiday, by myself, with my mates, I've been married eleven years this is like, breaking out of jail, it was, ja well I can relate to that but, jees, thanks for the tip, now I know what to look out for (laughing) when I get married.

TIFFANY: (laughs)

JANE: Um. So it was the whole like, the whole environment that I was actually in as well, but, and I think as well that there was that aspect that, that it was (clears throat), maybe that's why I grew up in a sense that I realised so much about myself was because, it was, sort of an element of. (1) I can relate really well to these guys and if you put the superficial part, of wow, the youngest is. (2) Seven years older than me, and the. The ja, the youngest is seven years older than me the oldest is twenty years, older than me and I am getting on really well with these guys, and what does that say about me, why didn't they get on

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: With my mates, what do they, what is different, it was all those elements as well that had an impact. Almost in me, ending up in bed with Brian

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: It was the whole sort of environment that I was living in. maybe if I had met, under different circumstances I would have still had my virginity a couple of more years, you know, whose to say. It was interesting though because two weeks later I went to visit John where he lived. (1) And. For three years. (1) Um. Every June and December holiday I would go up and visit the guy I was going out with. And I had been there jees, I think one or two days. (1) And I was lying in bed the one day and. The guy I was going out with, who probably was about, a year, ja a year, older than me. So very much the same age, um.(2) Walked into my bedroom. Um, and I was, it was almost weird in a way I don- I don't know how I had behaved before but. I said to him you know, why have we never had sex? And he looked at me and he said, you've lost your virginity haven't you?

TIFFANY: Oooh

JANE: And I was like, noooo!

TIFFANY: (laughs)

JANE: No! I'm curious, why have we never had sex, you know. And uh, lying in bed there talking to him, I realised that, I was a lot more open, almost in my sexuality. Um. In a sense almost more comfortable in my body and my sexuality, I had never had any issues or anything like that before. But he could immediately sense, that, I had changed in my sexual, behaviour.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: um. (1) And That was a very interesting comment, I went well.

TIFFANY: (laughs)

JANE: (laughs) Oh God, no, I haven't had sex (laughs 4)

TIFFANY: OK, so you had been there for two weeks, on holiday, um. What happened after, that with with him (inaudible)?

JANE: I was at the coast for two weeks, there after I was meant to have gone to, to go visit the guy I was going out with

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: I went, was meant to be there for, I think, three weeks or a month or something like that. And. (2) (clears throat) As I said, I realised that one of the things I needed to change. Was, the guy I had been going out with, and had been for so long. (1) Um, and I had loved him, and I had cared for him while we were going out, but the only way to get the message through to him that this was really over, 'cause our last months we had been on and off, on and off, was to say look, I never loved you. And I remember standing in a club, looking over the dance floor and saying I have never loved you and him, balling his eyes out and me feeling kak as hell, and horrible and. I got on the phone the next day to my mom and I said, you've got to get me back to the beach, got to get back to the beach, you've got to get me on a bus now. And I had kinda told my mom that I had met this guy and she was like, you're not going back for Brain are you? Really, he's ten years older, are you looking for a father figure? (laughing) And dah daah daah dah.

TIFFANY: (laughs)

JANE: I was just like, put me on a back, on a plane, I mean a bus back. Which she did, she paid, she sent put money in my account and (laughing) I went straight back (laughs 4)

TIFFANY: (laughs)

JANE: Um, having broken up with a guy that I had gone out with for three and a half years, who, pretty much, even though I had denied it, (laughing) knew that I had lost my virginity before I had come, to see him (laughs 2)

TIFFANY: (inaudible)

JANE: Who I had cheated on (laughs 2) Um. (1) Went back, back, and I stayed there for another week, and that was really nice, because the guys had gone, they were only down for, ten days or something like that and they had all gone back to, to the town they lived in. And it was just Brian there, and it was just the two of us. And it was amazing, we had. You know from frolicking in beach, I mean the sea at sunset and sunrise, and going for walks and. (2) Ja, it was, it was. (7) (laughs) (clears throat) I think in, in a way, in that time. I really felt. Very much, in love. Um. But, I think it was over, it was influenced by the fact that this was also something new, you know, that. (1) I didn't go out and have a really amazing day and then come home, and kiss you, and say, good night, that. I would have an amazing day and come home, and there would be more to it, and I realised that I really enjoyed doing this

TIFFANY: Uh huh

R; And it was like eh, you know, I'm going to be able to do this whenever I want, with this person. Um, whether it be for this specific time, or whatever. So ja, I spent another week, there, um, went back home. And then. (1) It was just after Christmas, um, I think it was actually Boxing Day or something like that. He, had, we had kept in contact, he had gone back home. And he said to me, I'm going up to visit my family, I'd love you to come with me, please let me fly you up. (2) Now that I think about it, my mother was very. (2) What's the word, maybe more (inaudible) to the whole thing, I was, now that I think back (laughing) what the hell was she thinking?

TIFFANY: (laughs)

JANE: (laughs 3) Um, I went with him, to where his parent's. Met them, met the whole family. Um, we were there spent about three days there, and then we drove down to the town where he lived, um. (2) I spent, New Year's with them, actually spent New Year's at one of the guy's house, and I had been briefed like anything beforehand, because there were pictures taken, from the holiday, and there were pictures that the wives saw

TIFFANY: (laughs)

JANE: And there were pictures that the wives were not allowed to even know existed, OK. I saw them all, 'cause Brian was a photographer so he had taken all these pictures

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: I was, I saw them all, but I was informed of what I could say and like, not lecture or anything, it was just like x, please don't say anything about like, them, screwing, other females, other young females

TIFFANY: (laughs)

JANE: I was like, OK, cool, and it was very interesting going, as an eighteen year old, I probably, you know, the same age, or near the same age as one of their kids, you know um. (2) Going to this adult twenty- um New Year's party. (2) And checking, it was a very interesting evening because it was, watching them now, interact with their wives

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: Um, and just seeing a different side to them, more like a fatherly, homely, business oriented as opposed to. Totally on holiday, and totally going wild. Um. (1) Ja, I stayed with Brian. (clears throat) Um. For about, two weeks. And then went back to my home. (2) And then, in the, April, I went, overseas, and. (2) Probably saw him, about, six or seven time, between, beginning of January to April. Um, and he had travelled extensively overseas, studied, overseas, and you know his he, he, said to me, um ja, I can tell you what the experiences are like. But, I cannot prevent you from going, because you need to experience these feelings as well, and how amazing it is and etcetera etcetera

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: Um, and I remember his bedroom wall in his house, which was a fucking huge hall just being plastered with pictures from top to bottom, and a lot of them were pictures from overseas, and it just looked amazing and, and almost in a sense I think he wanted to say stay with me and don't, 'cause I mean that's what he would always subtly imply, stay with me, don't go overseas, but I can't stop you from going overseas

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: 'Cause you need to experience this first hand.

TIFFANY: So were you then in a relationship with him now?

JANE: Jah. (1) I definitely thought at the time that I was.

TIFFANY: (laughing) OK

JANE: I wouldn't say so now, but, um. Ja, I mean, we would speak fairly regular, regularly on the telephone. Um, (clears throat). (1) And, his brother had a, um, twin engine plane, and he would often come and pick me up, when they came from like, they'd come from like where his parents lived to, where I lived, stop for fuel, and then fly to the airstrip in, near the beach house

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: And so they'd always pick me up, and sometimes, most times, Brian actually saw him probably more, probably saw him half about a half, about a dozen times, twelve, fourteen times

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: 'Cause he used to pick me up and most times he would have stopped near where Brian lived as well, picked up Brian. Um, and that was always interesting, 'cause it'd always be, you know, he's brother, and sometimes his sister would come with and it was their whole family, the father, the mother and Brian was it was like

I; Uh huh

JANE: These huge, get togethers, at the beach, um. Ja, I think if his brother didn't have the plane I don't think I would have seen him probably half as much.

Actually now that I think about it, ooh, I need to tell you something afterwards.

TIFFANY: (laughs)

JANE: (laughs 3) Um.

TIFFANY: OK, so then you went overseas

JANE: And then I went overseas. Um, we had decided that I would, we would end. (2) Because it was just impossible, I mean at that point, there's no point in having that long distance relationship. Um. Uh, that was, '91. '92, I saw him again in, ninety, three, I had spoken to him, probably, about two three times, no a little bit more, let's say five times, from April '91 to (3) June, May of '93. And I, at that stage I was in Europe, I rocked up there in June, and I was going to spend about three weeks in in a city, and then I was going to fly over to America, I want to arrive in America on Independence Day, on the fourth

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: Of July, I wanted to arrive. (clears throat) And I had spoken to Brian, before I don't know, somewhere the beginning of June. And he said to me, x, I am selling up everything, I've had enough of South Africa. He had like dual. Uh, tsk, dual, citizenship

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: And he said, he was going back to America, why don't I wait for him, and we can go over together. He was, going to go visit a mate of his and he'd be able to organise a job for me, I thought, brilliant, I'd love to go work there for a while, so I bought a ticket to Chicago. And because of that, we had spoken on the phone a few times. When I say we had spoken to him on the phone three or four times it was, sometimes I would be in whatever country, and I'd think, ah, let me give Brian a a call, I've got money, let me give him a call

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: When I went to the city and then, he said to me why don't you wait. (2) And we spoke, not on a hectic regular basis but every now and then just to find out how progress was going and that

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: (2) (laughs) he came over, I mean, every time I had spoken to him on the telephone I was like, wow this is so amazing I'm going to see a mate of mine you know, this guy that I slept with, went out with, but I'm gonna go, gonna see a mate of mine from South Africa, I have never seen, I don't think I had seen any one that I knew, two years, you know, from South Africa, um. (laughs) I booked him into a hotel. I fetched the asshole from. (1) the airport at five o'clock in the morning required me to get out of bed at half past three in the morning

TIFFANY: Sjoie

JANE: I can't wait to see him, stocked to see him. We come, get on the train, we. Um. Get back to his hotel room. Went for coffee, and over coffee I happened to say oh ja my boyfriend, at that stage I had a guy I was going out with who was American who was living in Europe. And I think I said something like, he's coming over for the weekend or something like that. Huh, well he went into a rage. And that must have been at about nine o'clock in the morning. At about. Half past five, six o'clock, a mate of mine who I was staying with, picked me up from the train station, and took one look at me and said, my god, what is wrong with you. I literally, had no, I had no physical energy, I had no mental energy, I had no, I was totally totally drained, we had spent the whole, day, arguing

TIFFANY: Oh my God

JANE: Eventually we got to the stage, where I didn't even argue, I was like in a zombie state, um. And he just ranted, and raved. I was naïve and I had changed, and what the hell did I think I had, become, and, I just kept sitting there thinking.

(tape interrupted)

TIFFANY: OK so you had been arguing all day

JANE: (coughs) And I kept on sitting there thinking to myself, um, hang on, were you just expecting us to go back into a relationship, like. My God, we haven't seen each other in how long, we broke up. Hu How, what planet are you on, I mean I, st- this guy who I had spent this amazing time with, who was this wonderful guy. Who was, romantic, and caring, and gentle, was this fucking monster standing in front of me

TIFFANY: Ummm

JANE: Losing it, ranting and raving, I was like. Hello

I; Sjoie, what happened there!

JANE: Um. I went home, uh. It was interesting, my mom had sent a parcel with him. And in the letter, 'cause he had said to me, uh, lets go up away for a few days and I was like, ja, don't know about that, I don't have money, I literally do not have money, I have. Very little money that I don't even think they're going to allow me to enter America with, you know

TIFFANY: Uh

JANE: And he had pulled on or two stunts where he had said, lets go here, paid for me to get there, promised to pay for me to get back and, me having to, well my mother having to fork out money to get me back. So I was very aware. Of that as well, and I thought, I don't have money for us to go away and then for you to turn around and say something to me and then, I can't get back to to the city.

TIFFANY: Uhm

JANE: Um (clears throat) And. (2) My mother had written this letter and basically in it she had said, be ware of Brian, don't let him, basically what I have just said, you know, don't let him to make you fork out money because you don't have that money to fork out and etcetera etcetera. I took everything, its weird how things happen, I just took all the stuff. (laughing) Left the fucking letter (laughs 3) This letter, any way, he was going to spend. Three four days in in the city I was living in, before he was going to head off to, um,

TIFFANY: So after this argument you still stayed with him?

JANE: No, no, I was staying with friends of mine

TIFFANY: No, but I mean you were still going to go to America with him?

JANE: (2) Well, after the first day, it was like. OK, I don't know what the hell happened. (clears throat) The bonus as I look back now and I thought then, was that he never knew where I was staying, he had a contact telephone number but that is all that he had. Um. And he phone me the next day, threatening me and, we are going to go away and dah dah dah dah. And he said something about, you meet me in, like downtown. (1) Something ja, so I went, and I said to this mate of mine, please come and join us a bit later. My friend was petrified he was like (laughing) no, he's going to think I'm your boyfriend, he's going to bliksem me, no I'm not going (laughs 3) I was like (side ends)

JANE: Ja, so any way, I went, to go meet him at the bar. A few hours late this mate of mine came and joined us

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: I had clearly beforehand explained to him, this is not my boyfriend, I if you touch him I will, explode. Um, and the whole time I was there, I mean this guy, was psychotic, he was mad, he had lost it. And he said to me, we are going to go away, you uh, uh then this friend of mine, I said to him this friend of mine is coming to join us, he said, you go home with him, you pack your bags. And you will meet me at the hotel at this time, I'm going to check out at this time, and I said ok 'cause I knew that he wouldn't allow me to go if I didn't say, for sure, I'll join you.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: So then this mate of mine came and joined us for a while and then I went home with him. (clears throat) and I said to him, there is no fucking way I am going anywhere with this guy, he has lost it. The, the that day, before I actually met him, I tried to change my air ticket to, Los Angeles, to Chicago

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: But it was less that twenty-four hours before I was mean to go over, and they said, there's no ways you can change your ticket, you've got to go to Chicago, I mean, the last wanted to go to was Chicago, the only reason I was going to Chicago was because we were going on from there, I mean the horror stories I had heard of the Chicago, there was no ways. Um, got home. And about an hour later, telephone calls, and we let it go to voice mail, and its like, Jane, or at that stage my first name, I've checked out of the hotel, I hope you're coming soon. About half hour later. Where are you, why aren't you here already, and another half hour later what the fuck is going on, where are you, why haven't you come yet, I've hired the car and dah dah dah dah. (1) And we just left it and he didn't phone back. And I cared nothing that he had moved out of his hotel and lah- whatever. I mean there was no ways I was putting my hand, my life

in this guys hands. (1) Um. The next morning, he phoned me. (3) I got told, that, I, was naïve. No, I wasn't naïve, that I was this amazing, wonderful girl and had turned into this absolute bitch (clears throat). I was, it all started 'cause he said to me, he was livid, and I, um, he said to me, you, will, meet me, today, and I said to him, I'm terribly sorry but we have a function, um, you know a university luncheon, which we dinkumly did. I said, and (inaudible) its this reunion sort of thing and dah dah dah dah. I, so then he preceeded to tell me that I was a bitch. Um, I had told him that I had used, that one or two times I had taken drugs in Amer- uh uh in Europe. He was, I was a drug user and he was going to phone my mother and tell my mother that I was a drug user, um. Eh, I think I got five things named of what I was

TIFFANY: Sjoe

JANE: And then, I reached a level of, this is now, enough. And I said to him. Just fuck off. And he said to me if, you do, not, come, here, now. There, will, be, hit, I said, what, uh, what are you going to do, 'cause I knew, and I could relay on the fact that he didn't know where I stayed. And I knew that the directory service would not give him and address if he could not tell them what the address was. (1) And uh, what you're going to come over, and do what, you don't know where I stay. Um, he threatened me a few more times and then I shut the phone down in his ear. Never heard of, him again. Um. There after, soon got on the phone to my mom and said, um, I have been experimenting with drugs once or twice, 'cause I was like really worried whether

TIFFANY: Ummm

R he would actually really do that, and I would rather it come from my mouth rather than from his mouth. Um. Any way, went to Chicago, went to America. Had been living in America for about. Two weeks. My mom got a letter in her, 'cause the letter that she had written. Like she had put, her postal box address, OK. He wrote a letter to me, oh and I was also a thief, in his thing, 'cause when we had been going out. he gave me this shirt, OK. Changes the whole story, tells me that I stole the shirt and, his mate died last year, and now he's got fuck all to remember his mate by, and said well that's fine, you shouldn't have given me his shirt then, should you have, uh that's not my problem mate. So he wrote this letter to my mom's p.o. box. Basically saying. I know, exactly what you wrote, in your letter, to your daughter, ok, but it was a letter to me and he didn't know my mom's postal box and it was like saying, ja, you know, I, I read your letter that's why I'm sending it to this so, like he knew what my physical address was. And inside there, it had, you will send my t-shirt to this address, by this date. I was like, whatever, leave me alone. And about a month went past, and I had a. (1) A job in Chicago working for a falafel company. Where I used to wear my blades, and my bikini top and. Little shorts and I used to go hand out pamphlets. To residence, to, um. Business, um. About the specials and all that, of this restaurant, or take-away or whatever. And then one day I. Rollerblading, went round this corner, well actually was going straight. And as I got to this corner junction, some one grabbed me. And it was him. Hm. (1) And. (1) The first thing that comes to my mind was, a mad man, he had, fucking, lost it, I mean, he started he grabbed me, he started ranting and raving, about, you're a fucking gone, lost it, who have you become and. I didn't say a word, I was, petrified, petrified. And I figured that he had been following me for at least a couple of days oh, the most important thing about the letter that he had sent me, was 'cause he was meant to have been. (1) He was going to the Virgin Isles for two weeks, and then he was going back to Virginia, or, moving to Virginia to go and live in Virginia. And. That letter, the postage stamp, said Chicago International Airport, my mom said he's in Chicago Jane. and I said ja, he maybe sent it from the airport but, he's going back to Virginia

I; Uh huh

JANE: Well who knows if he ever went to the place we were going, whether he went straight to Chicago. Um, but he harassed me for about, a month. (1) It wasn't on a daily basis but it was nearly every second day. I would, be, blading somewhere, and I would see him across the road, or he would confront me, and he, it was it was a, catch-22 situation 'cause I was working illegally in America. And I think he probably knew that. (1) And I couldn't go the cops 'cause then I mean I had no money

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: I had to work to get money, I went to the cops I would have to leave my job, 'cause, you know, and the whole problem was he knew where I was staying. And I met a guy in Chicago. And. He was aware of the situation. And about a month later, we. Moved in together, Brian was still harassing me. I moved into his house, to like the top, loft area of where his folks were living. Um. (1) And because I moved out into he suburbs, Brian didn't know where I was working, and I had stopped working for this falafel company, and so

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: Hardly ever went down to where I worked, so he couldn't find me any more. And then this guy I was going out with and myself went to a bar the one night. (1) And I said to him, don't look now, but Brian's here. And, when we left, got on the bike and drove off, and I turned around, and I saw 'cause we were worried that was going to follow us and then he would

TIFFANY: Yes

JANE: See where we were. He ran outside and he watched us what direction we were going in, but that was that, I've never seen from him again, I've never heard from him again. Wish the worst on him.

TIFFANY: S Joe

JANE: Ah, so it was two, very extreme situations from some one, who I still do not regret losing my virginity to him. Because at that stage he treated me really well

TIFFANY: uh huh

JANE: But I didn't know at the time that I was sleeping with a psychopath. (laughs)

TIFFANY: So considering that there was this like, one, person that you slept with and lost your virginity to, and this other complete psychopath like day and night, um, what has that meant for you, what has the experience, meant for you, what

JANE: (2) Well as I say, I still do not regret losing my virginity. Uh, it's a difficult thing because. (1) Its almost as if I can say. I don't regret losing my virginity to the person who he was.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: But when you attach Brian, to the person, then I regret having slept with him. But still you can't really you can't, you know in a in a sense there are two separate entities and at the time he was an amazing person. Um. Who I really got on well with, who I had an amazing time with. Um. And then saw the other side, of this person. Um, it was almost as if he was totally besotted with me and he had come over thinking, that we would get back together again and when he found out that I had a boyfriend, he lost it, I don't know what his plan was, I mean. (1) And so ja, it maybe, maybe, if I, had known what I had known, of his behaviour, overseas, I would have picked up, a lot more things, maybe

TIFFANY: Um

JANE: When I was going out with him. I don't know. (3) I don't, I I don't that period of my life, also because of what happened, with, me taking a big step outside my circle and uh noticing that there are things I need to change and. Growing up so much because of his mates and because of, it was a really good time, I had an amazing time, learnt how to drive as well, and got stuck, and I had a really really good time and so. I will rather, to me that was an amazing time I had a, I had a nice experience, I don't see why it has to be tainted because, of his behaviour there after

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: (2) There after I ja, his behaviour after that I mean, uh it, I am friends with every one of my ex-boyfriends, except him, I get on, if I see them on the street tomorrow I would have no problem having lunch with them, having a huge catch up session, if I had to see him in the streets tomorrow, I think two things I would feel, first is fear and absolute terror, and the other is. Anger and. You know basically I would like to say to him, fuck off out of my face and I wish the worst on you. Ever

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: And that's not a nice thing to say but, the way he made me feel

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: The was he, threatened me, and came into my personal space so hectically. That I have, no time for him, I still wish the worst on him, you know.

TIFFANY: So what does the, um. (2) What are the positive feelings about. (2) The uh, I suppose I'm asking for just kind of a reflection on what your first sexual experience has meant for you?

JANE: (10) Happy. (2) Gentle and caring, I would say those are the three that stick out in my mind. Definitely happy 'cause it was a really happy time of, my life it was

TIFFANY: Uh huh

JANE: It was, learning new things, being a mini adult, it was ja, I really had a good time. Maybe I was very naïve (inaudible) as well but. Those are the basic things that I would say. (clears throat) (2) 'Cause in a way I feel that. Ja, to mix the two together. Would be detrimental to the, I, it was amazing it was good why, deny that just because of his behaviour there after, you know

TIFFANY: Uh huh. Well, thank you, for telling me your story. Do you have anything else that you would like, to add that you think hasn't been covered in the interview.
(tape ends)

Appendix E: On the beginning of the authorised (con)quest for the thing that wasn't there

TIFFANY: Could you tell me the story about the first time you had sex?

TOMAS: (3) Um, ok. Well (3) I was fifteen. And uh. My first girlfriend who I was with at the time was, fourteen. And uh, she was also my first kiss. First French kiss (3) (clears throat) and um (4) basically we went out for about three months (3) and then. Uh. I broke it off (4) and uh six months, after that, we were actually during those six months of not being formally together we were now sexually active, I mean when we were together. Um. We went further as such (4)

TIFFANY: How long had you been in the relationship?

TOMAS: And then um. One night she phoned me we used to speak for hours on the phone. She asked me if I wanted to sleep with her. And I knew her pretty well by this stage and I knew that she'd slept with other nine men (inaudible). And uh (3) and I thought it was a bit dubious a situation, girls fourteen. So I said no, uh (3) then. You know, being fifteen, and libidos is very (inaudible), phoned her back. (laughs2)

TIFFANY: (laughs)

TOMAS: (laughing) And I said sure.

TIFFANY: That night you phoned her back?

TOMAS: No not the same night. A couple of weeks later (3) so I went back there one night spent the night (3) was all very, planned. We knew we were going to do it that night, and she knew it (3) was my first time (4) so we had dinner with the parents, strange parents. Went back into her room, there were candles and (3) uh (3) gorgeous gorgeous girl (4) really wearing sexy things. Just had foreplay for. About an hour or something (30 I asked her if she wanted to do it and she said ja (3) and uh. Sorry just let me turn this (3) and (4) she got the condom out, 'cause you know. Pretty responsible people (laughs 3)

TIFFANY: (laughs)

TOMAS: And she got it out (3) she put it on, she put it on me. Um, we started off in missionary position. For. Uh (3) wasn't long (laughs 2) (laughing) was about a minute, maybe two (3) I just remember, all I remember was staring into her eyes and (3) just this kind of (4) just like this vacuous, abyss that I was looking into, it was just like, she was giving completely, and utterly. It was just like, you know I felt like I was completely inside her. Uh it was quite strange, but beautiful at the same time, um (3) then, I came and um, you know (3) she (3) she wanted to. No wait I I didn't cum in the missionary position I came when we started having doggy style. Uh (3) and then she, she didn't know that I had cum, she she got on top. Then she realised, I had gone flaccid. Said (3) she did say ah come on, and I said (3) (laughing) sorry (laughs 2) um. you know did, I was a little, my, my male ego was a bit bruised you know

TIFFANY: Uh huh

TOMAS: It was like ja, its like (laughs 3)

TIFFANY: (laughs)

TOMAS: But I got over it. I think, comforted by (3) other stories of men's first experiences (laughs 3)

TIFFANY: (laughs)

TOMAS: Ja, that I actually lasted so long (3) but uh, on the whole it was great you know (3) um (3) and then kind of I mean I was, just lying there (3) post-coital, like. Cuddling and (inaudible) (4) um (3) was probably shit between us (3) because we were quite. Emotionally, uh (3) attached (4) then, the gap between us just got wider and wider.

TIFFANY: Could you tell me a bit more about the relationship that you had with her?

TOMAS: Before?

TIFFANY: Well, um, ja

TOMAS: The whole thing. Uh

TIFFANY: (coughs 4)

TOMAS: Well she was quite a fucked up girl, I mean she like had all these, um, what. She was exposed to sex at a very young age (3) you know, and. One of those girls who

in high school, everybody else would call a slut. Um (3) she just liked sex. I don't know what she was looking for in a sexual experience (3) (clears throat) but she was very, um, explicit about sexual, talking about it was just like something. Um. But I think it kind of went hand in hand with her, drug (3) uh usage it was just like 'cause she had very strange parents (3) any way I think she might have been molested as well, I remember she did tell me once, that she kissed her father. Uh (3) like anyway, um, she was, I mean at fourteen, what depth are you looking for (3) so it was, pretty superficial and, uh but nice (3) we got on very well we spoke for hours, most nights. We were very good friends (4)

TIFFANY: (coughs 2)

TOMAS: And she, uh, she went through some hectic stuff

TIFFANY: (coughs)

TOMAS: She was just, I think she was very, very I think, towards the end of the relationship she started to feel, very uh (4) like, violated, like she'd given too much away (3) so that when she came to visit me and I, would start having sex with her she, would say no, and just wanted to lie there with me (3) um. And I understood you know (4) it was a long time, I'm just trying to remember (4) ja like she, it became such an institution my folks knew her my friends knew her. Uh. The friends part was probably the part where, uh, had a seed of where the relationship. Broke down was because my friends (inaudible). And they were all, possibly immature and so was I so. They, you know kept ridiculing her. And I couldn't take it anymore so, I broke it off.

TIFFANY: They were ridiculing her?

TOMAS: Hum?

TIFFANY: In wha-what way were they ridiculing her? (2) (coughs)

TOMAS: In just stupid little fourteen year old ways, you know. Not really knowing what they were saying

TIFFANY: Uh huh

TOMAS: Just like (7) 'cause you know, she, she kind of had. She, at that stage, she, she wasn't, her figure wasn't, fantastic, I mean, she was, good looking, but, you know, if there's any defect, you know and your friends are jealous they point it out. So, they did, and uh. It was continual, I mean I was the first one of them to have a girlfriend, first one to lose my virginity. And uh, I obviously felt it I suppose and I really loved her, I think I still do (4) I really cared about her a lot. She relied on me, for support, protection, care, love. That sort of thing, I would, when we broke up I balled like a baby 'cause it was just. I don't know, it was just weird. Uh (3) that was it

TIFFANY: Why did you eventually break up with her?

TOMAS: I think, you know, memory is selective, but at this stage. It seems to me like it was the pressure of my friends. Uh, 'cause at that stage I was really, becoming part of a circle (4) and they just perpetually kind of ragged her. And uh I didn't have the gut the strength of character to stand up to them. Well I did but it it was kind of half-arsed you know

TIFFANY: Uh huh

TOMAS: Um, so it just carried on, and eventually I just gave way to like (3) (inaudible) and after we broke up, um. She started sleeping with lots of men, doing lots of hard core drugs. With me she was, you know she would smoke a little dope now and again, but, nothing else (3) and it just got worse and worse after we broke up (5)

TIFFANY: Um. You said that, she phoned you that night and you, asked you if you wanted to have sex but you, didn't want to at that time, what changed your mind? (3) (coughs)

TOMAS: Uh, the novelty, of sex (3) you know social stature

TIFFANY: Uh huh

TOMAS: (inaudible) (4) and basic horniness (3) now there's more than (inaudible) and five daughters (laughs 2)

TIFFANY: (laughs)

TOMAS: And that was just because you know, uh, it was kind of this ideal- idealised, wonderful thing, that you'd always dreamt about and then, here's this girl who you know and you trust, and she's phoning you, and she wants to have it with you and its like too good to be true. So, uh, well it was all those things (4)

TIFFANY: Did it, make you feel good that you, um you were having that experience that she'd ask you

TOMAS: Yeah

TIFFANY: That you (inaudible)

TOMAS: It really boosted me up, ja, definitely

TIFFANY: Could you tell me about that feeling

TOMAS: Ja, um, I felt older

TIFFANY: Uh huh

TOMAS: I felt more morally engaged. Uh. Kind of grew up a little bit because I had to make (inaudible) new more, important decisions (3) um (3) I, enjoyed talking about it with my friends because they. They told me, Tomas is a man, that's a nice place to be (6) I suppose (4) I suppose I felt more mas-, masculine, maybe (6) it was not so much the masculinity it was more of an (3) just the maturity of it. That really appealed to me (3) and the opportunity to be involved in something. That had, the potential for transcendence of reality, because I was into that you know, from early on

TIFFANY: What do you mean?

TOMAS: Um just, just like in you know new experience um (3) something beyond your everyday experience (18)

TIFFANY: Um could you tell me a bit more about, um, what you were feeling as you were having sex for the first time. What what were you thinking what were you feeling? (coughs)

TOMAS: (9) It was basically an enhancement of what I felt on the phone (3) it was like is this actually happening, I'm actually (inaudible)

TIFFANY: Uh huh

TOMAS: Um (7) ja, and like (3) I can't really remember feeling, nervous (3) cause I kind of knew what to do, it was just a whole new experience, uh. So I was a bit just kind of, you know oh that goes in there ok, uh. She did have to help me. Uh (3) and then, it was just, the awaking of a new, part of me (3) 'cause it was it was the start of my sexual identity (3) it is a part which has blossomed which is something very powerful. Um (3) something I really enjoy is the kind of (3) the it was the beginnings of of, almost a like a, a vitality (3) sexual vitality that you know I thrive on, every time I have sex, and it began there. Uh. It was just like this, battlefield almost, like we weren't fighting against the other person, its just like. Involved in some, activity that was (4) raising your, your energy levels, or in all dimensions. Uh. It kind of added a new, maybe a new image (3) with which to add to my, prism, of existence (3) uh, it was just this, sex god (laughs 3)

TIFFANY: (laughs)

TOMAS: And you know that kind of grew up like, you know I grew into that, and. Its kind of, you know, when I left university, it hadn't been fully realised. When I came to university, it kind of started blossoming, fully, you know it was just like (3) it's a part of me that I love, and I like to act out (4) so, because it was new I didn't quite know how to deal with it and I was quite arrogant at first. Now its just something that I like to (3) keep for those private moments. Rarely like to speak about it, I don't know its just, I show it to the situation in life (4) so it was, on the whole I felt really good. And uh (3) I'm also very (sighs) (2) you know this look in her eyes I can never forget it, its just like she had these dark dark brown eyes, just like looking in her eyes (3) look I don't know what I was looking for my mind was probably all over the place (3) it just seemed like she had vacated. Completely vacated (5) she was very gentle and, helpful (6) it was quite a big deal (4) uh

TIFFANY: Tell me more about that look in her eyes

TOMAS: (2) (sighs) (3) Strange. Um (30 just this kind of like uh (3) open, peaceful, empty (3) just looking at, into mine (3) Our faces, stayed connected the whole time, we didn't (inaudible) um (3) and (9) I honestly don't remember (3)

TIFFANY: Um (6) I'm not sure um I'm kind of I want to ask you a bit more about the feelings that you were having at the time what you were feeling as you were looking into her her eyes.

TOMAS: Um (3) alright, uh (4) well amidst the (3) kind of (5) it was like there were a lot of things going on in my head, I mean, this first, first time. So there was the whole oh my friends are going to think wow you know, then there's the, this feels so good, you

know. There was, I'm really enjoying this (6) I love you. Then there's (4) why are where is she (9) kind of wondered this, this might be retrospective more than (inaudible) she, you know (inaudible) you know the meaning of it is just like, I just remember the, that vagueness, that vacancy, it was just. It hurt a little 'cause. Kind of on some impressional level it felt like she had cut herself off and was just doing it. For the sexual pleasure, she wasn't really there (5) but, I didn't really, give that much thought. But I was in another place, so it didn't really matter at the time (3) uh, ja, just kind of, thinking about it, over the last kind of, eight years (3) I've kind of formed that idea. Of, what actually went down

TIFFANY: Uh huh

TOMAS: And uh (11)

TIFFANY: Sounds like you were um, there was a lot kind of going on in, a lot of feelings and a lot emotions was that, were they very intense, were

TOMAS: Ja no but I

TIFFANY: Was it confusing?

TOMAS: Not confusing just uh. Exciting (6) it was all kind of (13) doing, the opportunity for, passion, you know opened itself (6) that was. Perhaps the (3) the big the background thing (4) in that (3)

TIFFANY: (coughs 3)

TOMAS: It was, it was kind of images of friends and images of

TIFFANY: (coughs)

TOMAS: My parents

TIFFANY: (coughs 3)

TOMAS: And images of, they all kind of seemed to

TIFFANY: (coughs 6) Sorry

TOMAS: It all kind of seemed to occupy a back seat (3) because it was just now and what was happening and I couldn't actually

TIFFANY: (coughs 3)

TOMAS: Couldn't actually um (3) change the fact that I was, engaged on the uh, the experiential level, you know it was just like, this is what is happening so everything that was happening was about love (6) so as I say, um, those first, say. The first minutes of um, of missionary, um (3) was the first, I mean (3)

TIFFANY: (coughs 3)

TOMAS: I've always wanted to, I've always wanted to, try doggy style so I just kind of turned her over (3) and, tried that and, it didn't really work well 'cause I didn't know what I was doing. But uh (4) you know it excited me a lot, and uh (3) so then obviously I came then (4)

TIFFANY: (coughs 2)

TOMAS: I remember I was quite disappointed, at I was

TIFFANY: (coughs 3)

TOMAS: In fact very disappointed, that I'd, that I'd come already (6)

TIFFANY: You spoke about you ego being a bit, hurt as well

TOMAS: Ja no definitely.

TIFFANY: What kind of (inaudible)

TOMAS: Oh ja just the whole thing of performance really, uh. The edifice of the male ego (inaudible)

TIFFANY: (coughs 2)

TOMAS: Uh. Basically like, I couldn't keep it going and, whatever kind of (3) uh (3) insecurities about, sexual, uh (3) performance I'd had before. Kind of, showed their ugly heads. And uh, you know complexes about (3) uh (3) ja just ja like that (6) so I didn't feel too good about it when it happened (3)

TIFFANY: (coughs 2)

TOMAS: I didn't actually want to like. I needed, I needed, you know a couple of minutes just to sit on the end of the bed, and just like. Take it all in 'cause it was quite a hectic (3) um (3)

TIFFANY: The experience was hectic or the disappointment or,

TOMAS: Well the experience, kind of included my disappointment (9)

TIFFANY: You described her as, quite gentle and,

TOMAS: Ja

TIFFANY: Um.

TOMAS: Facilitative

TIFFANY: (inaudible) more experienced than you.

TOMAS: A lot more experienced uh

TIFFANY: (coughs 3)

TOMAS: 'Cause she (3) I know she really felt, felt deeply for me so she, I think she. Tried to make the experiences comfortable (3) more than is possible. Um (3) and when she urged me on, after I'd cum, I think it was more of a. um (4) encouragement, kind of. Kind of like (4) uh (5) and uh, ja, I appreciated it, completely (10) you know she'd always, kind of (3) she knew what I liked. I knew what she liked (5) she'd always, you know she'd always. You know she

TIFFANY: (coughs 3)

TOMAS: It was her who basically

TIFFANY: (coughs 2)

TOMAS: Took me to, all the places you know like (3) um, the first time I had oral sex was with, her (6) the first time I did anything, was with her (6) really, felt, thankful, for, that she had given me that.

TIFFANY: How do you mean thankful?

TOMAS: Well, appreciative. Uh, you know, I really, felt good that, that she'd. allowed herself to do that for me (4) it it made me, feel like she trusted me (3) uh (5) but there was always this kind of hidden dark, that kind of (inaudible) I just could always sense, um (4) just like 'cause she loved having sex she would love the role (3) of uh, being the diva of the (inaudible). And (4) and (4) and I I gave her the space to do that. 'cause I also enjoyed that, you know I enjoyed her doing that. Um, for me (6)

TIFFANY: (coughs 4) (10) um (4) could you, um (2) reflect a bit on what the experience has meant for you?

TOMAS: (2) OK, you mean, at the time, or, now

TIFFANY: Um, both, at the time and now

TOMAS: (3) Well at the time it was all about (4) sex (3) um, at least that was the one that, was most actualised, because, um. I (inaudible) with my friends. Which was, took up most of my time. Uh, and I told them, I phoned them up and it was quite a like, momentous occasion, I don't know. I phoned this closest friend up and said look, I slept with Samantha (3) uh he was like ah wow you bastard, you (inaudible), well done. You know brilliant brilliant how was it, tell us. Uh (4) so I enjoyed doing that, with all my friends, it was like (4) um (3) kind of felt, you know, like I'd been somewhere that they hadn't and I had (5) and that kind of added to my already (3) uh (3) I was already quite a solid, solitary character amongst the group, you know I was always the guy most quiet (3) most reserved (5) and uh (3) ja, and I I've had a serious, uh, serious (3) uh inferiority complex at that stage. And it just really helped, you know to know that I (4) that I, that I was capable of doing that, had done it well. And I got recognition because of it. Uh, just kind of helped me along a bit, you know (4) and then after that, uh (3) I'm trying to think like the next time (3) it was a good two years after that. Um, I was seventeen (3) um. There was this big gap. Between, between them (5) and it was kind of like it started the whole, actually seems quite ridiculous now, when I think about it, its like. You know, I was always thinking about how how many women have I slept with (4) and I was always trying to make it more. It was like, trying try to get another one you know, (laughing) just to put another stud on the belt, oh god, um

TIFFANY: Why was that important

TOMAS: Hey?

TIFFANY: What was that important? (coughs 3)

TOMAS: It was important because. Every sexual experience (3) you know we all, knew, on some level, that um, having sex, was an adult thing. And uh (3) the more, sex we had, the older we were

TIFFANY: Uh huh

TOMAS: And it, was true in one way, um but then you were at the bottom. And uh. So I'd find myself and night thinking, going through the list you know, when was she when was she when was she. And then slowly that transformed into, rather that the stud on

the belt thing, 'cause that just kind of fell away as I kind of mature, more mature, it was like, it was now, I need to remember these. Experiences because, they were important (4) and I owe it to the experience and to the girl, to remember, so I mean I pride myself now that I can remember every time (3) who where, and, uh

TIFFANY: Why is that a matter of pride, in what way, is remembering important?

TOMAS: (2) Well first of all it's got a lot to do with, with my, uh need to be, to have. A good memory since its, a part of me its, something I've always prided myself on, is having, the ability to remember things, basically shows more presence of mind at the time, and presence. Present um (6) ja uh. Um, also like to remember it 'cause, it was important to remember that kind of stuff because. Ja, as I said, I felt it was something I need to keep with me. Uh, for the rest of my life (3) even if the experience was completely arbitrary (3) which it was a lot of times (4) I still like to just remember it, and I like to remember most of my life, what happened (3) uh (3) because, it reflects, you feel a lot more full in that person (4) ja, so now uh, the way I look at it, what it means for me now is (3) uh. One of the best relationships I've ever had. In fact the first, after that, I'd never been in a boyfriend, girlfriend situation until (6) until last year (3) so, seven years (3) just. Walking around doing, whatever um, without actually. But always feeling this, deep whole, or kind of I need, love I need, that relationship so I was always depressed like I need a girlfriend I need a girlfriend (3) but I didn't have the, confidence to go out and look for one (3) so (3) uh (4) it was now its really a special thing, I remember and cherish, that that night. And the whole the relationship as a whole, you know I mean its just. It was the first one and it was just beautiful. The only thing I don't regret it, but (3) it a pity that, uh. I had to end it because of social pressures (4) uh. And it was, ja it was honestly the first real, you know, relationship that I was in. and after that everything just seemed to be (4) superfluous. Or not, not superfluous but but more. Inadequate(4) I still fell that way today (3) lots of the, relationships I've had since that, I've gone to university, just always get. (inaudible). And I still search for. Um, something from (3) although you know now I look at it a lot more. Um (5) I don't know what the word is but you know I, I understand that (3) I understand the, the nuances of building a relationship. As opposed to being a teenager understanding (3) looking for that love at first sight, you want to be um wow wow. I realise now, I want happiness, all the time (3) um (3)

TIFFANY: So in a way that first relationship and that first experience kind of, showed you an epitome of. of what relationships could be?

TOMAS: Ja, well it uh, it showed me, it showed me, something of what can be achieved, of what you can get you know and (3) uh (5)

TIFFANY: And now you are still searching for that (3)

TOMAS: Perhaps, not, the actual, the nature of, what we had, but what it promised (3)

TIFFANY: How do you mean?

TOMAS: Well (3) the potential for that relationship, um. Kind of. it could have, it could have resulted in something, you know 'cause we were still young you know, I was fifteen, she was fourteen (3) it was all very romantic, and all very like oh, she's my girlfriend. it was very nice (3) the thing is, the thing about it is that companionship as well, like uh. Its, having the person near that you can feel connected to. And having that security and trust (3) and uh (5) what did you ask me? (laughs 2)

TIFFANY: Um (3) I don't remember (laughs 2)

TOMAS: Uh

TIFFANY: I think we were talking about

TOMAS: Oh potential for the relationship

TIFFANY: Oh

TOMAS: Ja it just, it, I don't know I mean I've never thought about this, it just (4) I think in a way it stretched my limits. And then (4) those limits haven't been, reached since (5)

TIFFANY: How do you mean, what, what limits?

TOMAS: Just, the limits of, of wonder and excitement

TIFFANY: Uh huh

TOMAS: (4) Same as the first night together, always looking for that thing, but you kind of think of yourself as a membrane kind of stretches you skin out. And everything just

kind of, falls in the middle you know helpless (3) useless. Uh (4) but I mean, every sexual experience (3) taught me something (3) but it never. It was, it was never. Uh part of that relationship because they were all one night stands, all (4) fifteen (5) and. Only, in, first year (4) it was sustained, fucking, it was sustained it was like ok (7) we were friends, and we liked each other, we were having a scene. That's what you'd call it, we were having something. Girls would come over to my place, or I'd go over to their place (3) have sex. Then eventually we'd get to the point where we'd have to sort out feelings (4) it would always come down to (3) me. Saying no. Rejecting, because they didn't meet whatever. I, had, envisioned for my girlfriend (3) they always fell short (3) and in first year there were five of them (3) all fine art students. Weird.

TIFFANY: (laughs)

TOMAS: (laughs 3) And then ja, its strange, to really, it was just like (5) and then last year, I had a relationship that went throughout the year (3) but it was long distance she lived in Cape Town. And we shared something really profound. And, it felt good.

Because we had that companionship, we had that. Transcendence, we had that, uh, spiritual (inaudible). Passion, she's a very passionate girl. It was wonderful (3) but then, by this stage now I had other things, which I need, and which she couldn't give me (3) one of them being, her being here (3) she was there (3) uh, there's still issues there, I mean we still feel (3) you know which, we when we talk, uh, and she tells me she's into some guy. It hurts (3) um. So ja, its since that first time then I'm generally, looking for (3) something (4)

TIFFANY: Um you were talking about, the one night stands that you were having, um, kind of just having sex, is there a difference between having sex and, the first time you had sex, um

TOMAS: Um.

TIFFANY: What is that?

TOMAS: Uh (3)

TIFFANY: (coughs 2) (7)

TOMAS: Well most of the one night stands took place. After. Um. Well the next time I had sex was in standard nine (4) and that was, at a party, it was like (4) so I'd never ever kind of (3) ja. I'd always opened myself, completely in a sexual experience in search of, whatever (5) and. I was consistently. Like. There was there was no contact. Like (inaudible). Um and after doing that kind of four or five times I thought (inaudible). Until first year. Um, it was like. 'cause in high school sex, I'd learnt that sex can be (3) so I, every now and then I'd sleep with a friend of mine. She'd meet, her and I would stay at home, and do some homework and then we'd have sex and she'd leave, see you tomorrow (3) so in high school sex became very. Um. Easy (3) uh and there was always that deep longing, just under that. But it was still just easy you know, just something. And then I always, prided myself on the fact that I could just have sex, and its just sex (3) and. In first year that's the way I felt, just like (3) just going to have sex with you and its great and we're can be friends (3) but, uh, but after, you know after experiencing that for, a couple of years I I said well. I'm not going to fucking doing this any more. Like in second year, I just kind of just said no, oh well they're a hopeless casualty, 'cause its, just not rewarding me, I mean. 'cause by this time, I think, a lot of that um one night stand thing was still, a, um (7) it was still some kind of achievement thing, its like still kind of working out the physical aspects of like, getting good at it, practice, practice. Experiencing all kind of different positions and. And different girls and different cultures, and different tastes and different more of these things it was just kind of like searching, playing around um. And building up my (5) prowess, building up my ability. So wasn't really looking for a girlfriend I just wanted to build up my, sexual being (3) and then once I'd kind of realised (3) I think that was in first or second year, then I didn't actually need to go out and have sex anymore. 'Cause, sure it could be, two hours of fun and then, bye. So by that stage I still got completely (inaudible). Since then um (3)

TIFFANY: What was the more that you needed?

TOMAS: I needed a relationship, I needed I needed um (3) I needed love (3) and uh, trust and all those wonderful things (3) so (3) I kind of, (laughing) sawed away, rather (laughs 2) um. And uh, ja I haven't had sex an entire year since, you know, I had sex in January with a friend of mine in Durban. It was fucking, we were just horny (inaudible). And

before that it was Rei, my girlfriend. So (4) uh. Really have slowed down a lot. Um. And since I've quit university like, um, its been a lot easier for me to get sex. Um, and I'm continually ragged by friends who. You know, don't get as much as I do and uh. And I always tell them that its not that nice and its oh shut up at least you're getting some. I say no, really, its all well and fine going home and having a fuck but. Like you feel empty afterwards. Um. But I do understand because, it really feel good to be. Admired and kind of, express your (inaudible). Girls are all huh, but um

TIFFANY: Um, could you talk about that emptiness, you said its all (inaudible)

TOMAS: Ja, the emptiness, I mean

TIFFANY: Where does that come from?

TOMAS: (8) I don't know (5) I think its uh. Its part of who I am, it's the romantic, it's, the need for (3) uh somebody that (inaudible) you. That's the extrapolation. From, from where I am (4) its just that its so idealised (3) so, made so perfect you've just kind of, uh, beautiful, that anything would come short, that's not right (3) and this is you know, a serious thing that I must deal with. Um, I still feel. I still have that longing emptiness (5) but at the moment I am trying to fill it with myself. And as (inaudible) (tape ends) (next side)

Tomas: But at times its really really, its really really lonely. All those nights. I mean everybody goes through this. I always felt that mine was a lot worse (laughs 2)

TIFFANY: (laughs)

TOMAS: Uh, just lying there, in bed and just, man it's the aching really its like you need it need it need it. And I've done all kinds of, sums and equations with you know mothers, and fathers, and thing (3) when it comes down to it its really, uh (3) somebody who, loves me (4) and that's (3) I mean, that's what I want. Because I am a very affectionate person now. And its always, and I know that, that my my affection isn't always well received. I do have a lot of it, I mean, I'm just, that kind of person, just overflowing and very tactile. Um. You know, 'cause my dad hugs me, my mom hugs me (3) extremely affectionate people. Um (4) and. Ja lots of people have, problems (4) but I think I need to maintain it and not change it because people (inaudible) on it. And need to know me that, that if they need a hug from me I will give it to them, or a cuddle, I'm there (3) kind of. but then comes, like, say I have a friend (4) and I like her. Be my friend. There are things about her that I like, I find them sexy (4) then, its always difficult to spend the night in the same bed, as friends. For them and me.

TIFFANY: Why is it difficult?

TOMAS: For, me?

TIFFANY: Ja, for you.

TOMAS: Um, because I'll start wanting. And start feeling the magnetism that happen(5) should I go after her (4) when I know the other person is not into me (3) I generally cut it off, you know, and say you know wait, wait, wait (3) and that's much much (inaudible) (7) um, ja I mean. Kind of. you know. Drugs changed a lot of things as well. Um (4) um, smoking dope, especially. Um 'cause when I smoke dope I. I get, uh. I really need, I really want, that female closeness. Really really want it. Um, I also get extremely horny when I smoke dope. So. And then I took a lot of acid in first year. Um. Haven't since then. Haven't taken in about two years, actually (3) um (3) the acid trips were more of a (3) a, added to the idealisation, of the, whole thing. Um (3) ecstasy was. More like dope. Um. But, ecstasy I would become bold, and shut off. 'cause I was so. And people around me, I had (inaudible) were not (inaudible) (4) and then. The main was (4) you know, revelling in my, sexual um. Confidence (3) you know I'll speak to any girl, say hi (4) they would always say, you know I would always see that glint of admiration (5) and drugs helped me to realise a lot, of my potential (4) mushrooms especially. A very big, part of me, believes (3) just so, wonderful. I mean I learnt to (inaudible) you know, so. I had to, because. I felt that living life any other way but that way, was just, unnatural. And uh (3) so I'm on that trajectory now. Using what I've learnt, in both the bedroom and, in those various, worlds of, uh (3) to get to this bliss (inaudible) (5)

TIFFANY: Well um, I don't think I have any more questions um, is there anything you would like to, talk about or kind of

TOMAS: (12) I'm just think what might be interest, of interest to your, your study (3) you want to (clears throat) (2) where do you want to take this. Are you formulating a theory or what

TIFFANY: Um, I'm not really formulating a theory um, um, just looking at narratives of first sexual experience um

TOMAS: Narrative

TIFFANY: To kind of understand the dynamics that happen between, in a first sexual experience, in what way its meaningful to people um (3) what they have made of it, um, whether they have made anything of it whether its important

TOMAS: OK

TIFFANY: Um ja

TOMAS: Alright um (6)

TIFFANY: Good

(tape ends)

Appendix F: On the naked communion of minds

TIFFANY: Could you tell me the story, about the first time you had sex?

MICHAEL: Ja, um, I was eighteen (3) and uh, was first year at Rhodes actually, ja. Um, the girl was older, I think a year or (inaudible) she was from a city. A big city girl but from a smaller city originally. And um (3) ja, uh we hadn't been together that long actually. Uh, just gone out a few times and that's about it.

TIFFANY: How did you meet her?

MICHAEL: (2) In classes, she studied the same things that I did (3) uh. I then saw her out once you know, all dressed up and that looking good. And that's how it happened.

TIFFANY: And you went out a few more times?

MICHAEL: Um

TIFFANY: (inaudible)

MICHAEL: Stayed together, um, well, after that. That same thing sort of happened um, you know we always ended up hooking up together and stuff, but we weren't really together or anything, and then uh, ja, it grew to affection 'cause when we started sleeping together it just became a pattern. So it was actually quite a positive experience for me (4)

TIFFANY: Could you tell me about um, what sort of thing, what were you thinking really?

MICHAEL: (2) Uh

TIFFANY: (inaudible)

MICHAEL: I was terrified, it was scary as hell. Um, I don't know.

TIFFANY: What was scary about it?

MICHAEL: (3) Consequences, and then also you know, the desire to impress her and everything whatever. I actually knew, how important that was and things like that. But, she was really good, ja she was like

TIFFANY: What sort of consequences

MICHAEL: Well things like pregnancy and AIDS and things like that that obviously are in the back of your mind every time you have sex

TIFFANY: Uh huh (3) and did you take,

MICHAEL: Ja

TIFFANY: Precautions (3)

MICHAEL: Ja, so I mean it was probably, unfounded terror but, that (inaudible)

TIFFANY: Was this a planned event, did you know it was going to happen?

MICHAEL: No. no that's one thing that's not supposed to be

TIFFANY: Um

MICHAEL: So (3)

TIFFANY: Could you tell me about that night, when you were in that university room?

MICHAEL: I'm trying to remember now (3) um (3) ja, it was just, one of those evenings when the Grahamstown pubs get very, full and, you don't want to really go around with people any more

TIFFANY: Uh huh

MICHAEL: You know, you're a bit sick and tired of it all. And you run into someone that you know and you're about to (2) go back and have coffee at her. Because you're both sort of, refugees in the same way

TIFFANY: Uh huh

MICHAEL: Well that's sort of what it was about, and it was about three in the morning. And she used to stay in one of the reses um. So we walked down together. And uh, ja (4) that was what happened

TIFFANY: So you um, went to her res room and had coffee. And what happened

TIFFANY: Um, ja no. I can't remember if we did have coffee

TIFFANY: (laughs)

MICHAEL: (laughs 3) That was the precept uh

TIFFANY: (laughs 3)

MICHAEL: (laughs) Ja no that's ja. We used a condom and everything and, as far as I knew I think we'd probably, been drinking.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

MICHAEL: Not sure, I mean that, probably is, important (3)

TIFFANY: What happened when you arrived at the res room?

MICHAEL: Uh (3) we were just talking, because we'd been talking most of the evening but 'cause we'd been (3) sitting away from the crowds I don't know if you remember, where that bar used to have that area away from the crowds. You could sit outside there in the air, its at least better, if the crowds too hectic. I think it was o-week actually, if (laughing) I remember correctly. Um. Ja, I just sort of I don't know. She kissed me I think (5) when you're a teenager you know you always want um to take the whole thing further, but you're scared to. And then when this older girl, pulled into me it was fine.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

MICHAEL: You see (3)

TIFFANY: How did it feel to have an older girl wanting to take it further

MICHAEL: Um cool, ok. um well I don't know there's this sort of thing about how school boys and I think you carry it into your first year (3) I don't know how much further it can go. That older girls (inaudible) can teach you things, and I don't know. So it was cool you know, and I thought quite proud of myself, I'm going to go with her. Um, ja, and obviously more comfortable with the (inaudible)

TIFFANY: Uh huh

MICHAEL: You know, than (inaudible) (2)

TIFFANY: So you were, quite comfortable and actually quite pleased that she was willing to go (inaudible)

MICHAEL: Ja (3) I was actually comfortable through the whole thing really, I was only uncomfortable the next day. When I woke up

TIFFANY: How uncomfortable the next day?

MICHAEL: I don't know, I remember leaving in the morning, like quite early. Had coffee and didn't really speak much and then, uh, left. Only because, it suddenly got so intense.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

MICHAEL: And um. And it's a frightening thing to deal with hey, especially when, you've just got to a new place

TIFFANY: Uh huh

MICHAEL: (2) And um, no one's told you its going to be so intense, it's a really meeting, a communion of minds and stuff, its not just, (inaudible), when that kicked in in the morning it was a bit terrifying so I left.

TIFFANY: Tell me about the meeting of two minds

MICHAEL: Ja um, well when people, come together like that, there's a lot more (3) spent between them, than, than people think you know, there's a lot more, connection. Uh, it not just something you can shake off (3) 'cause you create a new space. Uh, and um (3) it was that that I was dealing with I think. Its interesting actually. Um if it had just been for the (inaudible) it would have been a lot more easier, then she would have been like focused. But its difficult to shake off what people have shown you um, and. What parts of themselves they reveal and what parts they keep for themselves, it ja. Its that that compound which is, like a new (inaudible) its difficult

TIFFANY: So because, you had both revealed, things about, yourselves

MICHAEL: Um

TIFFANY: To each other, it created that third space

MICHAEL: Um

TIFFANY: And then so there was this, uncomfortableness, the next day

MICHAEL: Um. Because it seemed (3) well, slightly cheap. Slightly false (3) you know I thought it was ok it something like that deserves time and, energy, and commitment and that sort of thing I mean I don't know, I'm not an angel in these sort of things but I think, you know I mean if I ever was going to be totally comfortable with sex and things like that, it would have to be (3) um. Ja, just (3) not a steady committed or whatever, just have enough time to go to the (inaudible) people, and uh. And thinking around it, and, and understanding of it really it is you know, and that's why I think we were just, or I was too young and I didn't (3) ja I don't know.

TIFFANY: So (inaudible)

MICHAEL: Talk about it

TIFFANY: Did you have preferred to have gone through that process of getting to know each other, before you had sex with her?

MICHAEL: (laughs 2) It probably would have been helpful, but uh, not at the time no (3) no I was very happy at the time, I wouldn't change it. Now I think I would have (3) but ja.

TIFFANY: At the time, you thought, it was

MICHAEL: No, it was ja losing your virginity is amazing. That next day was amazing, I don't know, I don't know if you remember but, you're just walking around, everything's different

TIFFANY: Tell me about it? What's different?

MICHAEL: I don't know

TIFFANY: What's amazing about it

MICHAEL: Colours are brighter (3) little jokes and things you sort of understand now. Connections, you know what I mean and um. References, all over the place (3) and I did really feel like part of a different society that I didn't really expect. And I can't really remember very well (3) but I do remember that

TIFFANY: The group of people who are now sexually active?

MICHAEL: Ja I suppose so, I suppose so, ja, or who understand what it is because, I mean that's such an important theme in I mean, most literature and media and things like that I mean, if you want to give this, um research a spin, go look at the media. Things like that most of the movies kids are watching and things like that, I mean. Ja, the art everything. I mean its such an important its an integral like corner stone of this art, and if you're outside that, as a young artist, you're not, going to appreciate the work fully, and that, for me, was probably one of the most important things, as well, 'cause I like to write, I'm a writer or, I like to write. (inaudible) but you, you feel outside the work otherwise, and I, I didn't want to. So it was half intellectual as well, that I just wanted to experience I don't know if that's selfish but. Uh

TIFFANY: So you wanted an experience that kind of let you into the whole kind of

MICHAEL: Um

TIFFANY: Understanding and, and, a new perspective on things

MICHAEL: That's right. I think so (3) more than (inaudible) I just think, perspective I think (3) 'cause to some degree a virgin is (3) ja, uh (3) not ignorant because you can understand things, you know, by description or whatever, but the real experience is something, ja, nothing else can substitute for, so, ja. And I've always been a curious person, and I mean sex is fascinating, so, I thought ja.

TIFFANY: Uh, so you were very curious about sex before

MICHAEL: Very ja I think its hormones really, especially ja, young people, and that's the only part, I not (inaudible)

TIFFANY: Had you ever been in a situation where you may have had sex before

MICHAEL: Um lots of times in high school. But that always felt like really, crazy. I didn't dig that at all because, I mean most of the time in high school you know, living with your folks, um (3) you have to, I don't know disappear off somewhere, you know you're at some party and, most of the time we were drunk, it just didn't seem right, there was no there was no occasion in high school where. I would have felt right, then I had a girlfriend for a year and a half in high school though, and we never slept together (4) I also remember that, I don't know why, couldn't give you an answer (4)

TIFFANY: What wasn't right about all of those situations, that you didn't have sex in

MICHAEL: Its like, childish minds, immature minds, you know, its really important to me (3) they, they just weren't ready for like. You know, the magnitude of (inaudible) things (3) people like, the one thing that annoyed me the most was, was when people treat it um, trivial or, purely physical something like that, American movies things like that, it makes me crazy. And uh that's, one thing that's been with me since I was young so

TIFFANY: So you don't see sex as being something that's purely physical?

MICHAEL: Um, I think don't think it can be, I mean, no and and a lot of uh there's a misconception that guys can do that, you know that's bullshit, its really not right

TIFFANY: How is it?

MICHAEL: Um, there's so much more um

TIFFANY: (inaudible)

MICHAEL: Um if each of you look in each other's eyes you're gonna realise that the. Minds trained on the whole thing, I mean you've got to be good, uh for you to enjoy yourself, the minds involved far more important than the body is I mean its, the greatest erogenous zone or whatever its called. Ja no, more, there are levels (3) um (3) cha, do you read some stuff yogi philosophy and stuff like that they've got these seven levels, and that goes from crass physicality all the way up to spiritual planes and whatever like that. And that's basically the way you can apply to sex as well that sort of spectrum of, sort of you know, things like that. And um, ja I mean if you leave it, uh at the physical its going to feel ugly, its going to be over quickly, you both going to be unsatisfied with it. But if you extend it through those other planes and that's, difficult. Um. Ja its its um it aids that third space that sort of thing and that's impossible without the mind being there to an extent, ja

TIFFANY: So, then, other levels are emotional connection

MICHAEL: Um

TIFFANY: And spiritual connection

MICHAEL: Ja, spiritual connection emotional connection intellectual connection. There are games going on, there's like (3) a lot of stuff happening (3) or there should be. I just think to limit it is is stupid and sick, you know it, it doesn't, do it justice. So I think in the end it's I mean it's, a beautiful thing. Sex, you know it's a gift. From god or supreme being or whatever you like to believe in. its something we have you know its something we should use. Correctly, but not that's all I'm saying you know I I feel uncomfortable if it isn't used correctly

TIFFANY: What is correctly?

MICHAEL: Um, authentically if you know what I mean, um, with regard to the other person with regard to yourself. With regard to causing, I mean not causing damage, to the person that kind of thing, I think if it's a creative, healthy, organic thing (3) um, then its alright. The danger is when people, hide away from things. That's where perversions live that kind of thing that's where things get fucked up because, um when people hide things away and I think the most important thing for sex is for you to be able to talk openly, frankly about it and get it right, you know what I mean, so I think there are lots of couples and that that just don't talk and they just don't get it right (3) so, ja. My overall attitude to it is essentially, very positive

TIFFANY: And, um. In what way does this, all of, um, what you are saying about the mind being very important in, within in a physical, interaction like sex, um, where where was all of this in your first experience? Was it present?

MICHAEL: Um, ja, no it was, um because. For the first thing, the only reason we started talking was because we got on really well, I mean we read the same books we watched the same movies sort of thing you know, bright girl. And it was interesting, so, already we were it was sort of a mutual respect you know

TIFFANY: Uh huh

MICHAEL: As students or whatever I don't know, generally first year so. Um, ja so there was some degree of this and it made me feel a little bit better I suppose, but ja, just

TIFFANY: Did it make you feel as though you including those other levels and not just the physical

MICHAEL: Ja, not just um (3) (inaudible). Um but (3) ja. I think I would have liked to (4) spend more time with her in the morning. After that you know, awake together

TIFFANY: Um

MICHAEL: Do something together the next day or whatever. 'cause its easy to limit it just to the bed space. And y- you know, that's also a mistake, ja I mean this is all like hyper critical stuff, after the fact you know and and I don't think it was a negative experience at all, but uh

TIFFANY: What was positive about it?

MICHAEL: Many things it was wonderful. It was really good (3) um. I learnt things. About women. Stuff like that. The body's anatomy, like, you understand the people you share the planet with you know, you what I mean. And that's quite a thing, I mean you've been locked away from them basically since. You're old enough to get institutionalised and in South Africa (inaudible) its bizarre. University is, or especially

Rhodes, is the first time you get, understand each other, completely if you know what I mean. And that's important I think (3)

(knock at the door)

(interview interrupted)

(tape stops)

TIFFANY: Um. We were talking about, um. What was positive about. What your experience was like.

MICHAEL: Um yes. Well it taught me about women. Not girls, if you know what I mean. That distinction (coughs 4) and um there's another thing it does it makes you a lot less um, giggly and useless. If you know what I mean

TIFFANY: Um not really

MICHAEL: Um (laughs 2) when people discuss things like that um. When you're at high school and, have no experience or whatever. You tend to respond in a, sort of hysterical, nervous, giggly, sort of, ridiculous sense and that's uh, school boys and school girls a like I think. And then that left, that changed, I think, to a more mature understanding, of things (4) knowing that. That you actually knew that you weren't frightened with your ignorance any more (3) that nervous energy I suppose which is quite nice (7)

TIFFANY: Could you reflect a little on what that. Experience of having sex for the first time has meant for you

MICHAEL: (3) Well (5) ja, I think it was actually quite a good thing for me, um (3) ja I mean we still see each other we're still friends and everything so there's no, animosity or anything, but for me personally, I understand (3) things better now um. I've had relationships afterwards, and I've had sex in them um, and its been great you know I haven't been clumsy of, because, the whole, experience I mean I've got a lot more confident and uh. Its uh ja, it's a positive thing. That um (4) not really sure (3) um, ja, little older little more wiser you know that kind of thing I think (3) um (5) its funny you know, um that first time was actually fine but I I've had sex times after that, which freaked me out badly, which made me want to stay away from girls kind of thing (3) but the first time wasn't like that I don't know why. It (inaudible) (4)

TIFFANY: What freaked you out about those, those experiences?

MICHAEL: I have no idea but they I'd just roll away. And I'm just not interested, which is funny because it surprises the hell out of them when you do it, guys aren't supposed to be like that, but it happens and a i mean more than once (8) uh, you know, it wasn't a. I'm actually quite glad, about it it wasn't a nightmare experience, and I know a lot of people's first times have been, not great, but it was, pretty good, I've had times after that which were worse (3) so ja (6)

TIFFANY: So kind of, in total, it was a positive experience that um. Started to teach you about women, started to show you a bit more about

MICHAEL: About life

TIFFANY: The experience that you, needed to know about, about life.

MICHAEL: Ja (coughs)

TIFFANY: And it did that in a kind of a non-threatening and uh, just a

MICHAEL: And I think I put that down to communication

TIFFANY: Uh huh

MICHAEL: That's why it was like that, 'cause we talked like constantly, um. Ja before and after and everything

TIFFANY: What did you talk about?

MICHAEL: Everything. Um from, from interests books videos that kind of stuff, um in the beginning, to like really you know kind of graphic stuff, uh whatever. Just questions though, I mean if I had any questions, I'd just ask, you know, it wasn't like graphic you know, ugly, just graphic as in um very, direct. And I got good answers, which was fantastic. So that, ja, that was very important because if I wanted to know something I didn't feel embarrassed about it I just ask, and um ja, ten to one they just, tell you. So that was odd but what I really put it down to. And that's obviously also the partner, you know.

TIFFANY: So, although you hadn't known her very long you did have sort of communicative

MICHAEL: Ja

TIFFANY: Communicative. Connection.

MICHAEL: (2) Ja, she had interests in things. One of those people you're going to like. Or you know you're going to like them. Certain things appeal to you. But um, ja, it was just um, endless endless talking.

TIFFANY: What did that connection feel like, I mean, that connection between (inaudible)

MICHAEL: Deeper than anything I've ever had before, much deeper, on so many levels, on like, ja it was just very heavy. Very heavy experience ja (3) 'cause I'd just, just left home (coughs) so I'm on my own for the first time (3) I don't know strange. Felt a lot older, in the morning, um. A lot more sort of in control (3) um. It was a very cool feeling (4) I felt like ja, I wasn't a boy any more (7)

TIFFANY: And what the um, feeling of being with her I mean what was that, feeling like um of um, sitting and talking with her, what was that like?

MICHAEL: uh it was great, it was like these new vistas opening you know. Um (4) female counterpoint you know like the, the other side of the whole thing, and um, when a woman is so intimate you can, so as to answer any question you, can pose, its fascinating, there's a whole world of information you don't know about, you know ja its, great (3) um and confirmed another whole bunch of my suspicions about sort of, you know humanity just being humanity, and I mane she was so similar to me in so many ways girls and guys are actually it exploded the myth, that's what I think is the most important think like the kind of duality between like male and female you know, its just not reality. Um, they're such similar entities, such similar beings, and that's the (inaudible) and that was really good (6) its it's the problem you see 'cause I went to a all guys school. And um, ja, its you see sort of um, poster board images of girls almost you know there's no (inaudible) behind her, just visually stimulating or whatever (3) but um, the reality's different you know and I only realised that once I got here. Around that time (4) you know but I always suspected and I had I've had girlfriends before, but I don't know (3) just knowledge

TIFFANY: What was it about having, sex with somebody or that particular relationship that, showed you, that depth or, what is behind that poster cut out.

MICHAEL: Um. I don't know if it was directly linked to sex but it might have been because, um, ja because sex is such a, like really intimate thing. Um. Ja, you reveal everything or, like, well that's what I sort of demand I don't know everything just like, total honesty, you know whether it hurts or whatever, and that's what I like told her and she said that was fine, that's how it was, so. In that sense then um. I don't know, everything's permissible, you just, the ugly or you know, I just hate kitsch. Like it annoys me. So like if your stuffs ugly its fine, its passable because we must know about it its important, 'cause it makes up the whole you know so, that's what it was you know, its just this sort of what do you call it (laughs) discourse, when um, no holds barred. And I've never had that in uh any other situation actually, the same kind of talking, outside of ja, the bedroom or whatever, you don't see it in normal life because people I don't know. They've got reasons (3) maybe drunken parties or whatever but its not the same level as, that is (4) and uh ja

TIFFANY: It felt like a very authentic experience?

MICHAEL: Ja, um. It did feel like hey, its funny 'cause I I don't know from her side it would be fascinating to, get (laughs)

TIFFANY: (laughs 3)

MICHAEL: (laughing) An interview with her um (laughs) but for me ja. And I think that's all that matters I suppose

TIFFANY: Did you feel as though it was mutual

MICHAEL: Ja. And I'm not, I'm not easily fooled I suppose, but. It did feel

TIFFANY: Would it be important for it to be mutual

MICHAEL: Ja, very important. But primary is probably just for it to feel mutual (laughs 3)

TIFFANY: (laughs)

MICHAEL: If you know what I mean

TIFFANY: Ja

MICHAEL: But ja, she was she was quite (3) interested I (4) but also, not to keen to settle down or whatever. I still had those school boy ideas of sort of like, getting together, for a long time, sort of just boyfriend and girlfriend. And um. Not that I think

that's a school boy idea but you know, (coughs) doesn't happen all that often, she was just no no way like you know fast living city kind of thing, which was. And I didn't know anything about that, you know I mean I was brought up in a small town (3) in overseas and then in in a small city. so I didn't know about that, way of life. It was very scary actually, I mean that was scary you know. That in Jo'burg this happens all the time and its its fast and people don't care, um. Its terrifying

TIFFANY: What is scary about that?

MICHAEL: Its fucking horrible, its inhumane. Its inhuman I hate it. Its terrible it's a machine. I hate Jo'burg, it horrible

TIFFANY: (laughs)

MICHAEL: (laughs 2) But ja that's just, not sort of the right, way of, conducting yourself really, I mean that's just running away from everything, that's just closeting yourself off from anything real and that's kitsch you know, I hate that. So you know

TIFFANY: So ultimately the relationship,

MICHAEL: Ja, it didn't work, different worlds you know, ja. Maybe I scared her too intense, I mean obviously I must have been hell of an intense I come to think about it

TIFFANY: (laughs)

MICHAEL: (laughs 2) You know, drop this uh speed and you know slow down and, give and understand and grow all this things and I'm fucking eighteen year old, please. She must have been terrified.

TIFFANY: (laughs 2)

MICHAEL: (laughs 2) And it makes sense now you know but, ja

TIFFANY: And you weren't terrified?

MICHAEL: Ja I was scared too. But I thought that was the right way to go about it you know, I thought. If we're going to do this thing we might as well (7) but ja, you know, perspectives of sex or whatever are they're different. And I think the bigger the city, uh you know, I'm not sure really. Ja Durban's the same.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

MICHAEL: (4) Its just so anonymous. And you you might not see that person again so you, you know, safe. You're whatever you want, you don't even have to be yourself, people take other names, in big cities (4) ja, I must admit I don't understand that too well. But uh, ja. If its just that, scared me a little bit, about being so young and then, asking so much rules, um. 'cause it does it scares the hell out of people, but they'll know, I don't want to deal with it.

TIFFANY: What is scary about it, what don't people?

MICHAEL: Honesty, people hate honesty. I think. You know. They spend their lives in make-up and clothes that hide their figure and. I don't know gym, those ridiculous gym exercises which morph your body out of its natural shape. Creatine and all those stimulants and intoxicants that are designed, you know, to either change your body or change your perspective of things, and it's all over, its in your face, what's going around you know, that's what I think it is (3) people are just terrified to just stand naked. It scares them so badly (3) know what I mean, that's that's one thing I know. Um (5) maybe, I don't know, maybe its just young people. Maybe they're not formed yet or, but I don't think its even that, because I think its what it is is if someone sees that or, that power over you people are defensive, that's all it is. And I'm probably the same, I mean we're talking about people, but I just you know

TIFFANY: Defensive about what?

MICHAEL: (3) Um (5) defensive about (4) ja, they just don't want anyone to get any uh, dirt on them any, kind of. ja, have any way of getting to them. People construct shields, you know what I mean. Which is a problem in sex 'cause you don't want a shield between you, you shouldn't. ja

TIFFANY: Were there any shields in your, first experience?

MICHAEL: No, I don't think so (3) or she no, it frustrates me, it saddens me (3) but um, but this is the whole question premarital sex I mean is it really, going to be right, ever. Is it ever going to feel totally right you know. And I'm not particularly religious about the whole thing I know (4) the practicality works, I mean it's a good union, a marriage is ja, its alright its contracts and everything, it works. But. Maybe, maybe you do need that kind of thing (3) that kind of reassurance, I know, that's strange. Depends what you

want though really, I suppose. Can be nice for the pleasure, I suppose. But depends on how you're going to invest of yourself (3) I don't know (3) interesting (5)

TIFFANY: Well, I think, I've asked all the questions I wanted to ask. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

MICHAEL: (laughing) No, no

TIFFANY: (laughs 2)

MICHAEL: (laughs)

TIFFANY: You're in an interview, you are supposed to speak

MICHAEL: I surprised myself I just kept talking so

TIFFANY: OK, thanks

MICHAEL: Thanks very much

Appendix G: The story of an unexpected but very affirming night out, just like in the movies

TIFFANY: Um. Could you tell me, the story about the first time you had sex?

CAMERON: Cool. Um, I can't remember the precise date it was about two years ago, it was um, end of august some time.

TIFFANY: Um huh

CAMERON: I went out to this bar with Tim, drinking a few beers, playing a few, you know playing some pool, after a while cruised off cruised over to another bar. Got some beers, chatting, you know (inaudible). And he uh, introduced me to this uh, girl, I think I'll call her Helen for now.

TIFFANY: (laughs) OK.

CAMERON: 'Cause I don't want her to be identified.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: And um. Ja he was saying ja this this woman has incredible hands, she give a bloody good back massage. So he said, ah, like Cameron, you have to experience this, like. Great cool.

TIFFANY: This was all in the bar?

CAMERON: Ja, and she is good at massage too. Stresses just melted away.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: And uh, well he, uh he told her like uh I'm also pretty good at it as well, so uh, she gave me a back massage I gave her a back massage. Which she liked. And we like sat down at a table and. Massage can be just like basically um, carried on a bit and then, hands started t- started to uh, wander a bit (3) her hands I mean

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: And um. Ja, so, uh kissed her and then. (inaudible) hands still pretty much, moving around all over the body.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: She was, ja it um (4) 'cause like, before before then, I mean like a, I had a couple of (3) chances here and there. Had one in uh, first year (inaudible) (3) decided that that would be being stupid.

TIFFANY: Why did you decide that that would be stupid?

CAMERON: Well. Uh you see I thought I saw, a, something really cool in the other person's personality.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: I turned out to be one hundred percent wrong. And uh, you know have you heard the expression "different world views"?

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: Worse. (1)

TIFFANY: OK.

CAMERON: So I decided that I would no.

TIFFANY: Did you discover this only later or.

CAMERON: Um. Well this was over, in uh, first year. Like I went out with this girl, not Helen

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: But I'll call, I'll call her Lisa.

TIFFANY: OK.

CAMERON: Went out with her for, about a month and uh. It was getting towards that point that (inaudible) think like that feeling that, it was just not good you know.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: Especially seeing as, I was getting irritated with her quite a quite a lot. This is not the kind of thing you want in as relationship. (inaudible) she ended up quasi-stalking me for the next two years, uh you know, that's life.

TIFFANY: Um, that's quite scary.

CAMERON: Ag, you get used to it. (1) Any way, back to Helen.

TIFFANY: Um

CAMERON: I like. 'Cause

TIFFANY: You were in the bar, feeling each other. Could you tell me what that felt like?

CAMERON: Well for one it felt um (3) it felt a little strange, a little. Not like strange as in whose looking, but like strange, strange as in. OK well I definitely didn't expect anything like this when I came out and, trying not to look forward to much 'cause that always like got me into trouble in the past.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: One way or another (clears throat 3) and (3) ja um, after a while like uh (3) we just like uh, ja the place started closing down so we left. Um, walked back to my place, chatting as uh as we went ah about this and that, very intelligent person, very clever. Something I had been looking for for a while, 'cause if I couldn't, 'cause I had thought (clears throat 2) ok uh 'scuse me a sec (coughs 3) ah, that's better

TIFFANY: You OK?

CAMERON: 'Cause for like quite a while I'd had like. The thought that, ja well. It's got to be somebody that like I really care you know, relationship situation. Got to the point that I realised that. A (laughing) I would have to wait a really long time for that. And B that the whole, simple issue of sex would become one major thing. And uh

TIFFANY: What do you mean major thing?

CAMERON: It would like over shadow our, over shadow life and, like all aspects of life, or, reaction um, not reaction (3) what do you call it uh, interaction with people.

TIFFANY: I'm not sure I understand um.

CAMERON: It would become. A little bit of a hang up and it would act, with less that uh, well actually, with very little confidence or. I would say, you know like, uh, a few mental complications that could arise from it, so I thought no no no. Lets just find someone who, I like and who I can, connect with.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: And ja so I like

TIFFANY: What do you mean by connect with?

CAMERON: Get on with, um be on the same, wavelength, you know

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: And um, so like I say x and says y or even z. like.

TIFFANY: OK

CAMERON: And um (3) somebody whose, very (4) um natural about things. No pretensions, you know what I mean?

TIFFANY: Um huh

CAMERON: (inaudible)

TIFFANY: Someone's whose sort of easy to be with? (1)

CAMERON: Ja, easy and en- enjoyable to be with and (3) 'cause uh, sexual, the sexual attraction thing, uh is pas and, is part and parcel of that 'cause uh, without that well, kind of negates the rest of (inaudible) (3) She was um (3) trifle on the, uh trifle on the heavy side but that didn't make a difference. Then we got home uh, had some coffee. And um, (inaudible) about massage before then so. I gave, I got my oil from up stairs and gave her a, good back massage.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: And uh, she gave me a good back massage and then. Turned over, and, started making out, how much detail do you want?

TIFFANY: (laughs) How ever much you want to give me.

CAMERON: Ja so

TIFFANY: I'm not looking for gory details.

CAMERON: Uh huh

TIFFANY: I just want, the experience. (1)

CAMERON: So we started making out and this was like. A little bit unusual, and my folks were like, upstairs. Thick ceilinged floor though.

TIFFANY: (laughs) OK. Um, OK could we back track a bit uh, what were you um, I'm curious I suppose, what were you thinking, this kind of unexpected thing happened to you and, then you walked home with her, and I'm sort of curious as to what you were feeling or thinking, while all of this was happening.

CAMERON: Well one I was feeling (3) like is this real or is this just, not real.

TIFFANY: (laughs)

CAMERON: Like a few, a few questions in my mind like, OK like, where is this going to end. Both in terms of that night and like further on. And I was trying not to think, not to think too much about the immediate future, trying to. Expect anything.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: Uh

TIFFANY: You were just trying to enjoy what was happening as it was happening.

CAMERON: Ja.

TIFFANY: OK.

CAMERON: Walking along up the road, and, see this and chat about that, and like it's a bit of a walk up you know, ja ja its like (3) ja.

TIFFANY: OK (3)

CAMERON: And (3) ja so. Started, started making, like. (inaudible) started to make like the move you know.

TIFFANY: Uh

CAMERON: And she kind of um (3) I uh uh I told her it was my uh, my first time and she was like. Seriously? Like she like, she hadn't thought about that.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: (2) She liked the idea.

TIFFANY: (laughs)

CAMERON: She, well, ja, she um. She had fun showing me a few things.

TIFFANY: (laughing) What do you think she liked about it, was it that was it I mean what do you think she liked about it being your first time, was it that she could show you things?

CAMERON: I think it was an aspect of. Uh, she could uh, show me things, uh, probably a bit of an ego an ego trip.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: Why not? (1) Um (3) that mean, everything up to that had been pretty (3) sensual (4) with um

TIFFANY: (inaudible)

CAMERON: No uh, like lots of uh, lots of uh massaging and (3) ja just um (3) this really kiff (3) electricity between us, it was really. I don't know, it like its impossible to describe, it was (3) quite strong but at the same time. A relaxed strength. If that makes any sense.

TIFFANY: Could you try and describe it more?

CAMERON: We had like um (3) you could tell that there was like a, lot of sexual energy coming, coming off. But quite often with that there is, a little bit of nervousness.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: For, whatever reason that wasn't present. (1)

TIFFANY: So you were completely comfortable, completely um. Just enjoying what was happening as it was happening, um (3) and um (3) and just enjoying the, the attraction and the chemistry, electricity that was there.

CAMERON: Ja. That and trying to make as good an impression as I could (laughing) with absolutely no experience. Well not absolutely no experience.

TIFFANY: What was that like?

CAMERON: It was. Very interesting, it was um (6) um (3) I don't know how to describe it (5) well for starters um, my body was shaking quite a bit. Although that has happened on a few occasions afterwards. Relaxes after a while, but, ja. You know like nervous energy before an exam?

TIFFANY: Uh huh (3) OK.

CAMERON: Ja (3) Just uh

TIFFANY: It kind of sounds like in a sense you were worried that you'd get something wrong?

CAMERON: Uh, there was a, a bit of that ja, and like, um, want to make things as pleasant for the other person as possible you know, want to make things as good.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: Ja (4) And, what else? (3) um (7) found stamina a little, not exactly a little. Not exactly a problem in terms of over all stamina more in terms of getting timing right. (1) Ja. (3) Got a bit better at it though.

TIFFANY: You mean in this experience?

CAMERON: Ja. And um. Ja, then (3) we talked for a while and um (3) fell asleep (3) woke up the next day hi how are you, like ah (3) (laughing) went at it again. (2) Um.

TIFFANY: What was it like to wake up next to her?

CAMERON: (4) A little strange, but very comfortable.

TIFFANY: Strange in what way?

CAMERON: Strange in that it was. Different from my normal wake up in the morning routine (3) um (3)

TIFFANY: OK so you had sex with her again and, and then what happened?

CAMERON: Well um, uh phone up, uh, two days later.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: Ta, cha, she a, I sent her an email like she sent me an email, but that doesn't really count. And um. Then, the next Saturday, had a. um birthday thing organised at uh, what's that place called. (1)

TIFFANY: Um, I don't know

CAMERON: It doesn't matter. Had a gather there Tim. Dave. Couple of people and um. Ja invited her along (clears throat). Played darts, talked about this, that and the other. There was this game, I can't remember what was it uh, it was called, in my pants, you know like one of those you've got to like take uh. Some kind of a. either from a film. Uh advertisement, or a book and

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: Remember character, or the film or slowly (inaudible) (3) you've got to remember all that and you've got only about three seconds to think.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: And of course it ended up actually ridiculous and we're all getting nicely drunk, and talking lots of shit. (1) And. Ja, it was the sexual, energy was still there and its (3) built up again. Um, the feelings started again.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: (3) And yet it is (inaudible). (1)

TIFFANY: OK

CAMERON: Grabbed a pizza, and uh (3) that was interesting (laughing 3) there was (clears throat 4) there was a friend of mine on this side.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: This one guy I know like. And there was her on this side and um. And he was lank drunk, and not all that aware. (1) And the hands were, her hands and my hands were definitely moving around, and at the same time, trying to make it not allowed to work out what was going on (laughing) so it was quite

TIFFANY: (laughs)

CAMERON: Quite unusual. Quite, cool like a little rebellious in a way you know

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: Ended up at, uh (3) another bar.

TIFFANY: Oh ja.

CAMERON: Played, played some pool and then. (1) Ja, she grabbed my shirt and took me into the girl's bathroom. First time I'd been in there.

TIFFANY: (laughs)

CAMERON: Um

TIFFANY: So what was that experience like?

CAMERON: (3) (sighs) Very good. Very (3) very amazing, I mean uh. Closed I closed the door. You know bathrooms of course. Um. Shirts got lost, and then completely spontaneously she uh went down on me. (1) That was well. She'd also um done that the first time. It was, (laughing) a completely new experience

TIFFANY: (laughing) What was kiff about it? You said kiff um, what was it that you were enjoying about it?

CAMERON: Oof

TIFFANY: Was it just the return of the sexual attraction

CAMERON: The return of the, well the, the return of the sexual attraction. Um. Her body, well like, ja, some aspects of her body, she was, she was a little over weight but that didn't make any, real difference. Um. The situation, like being in a. being in a girl's bathroom, that was really cool.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: Um. (2) That and feeling, that. It was almost not real life. It was almost something you see in a film. (2)

TIFFANY: The whole situation or just that night?

CAMERON: Um. Just, just the those those uh aspects, the uh. More sexual aspects

TIFFANY: OK

CAMERON: Ja. (1) That and the barman going, uh, knocking knocking on the door, and trying to open the door at one point. (2) Just put my foot in front of the door. (1) Gave me a very interesting expression after that. (4) Ja, then. Saw her again a few days after that.

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: (2) Another back massage she was lank stressed at work I was stressed I was lank stressed at work and it just. Every time we gave each other a back massage it would just, work into a sexual encounter. (2) Um.

TIFFANY: Why do you think that was?

CAMERON: Uh a combination of um. Attraction, sensuality. (2) um pheromones (laughing) I don't know

TIFFANY: OK (4) OK so what happened you, uh, you've now mentioned (inaudible) three times did that sort of start a relationship?

CAMERON: No, I pretty much thought, thought from the word go though I didn't know, that it was going to be a fling which confirmed that uh later on. The fling lasted for a little while and then, it ended. I see her every now and then and ask each other how how we're doing and. And we can chat about things. Like this film and that and, ah.

TIFFANY: So you still see each other, and your relationship is still at least friendly.

CAMERON: Ja. Most of my relationships with uh, women I've had, any kind of relations with are friendly. (1)

TIFFANY: Do you have any, uh sorry am I interrupting

CAMERON: Except one relationship, but I had to work really hard to be uh, perceived to be a bastard, (inaudible)

TIFFANY: OK

CAMERON: Three years of um, popping up at the most unexpected times, is a, little freaky. (1) (coughs 2)

TIFFANY: Um, uh how did you feel about your first experience being a fling? (2) Do you perceive it negatively do you perceive it positively. (1) Neither way?

CAMERON: I see it ambivalently.

TIFFANY: OK

CAMERON: It was um. (1) 'Cause it was real, if only for a short time, everything real is. (2) Is meant and natural and, right for then.

TIFFANY: OK

CAMERON: (3) Um

TIFFANY: Could you tell me something, a little about what the experience meant for you? Like, looking back on it, how has it made you feel, about sex, um. I don't know, just the meaning what did it mean for you?

CAMERON: Well. Firstly, well it had some (inaudible) all at once but after a while I realised that uh, sex was not nearly as big an issue as I had thought it in my head before then

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: Quite naturally, I'm sure that happens with just about every body. (1) And uh. (1) Um, could you repeat the question again there was something else I was thinking of.

TIFFANY: What did the experience mean for you, thinking back on it what has it meant for the rest of your. (1) What do you think about it, (inaudible) now?

CAMERON: Ah yes, well. I remember now at the t- te- time then and, maybe now and then ah I, I think about it or. You know when I'm like feeling a little down or. (1) Ja, but

uh, it ah, 'cause before 'c- before that, logically, I'd known or, pretty much known, that I was attractive, sexy, that I was. In my own right quite a cool guy. Odd and weird certainly but, hey that's life. And it just uh. Made me feel that you know.

TIFFANY: It affirmed you?

CAMERON: Um, 'cause uh before that it was, it was just logic. After that it was feeling. If you walk down the street and you feel, attractive and sexy. OK maybe, you don't want everybody uh, uh watching you when you walk down the street though, you know you just walk down the street and even if nobody's there, nobody's looking you feel cool you feel, you feel great. Um

TIFFANY: So it gave you a certain amount of confidence in yourself?

CAMERON: Ja. And uh, uh. (1) And talking to talking to women when it when talking got to (4) more like a sexual change over you know what I mean, you know conversation things like that.

TIFFANY: When conversation becomes flirting?

CAMERON: Ja. 'Cause I mean, I'd always, like well not always but, uh, I'd manage to get uh uh, with some practice, got it to the point where I could get, up to up to the like pretty far pretty far with ah uh flirting. Quite comfortably no problems, and then, soon as it moved moved away from uh. Metaphors and things I started getting a bit (inaudible).

(laughs) ja

TIFFANY: So it kind of gave you, I don't know, a real experience from which to work from?

CAMERON: Ja. Well.

TIFFANY: You said that sex wasn't as big an issue as you thought it was, what did you think it was? That may sound like a stupid question, but

CAMERON: Well, basically, I thought it was. As it was. No, well, um. I knew it was ah, a small aspect of life you've got so many experiences and its just one

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: But yet because I'd never had sex sex before I thought about it. Quite a lot.

TIFFANY: Why do you think that was?

CAMERON: Ag. One I wanted uh wanted uh the experience

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: (2) Two, I was meeting, some really attractive women around, like all over the place, and I was just. I was just, down right horny

TIFFANY: OK

CAMERON: (3) And uh, ja. (6)

TIFFANY: OK so um. (2) If you had placed all of that, you placed a lot of emphasis or importance on actually having sex and you discovered that, it wasn't that important once you had. But at the same time it gave you a certain amount of confidence and affirmation of who you are

CAMERON: Ja. (1)

TIFFANY: OK (2) Is there anything else you can think of that that, experience taught you or showed you, um. Made you think about

CAMERON: Um. (11) Ja, one thing, but its just uh, a liking. I like a certain amount of sexual aggressiveness.

TIFFANY: Um (inaudible)

CAMERON: And I love noisy lovers.

TIFFANY: (laughs) That may have been more detail that I needed, um so um, it kind of taught you about your own sexual preferences.

CAMERON: Ja.

TIFFANY: OK. So it was the beginning, it was kind of a discovery.

CAMERON: Completely

TIFFANY: (inaudible) (2) Can you say, if, this experience has influence any, of your subsequent sexual experience in any way?

CAMERON: (2) Um. (2) Let me try and work out who was the second. (4) Um (4) ja, I just, moved with um. More confidence, um, entered, able to able to perceive um. (1) Whether someone's attracted to me a bit better, not that I'm any expert uh now but uh. (inaudible) It's a learning thing it grows as you, grows as you do.

TIFFANY: So you kind of, gained confidence not only in yourself, but yourself in social situations.

CAMERON: And in my perceptions ja. What I perceive.

TIFFANY: OK (6)

CAMERON: There was one thing that was sadly lacking in that first experience though. Intimacy but uh.

TIFFANY: What do you mean?

CAMERON: (2) Parking off, on a roof. Night time. (1) Bottle of wine looking at the stars with a woman just. Talking shit look at that ja wadda wadda wadda wadda. Talk about this and that and. (1) Ja.

TIFFANY: Some sort of, um. Romance? Um

CAMERON: Yep.

TIFFANY: You're not talking about anything sexual there so is it kind of um. (1) I'm not sure, um.

CAMERON: Romance is a good word for it.

TIFFANY: Romance, OK. You did say that you felt a connection with, what was her name Helen, you did say that you felt a connection with her, um

CAMERON: Um

TIFFANY: But that's not romance?

CAMERON: No, not, well. It wasn't romance but it was. (3) (sighs) Uh um it was, there was talking to somebody who. I could talk to who I could understand who could understand me

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: And, whe-, I mean you you don't just, understand per-, like a, what they're saying to understand the context as well without having to, explain the context

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: So you're talking about, like uh (sighs) (2) I don't know like any, philosophical thing you say like x and, y is really obvious so they say z.

TIFFANY: OK

CAMERON: Um. Which was, um, like a, very unusual, I get that every now, every now and then. Something, something very similar to, beach vibe.

TIFFANY: I don't understand.

CAMERON: At the beach. Its as if you don't have any inhibitions hence you don't have any of, the major worries, or stresses, or. (1) Hesitations or anything. Just completely natural it flows its just. (2) There or it isn't, um.

TIFFANY: So you had some sort of. You had quite a deep level of connection that was, of flow and naturalness, sounds like you were quite comfortable with her, but that, never really lead to intimacy or romance.

CAMERON: No.

TIFFANY: Do you have any idea why any ideas why? Would you have liked it to?

CAMERON: (2) In retrospect. No. Then. Ja. Although then, after about, after about a after about a month and ah, run into her a few more times its, its evident that uh, what was felt by both of us, was one of those things that peaks quickly and then. Just drops down, you know what I mean?

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: Quite momentary. (3)

TIFFANY: OK so. It was too transitory for there to be that romance.

CAMERON: Precisely

TIFFANY: OK. (3)

CAMERON: With, my uh, first um, I suppose I'd have to call it my only relationship and that wasn't exactly a brilliant one that was the one in first year. Um. Ok it wasn't romance either, but I was trying for it. (2) Didn't work.

TIFFANY: Um is this romance aspect important to you?

CAMERON: Completely, definitely, I mean we're not talking about stars and violins because A I think the (inaudible) clichéd, and two I just don't I don't believe in that I think its. Its not realistic, the whole film scene thing. But I men, I've had romantic things with uh with women before though. Almost every time, its been (inaudible). And then the other times where, well you know what I mean, its like um. (1) Getting romance, and

having the sexual thing at the same time I'm having, I'm finding quite a bit of. Trouble finding, some one there, there's one person last year but. Alas she had a boyfriend six and a half thousand miles away so, that was ah, doomed from the start in terms of that one, although that ended. (1) Very, amazingly. Well. There was nothing any of either of us can, can blame the other person for even if we wanted to. (3)

TIFFANY: So, romance and sexual attraction don't seem to go together?

CAMERON: Ah, not yet but um, I live in hope

TIFFANY: But you would like them to?

CAMERON: (1) Definitely. (1)

TIFFANY: What is um, I suppose again this might sound like a stupid question but what is the difference between sexual attraction and romance?

CAMERON: (1) (laughs 2) Something I still, still haven't quite worked out. But its. (4) its for example. You you're sitting next to a woman, you you're ve- ver- extremely sexual attracted to them. Now, if its just sex. (1) Then there isn't that feeling of, you know like arm in arm, and um. (2) Sitting on a hilltop like the sea or at the movies watching something and just. (3) Being around the other person, being with the other person, um, being very sexually attracted to that person, but where sexual attraction doesn't take up. All of the time with that person. That doesn't sound particularly healthy.

TIFFANY: So there's, um almost something, more that, sex, um?

CAMERON: Ja, something more than sex, although, that being said. It's linked with sex, you know what I mean?

TIFFANY: Um

CAMERON: You

TIFFANY: Tell, tell me how you see them being linked.

CAMERON: Well for starters, I mean uh. If you have the romance, but you don't have the sex, um, OK I'm talking like relationship situations now. The thing is not I mean like I mean this is like a, a give and its. And its quite long lasting you know what I mean.

Then. I can't see it like really ending, well, there'd be you know like sensual like sexual tensions, there'd be, ag all sorts of like little complications there. But then on the other side, if you get sex with no romance, you get. Well you get your, well you get, you get the kiff feeling, you get the sex, but, you still feel lonely, so, something, a combination of those two is. What you need. (14)

TIFFANY: OK well um, I think I've, covered everything that I've wanted to, um, but is there anything else you'd like to mention or add or (2) tell me, anything that you feel is important to understand the experience of, the things we've been talking about.

(inaudible)

CAMERON: Yes. Um, at school I was um a tortoise.

TIFFANY: A tortoise.

CAMERON: I stayed in my shell mostly

TIFFANY: Uh huh

CAMERON: Chatting with women did not come easily at all in fact uh it hardly ever happened, it started getting better, like, standard nine, you know like matric, getting a bit better. So. I entered first year, and uh, things with, not a hell of a lot of knowledge on. Women, how women think, this that and the other. Worked it out over time though. Took some effort (clears throat 2) but then, everything does.

TIFFANY: So, do you feel that, that kind of, impacted on your first experience?

CAMERON: Um

TIFFANY: In what way?

CAMERON: Well if I wasn't in my shell early on I could, sex might have happened sooner, then again that would change history.

TIFFANY: Would, um. If sex had happened sooner do you think the experience would have been different?

CAMERON: (2) (sighs 1) Difficult one to answer. Could have been pretty much the same, could have been different. I mean, if I'd had, just for. (inaudible) If I'd had sex for the first time at the age of sixteen I might have started walking round, walking round and uh, I might have (inaudible) a bit of a, arrogant prick.

I; Uh huh

CAMERON: I don't know that for a certain and it doesn't really sound like me, but. All things are possible so. (2)

TIFFANY: So if you don't think you would become an arrogant prick, I can say it sounds as though I suppose it kind of taught you humility or something.

CAMERON: Uh huh

TIFFANY: But. (1) I'm not sure, what do you think that did teach you?

CAMERON: (1) Um. (1) It told me, well uh it taught me like um. You know the old cliché thing there's a there's a time for everything. (1) And that um. (3) It taught me to um, stop trying to um, analyse things too much. 'Cause I tend to do that rather a lot, tend to over analyse. It always works in spirals so it completely blows your mind a part. (1) Or at least you know like, you you're not gonna you're not gonna. Work out what's going on when you're trying to (inaudible), if you're analysing too much. Um. What was that other thing. (7) Taught me that, um. For quite a while, and with no apparent reason and with, no apparent thought at the time, I had been. Underestim-esta-etsta-under thpub uh, sorry.

TIFFANY: Underestimating

CAMERON: Underestimating myself for, quite a few years. So then I um I uh. Tried to deal with that.

TIFFANY: You were underestimating yourself because you hadn't had sex?

CAMERON: Well no that was just, you see, this uh, this uh, underestimating, goes to. A whole lot of exp-, a whole lot of different experiences, in different genres if you will.

TIFFANY: OK

CAMERON: And that being one which, contributed to the

TIFFANY: OK

CAMERON: Ja, so it wasn't just the sex it was the. Uh all the experiences that I was, that I was going through, pretty much the same. Pretty much within. The first, well I mean like the first three years at Rhodes.

TIFFANY: OK

CAMERON: Ja (4)

TIFFANY: OK, anything (2)

CAMERON: Can't can't think of anything off hand.

TIFFANY: OK, thank you very much

(tape ends)

