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ABSTRACT

This study pays attention to youth of Indian-descent within the context of sexuality and identity and their role in HIV/AIDS. By gaining an understanding of this interaction between identity and sexuality, it adds to our knowledge of the social dynamics that contribute to the prevalence or lack of prevalence of HIV/AIDS within population groups. This study uses a social constructionist discourse analytic framework and aims to explore the construction of sexual knowledge by Southern African youth of Indian-descent. The findings indicate that the construction of sex is primarily one of risk and ambiguity. Additionally, the construction of sexual knowledge highlights the significance of gender differentials and the importance of agency and responsibility for sexual education. These constructions reinforce traditional educational roles that contribute to the construction of sex as risky and ambiguous. In addition, a social identity of Indian-ness and othering is used as a strategy to give meaning to the lack of parental responsibility with regard to sexual education. The use of social identity is seen as highlighting the importance of acknowledging the sexual values within which youth are embedded. This study concludes with possible ways to shift these constructions. For example, one of the conclusions suggests the implementation of an alternative school-based sexual education that acknowledges the sexual values in which youth are embedded. Furthermore, this acknowledgement of sexual values should take place within a holistic sex education programme that is positive about sexuality. Additionally, a reframing of youth as capable and active decision-makers in their sexual education is necessitated in order to see youth as a potential resource in HIV/AIDS prevention.
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ABBREVIATIONS

HIV: Human Immuno-deficiency Virus

AIDS: Acquired Immuno-deficiency Syndrome
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In South Africa, it inflicts and threatens a highly diverse population that remains deeply divided by race, class, and gender - and is further cleaved by matters of sexual preference, ethnicity, xenophobia, age and more (Marais, 2000, p. 58).

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In South Africa, widespread ignorance of HIV/AIDS (“Human Immuno-deficiency Virus/Acquired Immuno-deficiency Syndrome”), economic marginalisation and poverty, gender inequity, gaps in health care and drug addiction are a few of the factors that are said to contribute a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS (Garbus, 2001). South Africa is further inundated by issues of diversity (Marais, 2000), which brings with it differences in belief systems and sexual practices that may play some part in the contraction of HIV. Hence, it can be said that differences in belief systems yield differences in attitudes to sexual practices and sexual behaviour. For example, such differences may be evident in attitudes towards premarital sex and such attitudes may then be responsible for the type of sexual education received by children and the sexual behaviour that these children express. Yet, addressing HIV/AIDS at the level of
diversity has connotations of racism in a country sensitised to racial issues after the apartheid regime which used notions of difference to segregate people. It may even be said that Southern Africa is a territory that has underwent similar liberation struggles against forced racial segregation and hence populations are similarly sensitised to racial issues. Thus, addressing HIV/AIDS at the level of diversity or population differences can be seen to promote racial segregation, yet it can be a pragmatic move towards promoting the contextual nature in which meaning is constructed.

In South Africa, as in the rest of the world, the 15 to 24 age group is an age group with increasingly high rates of HIV infection (Halweil & Brown, 1999). This age group has been defined as youth and describes the population group used in this study (WHO, 1998). It is this group of young people that are the future workers, parents and leaders in this country, and therefore a generation inflicted by this virus leaves the country and the Southern African region damaged economically and socially (Halweil & Brown, 1999). Beyond this, youth are often likely to experiment sexually1 and with substance use, and may still succumb to peer pressure and the desire for social acceptance2 in sexual decision-making. What may pose as a threat to this age group are situational factors, religion, cultural background and the lack of language with which to talk about sexuality. It is such factors that may influence the ability to negotiate sexuality (Lear, 1997). For example, situational factors such as religion or cultural background often inform the values or beliefs of individuals and as mentioned above, the values or beliefs that inform sexuality may determine sexual behaviour in a positive or negative way. Hence, sexuality and identity in the context of varied population groups and within a broader context of HIV/AIDS becomes relevant to gaining an understanding of the social dynamics that interact with this “disease”.

It is within this context of sexuality and identity and their role in HIV/AIDS, that this study pays attention to youth of Indian-descent. This focus locates a differential “identity” as being meaningful to constructions of sexuality. By gaining an understanding of this interaction between identity and sexuality, it is seen as contributing to our knowledge of the social dynamics that contribute to the prevalence

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1 Sexual experimentation may include for example sex with out the use of condoms on a regular basis or sex with multiple partners without the use of protection.
2 This is because youth are said to straddle between the developmental stage of adolescence and adulthood. Adolescence is generally the period between 11 or 13 and 17 or 22 years of age (Lear, 1997).
or lack of prevalence of HIV/AIDS within population groups. Amongst the “Indian” population group relatively little is known about the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and how it affects this population group, and it is often assumed that there is a very low prevalence of this “disease”. However, it is a population group that is being affected by HIV/AIDS (Horner, 2002; Govender, 2000), despite a suggested low prevalence. Hence, it is within an interest of furthering knowledge about HIV/AIDS and sexuality amongst this population group, particularly regarding the interaction between constructions of this identity and sexuality that this study will focus on constructions of sexual knowledge by Southern African youth of Indian-descent.

1.2 AIM AND APPROACH OF THE STUDY

The primary aim of this study is to trace and explore the construction of sexual knowledge by Southern African youth of Indian-descent. The secondary aim is to investigate the function and effects of repertoires of sexual knowledge within this cultural group. The approach that frames this study is a social constructionist discourse analytic approach and this is seen as central to the methodology of this study and the language used to talk about the findings and implications of this research. This approach is outlined at the outset of this study and is consequently highlighted in the methodology chapter.

1.3 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Chapter 1 introduces the research topic and discusses the motivation for this study. The aims of this study have been made evident and details given as to how this report will progress.

Chapter 2 introduces the purpose of this study for which relevant literature has been sourced and discussed. Firstly, the social constructionist discourse analytic framework is outlined and literature regarding the core constructs of this study, such as “HIV/AIDS”, “Sexuality”, “Sex Education” and “Indian Identity” are discussed. This chapter provides the basis for this study and makes evident how differences in belief systems and sexual practices may play a role in the contraction of HIV. It suggests that
understanding the social realities of different groups or the interactional forces within
different groups is vital for facilitating an understanding of diverse sexual values.
Additionally the lack of literature regarding the Southern African Indian population is a
further factor motivating this study. Lastly, language is located as the primary access
point through which an understanding of interactional forces can be gained.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology used in this study and offers a brief outline of the
discourse analytic framework that is the chosen approach of this study. The research
process in terms of sampling, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and
verification are then clarified in terms of this discourse analytic framework. Some of
the basic “terminology” relevant to discourse analysis is also made apparent, namely
that of, texts, interpretive repertoires, rhetoric, variability, function and effects and
verification procedures.

Chapter 4 is an analysis and interpretation of the interpretive repertoires and serves to
indicate the findings of this study in terms of the construction of sexual knowledge.
The construction of sexual knowledge by Southern African youth of Indian-descent is
one where sex is largely constructed as risky. The construction of sexual knowledge
offers a depiction of sex as ambiguous, where sex is both pleasurable and dangerous.
This risk or ambiguity mediates sexual experience, particularly that of males. This
renders the significance of gender differentials with regard to sexual experience.
Additionally, the construction of sexual knowledge is concerned with varied agents
responsible for sexual education. In particular, parents are constructed as largely absent
figures and the school is highlighted as playing a dominant role in the sexual education
of youth. This notion of the lack of parental agency is given meaning through the
rhetorical strategies of social identity and othering.

Chapter 5 discusses the findings of this study in terms of their implications for Southern
African youth of Indian-descent and the broader context of HIV/AIDS interventions,
particularly that of sex education. It also includes a reflexive viewpoint that considers
the significance of within-culture dynamics between researcher and participant. The
findings are seen to establish a youth in crisis and as reinforcing the traditional
educational roles such as the absence of parents and the role of the school in relation to sexual education. The role of social identity of both gender and the Indian identity are additionally significant in considering the implications for youth of Indian-descent and HIV/AIDS intervention. The implications of these findings suggest a reframing of youth as capable and active in their sexual education. Secondly, the role of the school in instituting the crisis-instrumental paradigm that Morris (1994) speaks of is challenged, and alternatives are suggested in its capacity to offer sexual education to young people. Thirdly, the implications of social identity, deliberates a consideration of acknowledging the sexual values in which youth are embedded.

Chapter 6 concludes this study and recommends areas of future research. It specifically offers a summary of the main findings of this study and considers the contribution of this research. This chapter also suggests the possible limitations of this study and indicates directions for further research.

1.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the research topic and discussed the motivation for this study. It makes pertinent issues of sexuality and identity in the context of HIV/AIDS and the diverse population groups in Southern Africa. Following this, the aims of this study have been delineated and details given as to how this report will progress. Lastly, each of the chapters included in this report have been briefly overviewed. The next chapter will review the literature and presents the core constructs relevant to the research topic.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Now this crisis has permeated all arena in our world; education, law, medicine, sexuality. As we try to cope with HIV/AIDS, we must learn how to cope with all these underlying social, cultural, and human issues (Erni, 1995, para. 7).

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the core constructs of this study for which relevant literature has been sourced and discussed. These constructs include that of “HIV/AIDS”, “Sexuality”, “Sex Education” and “Indian Identity”. Firstly, however, the social constructionist discourse analytic framework is outlined as it is central to the ways in which the core constructs of this study have been conceptualised.

2.2 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM

2.2.1 Addressing the Social Constructionist Discourse Analytic Framework

This study uses a social constructionist discourse analytic framework and in doing so, it frames not only how this study will be carried out but also what is studied. Therefore, it
is important to outline briefly what social constructionism is, and to mention how it would position the topic and core issues with regard to this study. There are varied constructionist approaches, for example, conversation analysis, symbolic interactionism, post-structuralism, ethnomethodology and reflexive ethnography, to name a few. Discourse analysis also features among the many varied approaches that can be called social constructionist (Potter, 2000). Very briefly, this approach can be said to view language as constructing versions of social reality. Its focus is on talk and texts as social practices and the resources that are drawn upon to enable those practices (Potter, 2000).

The social constructionist perspective adopts a critical stance towards taken for granted ways in which we understand the world and ourselves (Burr, 1995). Ways of understanding are seen as having been built up through social processes, especially through linguistic interactions, and so are culturally and historically specific. There is no single perspective on social constructionism. In fact, it is perhaps anti-social constructionist to approach social constructionism as if it were located within a single agreed-upon account (Potter, 2000). Different authors who take up this position may share some characteristics but not all.

However, having said this, there may be key assumptions that can be called social constructionist, which methodological approaches such as discourse analysis can be said to assume. There are several assumptions, one of which includes recognising that accounts of the world and ourselves are not determined by the individuals who give the account. A second assumption includes recognising that understanding or meaning within our world and of ourselves is mediated by social artefacts, history, culture, and interaction between people. A third assumption, suggests recognising that the extent to which an account of reality is sustained depends on changes within social processes. It also includes recognising that language gains significance in human affairs from the way it functions within patterns of relationships; and the last assumption suggests a consideration of different forms of discourse as a means of evaluating patterns of cultural life (Gergen, 1994). It follows then that knowledge is constructed through social discourse and is located within the context of the cultural life in which that social discourse is embedded.
Locating knowledge in such a way means it is social context that lends meaning to the way things are constructed (Rowan, 1997). It furthermore eliminates any allusions to “truth” and hegemony of domains of knowledge (for example, ‘natural sciences are superior to social sciences’) and it has been critiqued as relativistic and as perhaps obliterating “empiricism”. Part of the social constructionist position, while questioning taken for granted knowledge, also questions and reflexively deals with its assumptions. Thus critique may be inherent in this position. It can be seen as one position among many other positions. Most importantly, it can be seen as position with a certain outlook that may be a valuable approach to viewing domains of knowledge, topical issues such as sex education, and social reality.

2.3 A Social Constructionist Reading

Taking on a social constructionist position has many implications for the way core issues of this study are viewed. Firstly, “HIV/AIDS” is viewed as constructed in many ways, one of them being its bio-medical construction. Similarly, topics such as “sexuality” are viewed as being constructed in many varied ways. The view of sexuality as socially constructed has focused research on the social and cultural systems that shape sexual experience as well as the way in which that experience is understood (Parker & Easton, 1998).

Secondly, and fundamental to this study, is the importance of context. For example, historical and cultural viewpoints, while not the focus of the study, becomes primary when viewing how people construct their sexuality. Lastly, in using a social constructionist position to frame this study, there is a reflexive awareness that it is not the only way to view a topic such as the construction of “sexual knowledge”. Instead there are multiple ways in which to talk about sexual knowledge. Choosing to use a social constructionist position provides a way of talking about sexual knowledge that recognises this.

In using this reflexivity, the social constructionist position is seen as being useful in the study of sexuality and HIV/AIDS because it does not view it as collectively agreed upon or universally accessible in the same ways. Hence, the importance of context
within the social constructionist position helps to maintain the viewpoint that locating sexuality within a socio-cultural context may be useful in making HIV/AIDS interventions such as sexual education programmes better accessible to different groups. Therefore, it can be said that meaning stems from individual socio-cultural backgrounds and in order to lend meaning to interventions or research carried out within the HIV/AIDS context, the focus lies in attending to research in such a way that it can be of use to individuals from different contexts.

2.4 HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS is not solely a medical phenomenon and yet much of the discourse that surrounds it has been dominated by the medical field. This is not to say that HIV/AIDS does not exist as a medical phenomenon, but rather since its first appearance in the 1970’s (Berer & Ray, 1993), it has come to take on a whole host of meanings dominating politics, economics, and society. HIV/AIDS has come to be a debate between life and death and in Africa where medical treatments are costly, life and death is not merely chosen by the individuals who have HIV or AIDS status. Life and death is debated by politicians and by all social institutions. Hence HIV/AIDS is not simply a disease or a “natural disaster” that “plagues” society today, it is also a metaphor. This indicates that HIV/AIDS is constructed in a variety of ways that gives meaning to people with or without HIV/AIDS status. While it is crucial to understand the disease as a medical phenomenon, it is equally important to understand its meanings and significance (Treichler, 1998). Hence, HIV/AIDS is talked about in many different ways and additionally has much variability in terms of the meanings attributed to it and the meanings it constructs via research.

The medical life of HIV/AIDS indicates the biomedical approach towards HIV/AIDS in which medical technology and research use a particular language to define it and perhaps set its boundaries. For example, one can learn that HIV can be “transmitted” through “blood”, “vaginal fluid”, “semen”, and “breast milk”, from people who have HIV (AIDS Org., 2001). This knowledge defines then how one can get HIV and how one can avoid contracting HIV. HIV/AIDS is a “disease” like any other “disease”, although perhaps in greater prevalence. It is an “illness” that insists upon “precautions”
in order to avoid it. Failing to avoid it means consequences such as medical treatment, hospitalisation, prognosis and death. “Stigma”, “marginalisation”, “morality”, “panic” and “fear” are words that often do not belong under the medical institution, however much one faces such discursive accounts within their experience.

In the medical terrain, HIV/AIDS is a “disease to be treated” and to “find a cure for” – yet HIV/AIDS has also been described as a powerful metaphor for “life and death”. It has confirmed the certainty of “death” and the uncertainty of “life”. “Life” is ambivalent and without hope. Part of the ambivalence of life for those living with HIV/AIDS is the resurgence of life before death – the experience of greater fulfilment before impending death (Weeks, 1995). In addition, to the “life and death” metaphor, AIDS has also come to be a “mediatory term between love and death” (Weeks, 1995, p. 156) whereby the act of sex can mean disease and death.

Given the varied meanings attached to HIV/AIDS, it is not inconceivable then, that a “moral” discourse exists that perhaps “marginalises” people as sexually promiscuous or as having a particular sexual identity seen to be “deviant”. Much of the literature around AIDS began with HIV being first identified in the “gay community”. It was “gay love” that was seen to go against sexual norms and it was “gay love” that meant HIV/AIDS and death. However, once it was discovered that HIV was not a “gay disease”, the morality that preached against homosexuality had to preach in general about “sexual promiscuity” and the “demise of morals”. In this way, a moral discourse exists and AIDS is about “sexuality and identity” and not only about its epidemiological constructs (Weeks, 1995).

### 2.5 HIV/AIDS AND THE REVIVAL OF SEXUALITY RESEARCH

The study of HIV/AIDS and related fields such as sexuality are topical and have been the focal point of much research across disciplines (Manderson, Bennett & Sheldrake, 1999). Quite familiar to HIV/AIDS discourse is the term “research”. “Research” not only intercedes between the life and death of HIV/AIDS discourses, but is itself a discursive context with much variability. For example, research carried out has either considered the “social dimensions” of HIV/AIDS (prevalence of male homosexuals,
intravenous drug users, sex workers, women and orphans) or its “bio-medical dimensions” (cause, progression of virus and treatments) (Strebel & Lindegger, 1998). This discursive context offers accounts of the way the disease is studied which furthermore gives rise to particular ways of viewing the disease.

Epidemiological surveys, for example, have usually been used in social research, typically focusing on knowledge, attitude and practices (Lear, 1997). For example, with regard to HIV/AIDS research, such surveys have been used in a number of different social and cultural contexts and have paid attention to patterns of sexual relationships and safe sex practices. However, with considerable amounts of research being done in this area, it has become evident that quantitative surveys offer limited insights into the complexity of social and cultural meanings that shape behaviour. Hence, there has been a movement towards the use of qualitative studies to investigate sexuality within social and cultural contexts (Lear, 1997; Parker, Herdt & Carballo, 1998). Quantitative data is no doubt useful, and while qualitative research does not attempt to substitute it, qualitative data holds the potential to explore social and cultural meanings that may be associated with behaviours. It is such research that is said to focus on the social dimensions of change, paying attention to change, for example, within media discourse, culture, and religion (Bolton & Singer, 1992). This type of research has increasingly focused on the shared nature of sexual meanings within different social and cultural settings (Parker & Easton, 1998) as a contributing factor to sexual behaviour and its relationship to HIV/AIDS.

Essentially, much research (whether it be behavioural research or research that takes into account socio-cultural aspects of HIV/AIDS) has focused and is focusing on factors that contribute to HIV risk (Kelly, 1995) and how to reduce the risk of HIV/AIDS contraction, and thereby HIV/AIDS prevalence. In doing so, there has been a notable shift in research towards sexuality across disciplines as it has been noted that curbing the HIV epidemic requires effective strategies for helping people alter high-risk sexual behaviour. In order to change sexual behaviour, research on human sexuality in all its scope, brings a greater understanding of sexual behaviours and can lead to efforts to reduce high-risk sexual behaviours (Kelly & Kalichman, 1995). Within HIV/AIDS research, sexual desire has been taken for granted and assumed to be universal, and even though a degree of “lip-service” has been paid to the importance or potential role of
social and cultural factors in shaping sexual experience, such factors have been ignored or perhaps not taken seriously. Research that takes into account social and cultural concerns does not attempt to replace more dominant approaches such as behavioural research. Yet, such research has increasingly become a compelling counter-current within the broader framework of HIV/AIDS research (Parker & Aggleton, 1998).

The focus in such research with regard to HIV/AIDS and sexuality is on meaning systems in order to understand individual and social patterns of sexuality. Over the past decade research has demonstrated the importance of socio-cultural factors in determining aspects of sexuality. A key realisation from this type of research is that sex is not merely “biological”, but is a “culturally informed experience” (Parker, Herdt & Carballo, 1998).

The topic of this study fits into this category of social research and aims to contribute to the body of research on sexuality. In particular, it fits in with qualitative approaches to the study of HIV that has been concerned with “culturally” sensitive approaches to HIV prevention efforts (Lear, 1997). It is proposed that “the future public health education arguably lies in its ability to make itself meaningful to everyone concerned in as culturally appropriate and specific a way as possible... To create AIDS education that works, first we must have an accurate idea not only of a taxonomy of behaviours that pose a risk but also how they are regarded in the cultural context to be addressed and what interactional forces shape and sustain them” (Lear, 1997, p. 16/17).

2.6 SEXUALITY

The realm of sexuality also has its own internal politics, inequities, and modes of oppression. As with other aspects of human behaviour, the concrete institutional forms of sexuality at any given time and place are products of human activity. They are imbued with conflicts of interest and political manoeuvre, both deliberate and incidental. In that sense, sex is always political. But there are also historical periods in which sexuality is more sharply contested and more overtly politicized. In such periods, the domain of erotic life is, in effect, renegotiated (Rubin, 1998, p. 143).
The terrain of HIV/AIDS research locates sexuality as a context in which much can be learnt about sexual beliefs and practices and the ways in which it contributes to the transmission of the disease. It is in accordance with this that the construct of sexuality becomes central to this study and is conceptualised here as socially constructed. However, before this is determined, the discussion deals with the varied discourses that contribute to this construct of sexuality.

The term “sexuality” refers to “the ways in which we experience and express ourselves as sexual beings”, that is, in the awareness of being female, as well as in the capacity one has for erotic experiences and responses (Rathus, Nevid & Rathus, 1997, p. 5). It seems very simple when we see definitions of sexuality such as this one, yet sexuality is far from simple. Giddens (1992) makes this apparent in indicating that sexuality is a significant feature of one’s identity connecting the body, identity and norms of society.

Sexuality is a term that is often associated with sexual acts and biological rootedness and “Biology” has very much dominated how sexuality is talked about: “sexual practices”, “sexual anatomy”, “sexual deviants”, taxonomies of “sexual acts” and so forth. Yet, without “culture”, human society would not have realised “biological sexuality”. “Biological sexuality” may be one way of talking about sexuality and “relational sexuality” may be another way of talking about sexuality. With regard to relational sexuality, the content of sexuality is determined by human social relations: “The particular interrelations and activities which exist at any moment in a specific society create sexual and other categories which, ultimately, determine the broad range of modes of behaviour available to individuals who are born within that society” (Padgug, 1998, p. 21). Hence there are different ways of talking about sexuality or different ways of viewing sexuality, some of which will be mentioned here.

### 2.6.1 Appropriate Sexuality: Ethics, Religion & Psychology

Historically, religion contributed most to knowledge about sexuality. It regulated the language people used to talk about sexuality and attempted to govern people's sexual practices and attitudes towards sexuality. Issues of when to have sex, whom to have sex with, “contraception”, “abortion”, are all issues that religions have had a say in. Religions lent sexual values to people and this may still be the case today. Hence religion and ethics or morality often provide a framework within which people make
decisions about their sexuality (Hyde, 1994), and perhaps about other people's sexuality. Hence, it is a powerful discourse: “pre-marital sex is wrong”, “extra-marital sex is a sin”, “contraception and abortion is wrong” and so forth. It defines and establishes boundaries for people of what is “right or wrong”, what is “good or bad”, what is “appropriate or inappropriate” and “moral and immoral” (Hyde, 1994). Law or legal discourses establish similar boundaries of what is appropriate and inappropriate sexual conduct (Rubin, 1998).

At the same time one cannot exclude the role of psychology in framing the way people understand and talk about sexuality. Sigmund Freud is perhaps central in making such discourses readily available to people. “Libido” or “sex energy”, “erogenous zones” and “psychosexual stages of development” have played a role in offering people different ways to talk about sexuality (Hyde, 1994). In general, psychology has dealt with sexual development and sexual identity. It has held power like religion in stating the “appropriacy or inappropriacy” of sexual beliefs and practices. In this study, “sexual development” is a central discourse drawn upon and the discussion below focuses on this notion.

Talk about the age that “sexual development” begins, about important agencies for sexual development such as school, games (“doctor and nurse games” and “mummy and daddy games”) or “sex play” with peers is apparent. Terms such as “adolescence” are often associated with sexual development as a time when boys and girls experience physical changes in their body (such as the growth of pubic hair and breasts), generally known as “puberty” (Rosen & Hall, 1984). “Values” have often become part of the repertoire around sexual development and the acquiring of knowledge and values about sexuality is said to be pertinent and more outright at adolescence than in the early years of child development (Andre, Frevert & Schuchmann, 1989).

Hence, a universal developmental doctrine is established in relation to sexuality, which can be problematic for health interventions (Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999). For example, this is evident in constructions of “childhood” and “adulthood”. “Childhood” is generally constructed as a time when one should not be having sex. However, what marks this period as “childhood” is ambiguous (does adulthood begin with puberty? Does adulthood begin at the legal age of consent and if the legal age of consent differs
from place to place then how does regulation of childhood versus adulthood take place?) and similarly what it means to have sex is equally ambiguous (Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999, Paris, 1995). Historically the onset of puberty meant significant biological changes and often marked the beginning of sexual relations. This has changed in that there has been a development towards biological and social conflict and “the creation of the non-sexual child” (Paris, 1995, para.). This means that the social roles assigned to children has changed over the centuries despite the biological and sexual maturity of children staying the same, if not taking place earlier on in childhood. This change has led to a change in attitude towards children and has led to the perception of children as non-sexual (Paris, 1995). In this respect, drawing on universalised concepts of “childhood” and “adulthood” has implications for the type of sex education received.

2.6.2 Interplay Between the Individual & the Collective

HIV/AIDS and sexuality research has suggested a move towards culturally sensitive knowledge of sexual beliefs and practices, in order to understand the patterns of HIV transmission and the impact of AIDS on different communities in order to plan interventions that are more effective. A significant way of conceptualising sexuality is through the discourse of “sexual culture: the systems of meaning, of knowledge, beliefs and practices, that structure sexuality in different contexts” (Parker, Herdt & Carballo, 1998, p. 420). Of course, this approach assumes that there are differences in sexuality between different contexts and hence points to the impact of socio-cultural systems on sexuality and cross-cultural research in researching these socio-cultural systems.

The term “culture”, because of its complex nature and perhaps sometimes “ethnocentric” connotations, is often left on the sidelines. However, cross-cultural research points to “culture” as shaping individual sexuality through roles, norms and attitudes within particular social groupings or institutions and at the same time it contributes to the reproducing of the collective or community. An example of a socio-cultural account is the notion of “sexual socialisation in restrictive societies” as opposed to sexual socialisation in “semi-restrictive societies” or “permissive societies”. This implies that interaction between society and the self is responsible for educating one about sexuality and depending on the type of society; one has a different experience of sexuality. In a “restrictive society”, for example, sexual activity as a youth is strongly
discouraged and engaging in sexual activity often results in punishment. On the other hand, in a “semi-restrictive society” sexual activity as a youth is discouraged but if one engages in sexual activity, one is not punished (Steinberg, 2002).

“Culture” within its constructionist framework can be seen to be a socially constructed label often used to talk about particular shared ways of being. Just as the church or the law may regulate sexual beliefs and practices, such shared ways of being may have a role in this too. The significance of “culture”, highlights particular discourses such as “cultural ideals vs. actual practices”, “public vs. private conduct”, and “prescribed vs. voluntary behaviour” (Parker, Herdt & Carballo, 1998, p. 420). It is such discourses that point to an interplay between the individual and collective or the “individual” in relation to “culture” and asks for an examination of the account of “sexual culture” (Parker, Herdt & Carballo, 1998).

2.6.3 “A Social Constructionist Sexuality”

The social constructionist perspective suggests that “sexuality” is given meaning in social relationships. Various elements influence an individual’s identity and sexuality. In other words, understanding or meaning within our world and of ourselves, is mediated by social artefacts, history, culture, and interaction between people (Gergen, 1994). In suggesting that sexuality is socially constructed it does not deny the significance of biology either (Weeks, 1986).

Fundamental to this perspective on sexuality is firstly that sex is not an independent realm free of social interactions that reproduced it. Secondly, it is accepted that there are variances in sexual beliefs and practices. Thirdly, sexuality should not be looked at as a set of dichotomies – that is, for example, society is “sexually repressed” and therefore needs to be “liberated”. Sexuality has numerous histories and is produced by society through complex patterns of negotiation and struggle between those who have power to define and set boundaries and those who do not and attempt to resist (Weeks, 1986). Interaction is vital to this understanding of sexuality and understanding that interaction as involving complex negotiations between individuals is equally important. It also points to the significance of the discursive position as an approach to understanding sexuality (Parker & Easton, 1998). It is by looking at discursive accounts of sexuality that it is possible to see how constructions of sexuality are produced and
reproduced to constitute meaning (which, in effect, affects sexual beliefs and sexual behaviour). It is from this understanding that this study proceeds.

2.7 SEX EDUCATION

*the dispensing of sexual knowledge as a prophylactic for the unwelcomed consequences of freewheeling sexual behaviour is the cornerstone of modern sexuality education* (Sears, 1992, p. 17).

“Sex education” is a central construct in this study because it is by examining the construction of sexual education of youth that one may gain access to the sources and processes that produce and reproduce patterns of sexual knowledge (which in turn may serve to inform sexual beliefs and practices). The term “sex education” is generally understood to refer to “the process by which ignorance in relation to sexual matters is dispelled” (Willig, 1999, p. 110). This term has connotations of education around sexual concerns that takes place in a formal atmosphere such as a schooling institution. In addition, the word “sex education” is often used interchangeably to refer to HIV/AIDS education (sex education was around long before HIV/AIDS education). While perhaps it is not synonymous with AIDS education, it certainly does encapsulate it. Thus, the awareness of the ambiguity of such a word and the acknowledgement of cultural disparities in the way words are used, has lent a preference for the word “sexual knowledge”. In this study, the term “sexual knowledge” will be defined in terms of sexual education (as defined above), but encapsulating both formal and informal sex education in the process of becoming sexually informed.

2.7.1 A history of resistance
Placing sex education within a historical context bears important insights for contemporary talk around sex education. In America, formal sex education apparently dates back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century; while in Europe formal sex education was said to be non-existent as early as this (Morris, 1994). In South Africa, it is uncertain where and when formal sex education was first established. Yet in all three contexts, it is teenage pregnancy, STD’s and AIDS that dominate “sex education” (Diorio & Munro, 2000). Decreasing the incidence of teenage pregnancy was one of the
earliest aims of sex education and with the advent of HIV/AIDS in the 1980’s, sex education took an additional aim of educating to prevent its incidence (Reiss, 1993). Essentially, the history of sex education is dominated by the lack of reference to “sexual desire”, or “pleasure” and instead centres around the dangers of sex (Diorio & Munro, 2000) so that sexuality has been reproduced as a problem.

Historically, sex education has been shaped by the church, medicine, schools, family, among other social institutions. This gave rise to a form of pedagogical rivalry, with each institution using its discourse to challenge the unbecoming morality of its day and age. For example, the medical institution marching under the banner of “science” and making its way into books such as “What a Young Girl Ought to Know” (by a physician named Mary Wood-Allen) preached its biological messages, and which because of its highly prescriptive nature led to further misconceptions (Morris, 1994).

While sex education took place in the form of talk or text from various social institutions, and still does to this day, “silence” was additionally a powerful “regime of discourses” (Foucault, 1980 cited in Morris, 1994, p. 13). Foucault makes this apparent and takes us back to the European secondary schools of the eighteenth century, where it appears that sex education was non-existent. However, “one only has to glance over the architectural layout, the rules of discipline, and their whole internal organization: the question of sex was a constant preoccupation … The spaces for classes, the shape of the tables, the planning of the recreation classes, the distribution of the dormitories (with or without partitions, with or without curtains), the rules for monitoring bedtime and sleep periods – all this referred in the most prolix manner, to the sexuality of children” (Foucault, 1980, p. 28 cited in Morris, 1994, p. 13). It is not only a history of resistance against sex education, but also a history of resistance against the sexuality of children, as it marks out “appropriate” or “inappropriate” sexual behaviour of children.

The history of sex education is fraught with resistance. A complete history of this resistance is beyond the scope of this study, yet it is significant to note some of the talk that surrounds this resistance. So-called “conservative” discourse has suggested that sex education promotes sexual promiscuity, and will lead to some sort of disaster (Hyde, 1994). On the other hand so-called “liberal” discourses, which advocate sex education, acknowledge that children need sex education. However, in advocating sex
education it is pro sex education in the school. This is problematic as it suggests that education takes place only in schools. Sex education that is primarily located in schools, establishes learning as fixed and only taking place at a particular point in time rather than being a life-long process. Furthermore, if sex education is to take place in the school, it places enormous pressure on teachers and obscures the responsibility of family, media, the work place, and the state (Morris, 1994).

2.7.2 To “coitus” or not to “coitus”

Yet, while such talk leads one to question the current format of formal sex education, still other discourses challenge us further. Sex education has been around long before HIV/AIDS and teenage pregnancy, yet it has only become prominent in response to these “crises.” Such a response seeks to intervene and lower the rates of teenage pregnancy or contraction of HIV and has taken a particular slant on sexuality. This “Crisis-Instrumental Paradigm” (Morris, 1994, p. 15) tells young people what is bad about sexuality rather than what is good about sexuality. Furthermore, inherent in this discourse is a focus primarily on young people in “crisis” excluding the older generations of sexually active people and those who are not sexually active. It is a discourse that is centred on sexuality as “coitus” and does not explore the “non-coital gestures” (Morris, 1994, p. 22) that may be pleasurable. It teaches young people to either “abstain” from sexual intercourse or to use “protection” (Morris, 1994).

The “Value-Neutrality” (Morris, 1994) position on sex education offers a discourse of “neutrality”. Here a teacher does not take a particular stance on what young people should do or should not do and just presents the “facts” (Morris, 1994). Yet, in clarifying the “facts” one may ask where these value-free “facts” come from. Mclaughlin (2001), points out that it is impossible to have a “value-free” sex education as educational circumstance means that facts have to be selected for presentation and this means that judgements are made about what is valuable and what is not valuable for young people to know.

Research on sex education indicates mass media, parents, extended family, schools and peers act as sources of sex education. Additionally, religion, cultural traditions and legal systems also have an indirect influence (Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999) as does the impact of research, for example, social scientific research. Peers are generally indicated
as playing a greater role as a source of sexual information than parents, yet peers are often “unreliable” sources of sexual information offering “misleading” information. However, “menstruation” is often a topic that mothers are the source of information for their daughters (Andre, Frevert & Schuchmann, 1989) and mothers are seen as central to the socialisation of their daughters with regard to sexuality (Fox, 1980).

“Parents” are generally constructed as failing to communicate sexual issues to their children (Delius & Glaser, 2002). However, the idea that the youth should be getting sexual education from parents is encouraged, and yet not questioned. Still however, parents’ negative reactions to sexuality, their avoidance of such topics in the household, their modelling of relationship negotiation, if not their forced and forged attempt to communicate sexual knowledge, could communicate negative affective reactions about sex and sexuality to children (Andre, Frevert & Schuchmann, 1989). In this light, it perhaps can be said that “parents/caregivers” of the youth are “unreliable” or “unsatisfactory” sources of sexual knowledge. Hence, it may be necessary to challenge our preconceptions “and to challenge ideologically loaded ways of perceiving a disease … because now AIDS is no longer just a biomedical problem, it’s a social crisis, a cultural fallout and a political battlefield which affects everyone” (Erni, 1995, para. 6).

It is vital, in the context of HIV/AIDS, to understand sources and processes of sexual information in order to address prevalence of HIV at the social level. Dana Lear draws attention to the contextual nature of sexuality and the negotiation of sexuality through interaction:

> Meaning and thus social reality are socially negotiated and symbolic because they are mediated through language, symbols, and interaction. Communication is the medium for exploring the complicated relations between behaviours and culture…(Lear, 1997, p. 2).

Indeed, research has focused on the varied processes of “sexual socialization”¹ (Parker & Easton, 1998) and the sexual experiences of young people as a window to

¹ “Sexual socialization” is perhaps another to term for sexual education or gaining sexual knowledge but perhaps more broadly defined as the process through which “individuals learn the sexual desires, feelings,
understanding the dynamics of sexuality and the ways in which sexual meanings (which are shaped through interactions) are produced and reproduced (Parker & Easton, 1998). Thus exploring constructions of sexual knowledge offers a similar window of opportunity that works towards contextually based understandings and interventions.

2.8 HIV/AIDS AND THE “INDIAN” POPULATION GROUP OF SOUTH AFRICA

Different individuals and social groups attach diverse meanings to sexual activity, variously understanding sex as an expression of intimacy, a route to physical pleasure, or a sacred part of marriage (Carpenter, 2001, p. 127).

Diversity amongst peoples suggests complexity in the context of HIV/AIDS interventions, such as sexual education. In exploring the construction of sexual knowledge amongst Southern African youth of Indian-descent, the constructions of this population group as “different” to other population groups becomes relevant and comes under review in relation to HIV/AIDS, “culture” and “sexuality”.

2.8.1 “Surveillance” & “Susceptibility”

In identifying the “Indian” population group as a population for this study, the discourses of “surveillance” and “susceptibility” (Barnett, Witeside & Decosas, 1999) are significant. These notions are familiar within HIV/AIDS discourse, and more specifically within a discourse of HIV/AIDS risk. Within the context of HIV/AIDS risk, “risk” will be defined as the “probability of some future event in which the certainty of a given outcome is unknown” (Prohaska, Albrecht, Levy, Sugrue & Joung-Hwa, 1990, p. 385). Here the discourses of surveillance and susceptibility, of which are central to HIV risk, will be drawn upon in relation to the Southern African Indian population.

Surveillance within the context of HIV/AIDS refers to identifying risk factors that increase the susceptibility to HIV/AIDS and also to documenting HIV/AIDS roles, and practices typical of their cohorts or statuses within society – as well as the sexual alternatives that their culture opens up to them” (Parker & Easton, 1998, para.).
prevalence. Risk factors are traditionally seen to be “unsafe sex” and behaviours that can lead to contracting the HIV virus, such as sharing needles or behaviours that may lead to unsafe-sex, such as recreational drug taking and excessive alcohol consumption (Barnett, Witeside & Decosas, 1999). As of yet no “risk factors” have been determined for the Southern African Indian population. Yet, the “culture of silence” that is sometimes made evident (Horner, 2002; Govender, 2000) may be arguably a risk factor standing in the way of sex and HIV/AIDS education. The Indian population group is said to be affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic yet relatively little known is about the prevalence of HIV/AIDS amongst this population group (Horner, 2002; Govender, 2000). The first published South African data stratified by race groups, reveals that 2% of the sample group who were infected by HIV were Indian (Taitz, 2000). Yet, even without figures to show for it, it is generally assumed that there is a low prevalence rate among this population group in comparison to other groups.

Susceptibility to HIV infection is a socially produced attribute created by the interaction of all factors, which affects the rate at which the epidemic is propagated. This concept describes the level of probability of HIV infection in a specific social environment. Factors may be related to physical infrastructure (new buildings), natural environment (drought), culture (particular sexual beliefs), economy (widely divergent monetary distribution) and the effects changes in these factors bring. Hence, susceptibility may be analysed at the level of country, a population group, an institution or organisation, an economic entity like a business enterprise, or at the level of household (Barnett, Witeside & Decosas, 1999). In the context of this study, susceptibility is looked at at the level of population group and culture. It is via the processes of “socialisation”, that this cultural group may come to have different constructions of “sexual knowledge”, which informs their “perceptions of risk” and “risk behaviour” within their sexual behaviour.

2.8.2 Constructing a Population: People of Indian-decent
Talking about the Indian population of South Africa is not intended to establish a dichotomy of “western” vs. “eastern”. However, within a social constructionist approach it is important to establish a context from which to begin such research. In

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2 Socialisation is used to refer to the process by which children learn to act and think in ways appropriate to societal expectations (Kumar, 2000; Rosen & Hall, 1984).
addition, constructing a so-called “identity” for people of Indian-descent is not intended to make any broad claims about the effects of “culture”.

Within the few literary sources available, literature defines the Indian people in South Africa as firstly an immigrant population brought in as indentured labourers to work on sugar cane plots, and secondly as a politically defined group labelled as “Indian” despite differences in religion or place of origin in India. “Pre-apartheid” literature indicates the “Indian” community as having much political involvement in fighting for their own rights as immigrants and fighting together with “black” South Africans for freedom from apartheid (Bhana, 1987). The fight for liberation from colonial regimes, somewhat akin to the apartheid regime with its segregation policies, for example, was a fight that most “Indian” communities within the SADC\(^3\) region are conscious of.

While the label “Indian” pertains from apartheid segregation laws, and is still retained referring to immigrants who came from India, there is great diversity among “Indians” who came from India most notably in their religious differences and geographical part from which they came. In pre-apartheid literature however, this population group was treated as a homogenous group despite these differences. Differences lay chiefly between the Hindu and Muslim religion\(^4\) and the southern and northern backgrounds which predisposed individuals to differences in customs (language and food, for example). Yet, these Indians brought in as indentured labourers and with the close proximity that was imposed on them made many of these differences disappear with religions being preserved (Bhugwan, 1962). Recent literature however suggests the “Indian identity” in South Africa to be contested\(^5\), with uncertainty as to how to define oneself: “South African Indian”, “Indian South African”, “South African”, “South African of Indian descent”. In addition, it serves to confirm that the main differences lie in religious affiliation – the two main groups of religious affiliation being that of “Hindu” and “Muslim” (Ebr.-Vally, 2001).

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3 SADC refers to the Southern African Development Community which is membership of countries in the Southern African region and includes the following countries: Angola, Botswana, D. R. C., Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Seychelles, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

4 Hinduism and Islam (which Muslims practice) are two major religions of Indians. Christianity also has a large following (Bhugwan, 1962; Harilal, 1993).

5 This was part of the findings of an empirical study on the South African “Indian Identity” by Rehana Ebr.-Vally which forms part of the book *Kala Pani*.

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In attempting to label the Southern African “Indian” youth appropriately, the term “Indian-descent” has been chosen as referring to those individuals living in Southern Africa and whose parents or great/grand-parents were originally from India. In addition, the term attempts to recognise that many elements of the “Indian” (of India) culture are retained. Yet, the effects of globalisation and assimilation are not without their place in the identity youth of Indian-descent. This is demonstrated in a study that was done about the need for Sex Education for Indian secondary pupils (Harilal, 1993). This study indicates two conflicting forces that Indian youth are faced with: that of maintaining the “culture” of “Indian society” and that of assimilating or integrating ways of being from other cultures. It suggests a generation faced with a changing society and a so-called “breakdown in cultural values” or a “waning of traditional sexual values” (Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999, p. 33). Such terms are perhaps loaded ways of referring to shifts in cultural values as negative or as threatening communally held ways of being.

However, despite the effects of globalisation and assimilation, the “Indian culture” is still pointed to as observing particular “customs” (Bhugwan, 1962; Harilal, 1993; Ebr.-Vally, 2001). For example, the colourful dress and food is still common. In addition, the Indian family is generally seen to be a closely knit unit (Bhugwan, 1962; Harilal, 1993; Ebr.-Vally, 2001) where a sense of duty is encouraged. Additionally, it is described as a “communal culture” where the common good of others is said to be placed before individual needs (Bhugwan, 1962). “Indian society” is also described as having an “authoritarian structure” where parents generally assert control or influence over their children. A further construction of “Indian society” locates “religion” and “spirituality” as the basis for the values that the Indian child acquires (Harilal, 1993).

2.8.3 “Indian Sexuality”
By discussing “Indian sexuality” separate to the broader concerns of “sexuality” in general, a difference in sexuality is assumed (yet no claims can be made as such). By briefly outlining some of the depictions of “Indian sexuality” or the ways in which “Indian sexuality” has been talked about, a consideration is made of the ways in which “Indian sexuality” has been framed. It establishes a baseline of local knowledge that may or may not be drawn upon in the discourses of Indian youth of South Africa today.
Firstly, the depiction of Indian society as a “male dominated society” in which sons are preferred (Singh, 1990) impacts Indian sexuality. “Discrimination” between males and females is said to begin at birth and continues into adulthood (Harilal, 1993). For example, “it is an unspoken rule that men may exercise their rights in sexual freedom, whilst women have to be chaste, virtuous and faithful. This double standard indicates that adults sanction male liberalised behaviour” (Rudra, 1976, p. 50 cited in Harilal, 1993, p. 79). Hence, “chastity” is a central discourse and an ideal for marriage for women and premarital-sex on the part of a woman is frowned upon, incurring labels such as “loose” and leaving her unwed. A “woman's virginity” is talked of in conjunction with “family honour” and parents try to maintain the honour of the family by maintaining their daughters virginity before marriage and this may mean a girl’s movements are often restricted in comparison to a boys movements.

This “traditional practice” is evident among Hindu and Muslim families. For example, Islam emphasizes “chastity” and “modesty” as part of a “moral conduct” and the free intermingling of the sexes is traditionally prohibited. Women are encouraged to wear *Purdah*[^6] and men are encouraged not to look at women (Harilal, 1993). With regard to Hindu teachings, the *Vedas*[^7] emphasized the youth’s preservation of the reproductive element. Historically, students practised *Brahmacharya*, “which is a cloistered and austere student life with a strict taboo on sexual intercourse for the development of a healthy body” (Ramasar, 1987, p. 271 cited in Harilal, 1993, p. 99). While the above is perhaps a traditional outlook, it points to a gendered experience of sexuality. This is not uncommon, as research suggests (Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999).

This traditional outlook lends itself to the challenge of change, and change is said to be manifest. For example, pre-marital sex, once believed to be uncommon, is no longer said to be uncommon. Yet it is still seen as “a source of anxiety for parents for it is traditionally denounced, and this therefore, creates personal and family conflict” (Kelly, 1976, p. 141 cited in Harilal, 1993, p.143). “Guilt” which surrounded pre-marital sex may have decreased, or instead the seeking of a steady relationship in which sexual

[^6]: The covering of the body (which, sometimes extends to the face of a woman). However, when a woman is with her husband or immediate family she does not have to cover her head.

[^7]: Vedas are ancient Hindu scriptures (Harilal, 1993).
experimentation may be seen to decrease this “guilt”. This is because it appears more respectable to experiment sexually in a relationship rather than being perceived to be “promiscuous” for “sexual indulgences” outside the context of a “relationship”. Hence, dating among Indian males and females is common and the familiarity that results between the sexes is said to decrease the “mysteries” that surrounds sex and sexuality (Harilal, 1993).

While changes have begun to occur with regard to sex, it does not mean that there is now an acceptance of pre-marital sex. Kamani (1997) suggests that addressing the question of sex with regard to the Indian culture is to set up “an illusion of choice, in a culture where the sexuality of any given individual is still communally held to a great a degree” (para. 1). Kamani (1997) makes evident the “shame” that surrounds “talking”, indicating that “talking” carries with it the potential of breaking hierarchies, roles and control, for example. Talking about sexuality carries with it a similar effect (Kamani, 1997).

The history of sex education in the Indian community is nonexistent or rather may exist in its “silence” because Indian parents, often perceived to be “orthodox”, “puritanical” or “conservative”, have traditionally not sat down with their children to talk about sex and sexuality. Historically, Indian parents have assumed that their children would learn about sex once they were married, and often children were married at a very early age. Familiar to most Indian females, however, and perhaps the closest to sexual knowledge is the “mother-daughter-talk” at the time of menstruation (Harilal, 1993).

“Sex” is said to have been a “taboo” subject among Indians (Harilal, 1993), if not other population groups, for generations. The idea that informing a child about sex and sexuality may lead to experimentation is a prevalent discourse among the Indian community. Yet, if dating is common, and sexual experimentation and pre-marital sex is occurring among Indian males and females, what “sex education” is being received or what “sexual knowledge” is being drawn upon and especially so within a multi-cultural society where there is exposure to range of discursive accounts? This study is intended to explore sources of sexual knowledge with regard to Indian youth and will attempt to address the function and effects of repertoires of sexual knowledge within this cultural group.
2.9 SYNTHESIS

A social constructionist discourse analytic approach is the outlook that guides this study. It is seen as an approach that pays attention to the contextual and interactional forces that shape “reality” and hence has been chosen for this very reason in an attempt to guide HIV/AIDS intervention towards meaningful and culturally appropriate ways of implementation.

In South Africa, issues of diversity, among other issues (Marais, 2000), brings with it differences in belief systems and sexual practices that play some part in the contraction of HIV. Hence, context or the social realities of different groups of people is important in facilitating understanding about the differences in belief systems and sexual practices.

Sexual development is said to begin very early in life and while this may be a generalised statement, Indian youth undergo such development and evidently more youth are becoming sexually active before marriage (Harilal, 1993). However, when sexual education is not made pertinent for the Indian youth, one wonders what sources and processes contribute to their sexual education and what effects these have. The lack of literature on the South African Indian population, (especially with regard to HIV/AIDS and sexuality), suggests that exploration is strategic in examining the relationship between this population group and HIV/AIDS as well as sexuality. It may also be important to explore the constructions or images of this population group as a possibility in challenging talk about sexuality or sexual crises. By gaining an understanding of the interaction between identity and sexuality, it is seen as contributing to our knowledge of the social dynamics that contribute to the prevalence or lack of prevalence of HIV/AIDS. Additionally, it is a possible access point for interventions that may be useful to this population group, if not other population groups. Within this study, the primary aim is to trace and explore the construction of sexual knowledge by South African youth of Indian-descent. The secondary aim will be to investigate the function and effects of repertoires of sexual knowledge within this cultural group.
2.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a context for this study and motivates the use of the social constructionist framework. Literature relevant to the core constructs of the research topic has been reviewed and the aims of the study have been reiterated. The chapter that follows describes the methodology used in this study and makes available details of the various phases of the research process. In addition, this next chapter will indicate the criteria for verification used in this study.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter reviewed literature dealing with the core constructs of this study and introduced the aim of this research. This chapter will describe the methodology used in this study by outlining the discourse analytic framework and identifying the steps used in this research process. These steps include the data collection phase and data analysis and interpretation phase. Lastly, attention is paid to the criteria of verification (within the discourse analytic framework) used in this research.

3.2 DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

A social constructionist discourse analytic approach is used as a framework for this study. The social constructionist framework has already been explicated but will be briefly mentioned here in order to relate it to discourse analysis. Social constructionism consists of varied approaches, of which discourse analysis is one feature (Potter, 2000). Discourse analysis views language as constructing versions of social reality. Its focus is on talk and texts as social practices and the resources that are drawn upon to enable
those practices (Potter, 2000). Discourse analysis can therefore be seen as a social constructionist approach to research.

As a social constructionist approach, discourse analysis within psychology is divided into two major versions. These two versions share an interest in the role of language in the construction of social reality, yet they attend to different types of questions (Willig, 2001). Discursive Psychology is concerned with discourse practices and considers what individuals do with language, placing an emphasis on the performative qualities of discourse. Foucauldian Discourse Analysis is concerned with the discursive resources that are available to people, and the ways in which institutional power and power relations operate in discourse.

Discursive psychology asks how participants use language in order to negotiate and manage social interactions to achieve interpersonal objectives such as rationalising an action. In this instance, questions ask how participants use discursive resources and with what effects. Foucauldian Discourse Analysis on the other hand, aims to describe and critique discursive worlds people inhabit exploring their implications for subjectivity and experience (Willig, 2001). An example of this is how discursive accounts of having a “mental disorder” position individuals and what kinds of actions and experiences support such a positioning. It is crucial to understand these two major approaches of discourse analysis as the approach of Jonathan Potter and Margaret Wetherell (1987), which will be used in this study, leans towards the Discursive Psychology approach. Yet, Jonathan Potter denounces a sharp divide between the two, suggesting that a focus can be on discursive practices as well as resources (Willig, 2001).

Additionally, the approach of Jonathan Potter and Margaret Wetherell is marked out as a discourse analytic approach that “involves developing hypotheses about the purposes and consequences of language” (Wetherell & Potter, 1994, p. 170). This means that one explores the function of interpretive repertoires as the end point of discourse analysis. Exploring function means exploring the purpose that discursive accounts serve. Interpretive repertoires are an analytic unit and can be described as discursive resources that writers as well as speakers use “to construct versions of events, actions, persons, interpersonal processes, and so on and to perform a variety of other actions” (Wood &
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Kroger, 2000, p. 43) (e.g., the justification of particular practices such as discrimination). Looking at interpretive repertoires is central to the coding and analysis process and will be elaborated upon when discussing those phases of this research process.

3.2.1 The Functions and Effects of Discourse Analysis

The discourse analytic approach suggests that language is used constructively, whether consciously or not, to achieve particular functions which in turn have effects, or consequences. Understanding “construction” as a keyword is central to demonstrating how social reality is linguistically constructed. It emphasises that discourse is contrived out of readily available linguistic resources that have properties of their own. Secondly, it makes clear that individuals are drawing upon available linguistic resources in order to construct an argument or a counter-argument (Wetherell & Potter, 1994).

Furthermore, this process of drawing upon linguistic resources more often than not is in relation to other individuals. That is, social interactions are often the basis for talk in which linguistic resources are drawn upon in order to construct a particular phenomenon (Billig, 1997; Sherrard, 1997). Thus, discourse is seen as a primary research tool to understanding social reality and not as a secondary means (Wetherell & Potter, 1994). Just as a researcher might observe actions in order to learn more about a particular phenomenon, language, in this instance is observed closely. Looking at the detail of language use is then the primary analytic tool used in this study.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION

Sampling is very different within a social constructionist discourse analytic approach in comparison to various other traditional approaches to research. Within the discourse analytic approach, quantity of data is not always looked at as revealing valid information. Hence, a few interviews can reveal as many linguistic patterns as a large amount of interview transcriptions. Thus, the data within 10 texts (8 interviews and 2 written narratives) was deemed sufficient to analyse linguistic patterns that may arise in relation to the construction of sexual knowledge by Southern African youth of Indian-descent. Purposeful sampling was used to identify 10 Southern African youth of
Indian-descent to participate in this study. Participants were all students attending university and the distribution of males to females was equal (5 males and 5 females). Students were all “youth” as defined by the World Health Organisation criteria (15 to 24 years of age) (1998) and were not below the age of consent. Participants were asked to sign a consent form\(^8\) which explained briefly what the study was about and what would be required of them. It also puts into place mechanisms such as confidentiality and anonymity to protect the identity of the participants.

Initially participants were asked to write narratives of their experience of sexual knowledge (Kuzel, 1992). However, the majority of participants had a preference for being interviewed as it seemed less time consuming. Interviews lasted approximately one and a half hours and participants were asked to relate their earliest recollections of sexual knowledge to their present recollection of sexual knowledge in as much detail as possible indicating the process of being and becoming sexually informed.

Questions were directed by an interview guide\(^9\) which participants were allowed to see before hand as it was felt that it would assist with participants’ recollections. Participants could then give some thought to their earliest recollections of becoming sexually informed, something that is perhaps not easily accessible on request. Interviews were audio-taped and these audio-tapes were discarded at the end of the research process. Within a discourse analytic framework, the interviewee’s contribution as well as the interviewer’s contribution to the interview is as important for the interaction (Wetherell & Potter, 1992). The interview is seen as the site of construction where intersubjectivity is aimed for in the construction of knowledge. Following this approach, the researcher was allowed to interact more actively with the interviewee and the process was less structured than traditional interviews may be (Wetherell & Potter, 1992).

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\(^8\) Please see Appendix A for the consent form
\(^9\) Please see Appendix B for interview guide.
3.4 DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

The next step in the research process was to transcribe the audio-taped interviews. Interview recordings were transcribed\textsuperscript{10} ad verbatim and the transcribed material was used for the coding process. In the coding phase, one looks closely at language, which is the analytic unit and one looks at words that share images, connotations, or meaning that can be associated with one another within the context of the texts. This is what the analytic unit of interpretive repertoire refers to (Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

At this stage, the texts were read several times and an open coding process took place in which anything that seemed relevant, however distant from the research question, was coded. Once this was done, texts were re-read and closer attention paid to existing codes and patterns were looked for in the form of variability (similarity and differences). In addition, attention was paid to the researcher’s own input in the interviews and also to any emerging rhetoric (Wetherell & Potter, 1992) (how linguistic resources are used in accounts to justify a particular perspective or lack of perspective). Rhetorical strategies are important because these are discursive positions that are drawn upon to give meaning to particular standpoints (Harris, Lea & Foster, 1995). Harris, Lea and Foster (1995) indicate that it is through the use of rhetorical strategies that accounts remain meaningful and are reproduced.

The completion of this phase resulted in the organisation of the repertoires that emerged from the texts. Possible patterns were formulated according to the content of the interpretive repertoires, in order to establish a coherent picture. This led to the last step in the data analysis and interpretation phase. At this point, several repertoires were chosen as representative of the constructions of sexual knowledge. These were looked at closely in terms of the way language was used to construct sexual knowledge. Hypothesising about the various functions and effects of these constructions as well as rhetorical strategies was the last step. This meant that interpretations were made about the effects of the interpretive repertoires and the purposes they serve (Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

\textsuperscript{10} Please see Appendix C for transcription method.
3.5 VERIFICATION

Within the social constructionist paradigm, the term credibility is used to refer to the verification process in research. The Potter and Wetherell (1987) approach provides several criteria, which can be used to verify research findings. Below are the central criteria used in the verification process of this study and these will be described briefly:

- Ensuring coherence
- Fruitfulness
- Participant’s orientation
- Transferability
- Reflexivity

Ensuring coherence
One should be able to see how the discourse fits together and how the discourse relates to the analysis and interpretation stages. Coherence was ensured by providing a detailed documentation of the analytic process and by showing how the results relate back to analytic procedures. For example, by demonstrating clearly how an interpretive repertoire is used to establish a particular construction, one can begin to assume coherence.

Fruitfulness
In this verification procedure, the implications of the textual analysis are considered. This was done by considering the findings of the study within the current body of HIV/AIDS research as well as for future research (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Wood & Kroger, 2000). Hence, the patterns that emerged were seen within the context of established literature and speculations as to function and effect were seen in the light of existing literature. Additionally potential gaps in the findings of this study were seen as contributing to recommendations for future research.

Participant’s orientation
This criterion for verification refers to the importance of consistency. It is what participants’ say that determines consistency (that is what they see as consistent or
different). It is not sufficient for the analyst to decide whether statements are consistent or not (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). In this study close attention was paid to the way participants described how they defined particular things. For example, in the interviews, if a participant made an attitudinal statement, the researcher did not assume an understanding but followed up in order to get the participant’s orientation with regard to what had been said.

**Transferability**

Rather than generalise the findings, this study, which takes a constructionist position, aims for transferability. Transferability refers to the process whereby “understandings can then be transferred to new contexts in other studies to provide a framework with which to reflect on the arrangements of meaning and action that occur in these new contexts” (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 1999, p. 62). Transferability was attained by producing detailed descriptions of contexts, in order to account for the construction of meaning in a specific context and it is then up to the reader whether or not to transfer this account to other contexts or other studies (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 1999).

**Reflexivity**

Reflexivity is a way of expressing one’s own role in the research process and is “an attempt to make explicit the process by which the material and analysis are produced” (Tindall, 1994, p. 149). By reflecting on the process of research, and expressing this within the research report, one can begin to assume that reflexivity was attained. For example, when analysing the texts, the researcher not only looked closely at the language used by the participants but also looked closely at her contribution to the interview via language used and assumptions. Such instances were drawn out and commented on in the context of this study but also in the broader context of research processes. One such example would be how the researcher’s own identity featured in the interview and what comment this makes about identity, about research processes and how this impacted on the study.
3.6 SYNTHESIS

In this chapter the use of the social constructionist discourse analytic approach as the methodological framework for this study was elaborated upon. The analytic tools of discourse analysis were highlighted and in addition the research process in terms of sampling, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and verification was clarified in terms of this discourse analytic framework.

In analysing the texts, language was looked at closely in order to identify ways in which sexual knowledge was constructed by youth of Indian-descent, and what this meant within the context of HIV/AIDS. In this study, the approach of Potter and Wetherell (1987) was drawn upon in order to carry out the analysis. This approach looks at the function of language and identifies effects and purposes that language can have in different contexts (Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

Some of the basic “terminology” relevant to discourse analysis is made evident, namely that of, texts, interpretive repertoires, rhetoric, variability, function and effects and verification procedures. This terminology serves as the basis for talking about the discourse analysis of this study, and has been defined briefly in this section.

3.7 CONCLUSION

The methodological approach to this study has been elaborated upon and in doing so the criteria for verification and the terminology used by the discourse analytic approach is established. Additionally, this chapter has described the steps taken in the research process, such as the data collection phase and the data analysis phase. The next chapter is an analysis and interpretation of the interpretive repertoires and details the findings of this study.
CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In tracing and exploring the construction of sexual knowledge by Southern African youth of Indian-descent, several significant repertoires have been chosen as representative. This chapter is an analysis and interpretation of interpretive repertoires and in this way offers the construction of sexual knowledge in terms of the aims of this study. These repertoires, however, represent one reading of the texts and there may in fact be differing readings. Additionally, and as Billig (1997, p. 47), makes apparent, “it is not possible ever to exhaust the material nor to produce a complete analysis” within a discourse analytic framework.

4.2 THE SEXINESS OF RISK

This repertoire describes the construction of sexual knowledge as predominantly one where sex is risky. Sex is “taboo”, “dangerous”, and has “limitations” and “consequences”, and having sexual knowledge means knowing that sex is risky and that a level of precaution should be taken when engaging in sexual activity. “Risk” has been defined as “the probability of some future event in which the certainty of a given
outcome is unknown” (Prohaska, et al., 1990, p. 385). In relation to sexual activity, it suggests that when an individual engages in sexual activity, there is no certainty of what the outcome will be. Hence, “risk” encapsulates a great deal of “uncertainty”. It is this “risk” that can be said to influence people’s perceptions and behaviour (Prohaska, et al., 1990). It is this “risk” that becomes apparent in the construction of sexual knowledge by Southern African youth of Indian-descent and informs the repertoire the sexiness of risk. However, having sexual knowledge also means understanding sex as “sacred”, as being about the “emotional attachments” and about “much more important issues than the act of sex”. This latter understanding of sexual knowledge stands to form a sharp contrast to the first understanding of sex.

Extract 1:

13. I: ok - um - we can go straight in then – um - maybe you can tell me about your understanding of sexual knowledge or what it means to be sexually informed?
14. P: Sexually educated, well, - um - let me think – I think it, it entails knowing, you know, what sex is, and the limitations that it has um also other than like, you know, the nitty gritty of what sex is, I think it is also um you know, the consequences of sex, like pregnancies, knowing all the limitations and things like that, STD’s, you know HIV/AIDS - being such a pivotal factor in like sexual behaviour now

Extract 1 illustrates this construction of sexual knowledge. In Extract 2 (lines 17 to 20), the participant establishes sexual knowledge as knowing about the “consequences of sex”. The use of the word “consequences” implies that one must be aware of the impacts of an action. Furthermore, “consequences” here is taken in its pejorative sense. What are these negative consequences? “Pregnancy”, “HIV/AIDS” and “STD’s”. This is re-iterated throughout participant’s ideas about sexual knowledge and is evident in Extract 1 (l. 17-20), where the participant identifies “pregnancies” as a consequence of having sexual intercourse and “HIV/AIDS” and “STD’s” as the “limitations” of sex and as factors that mediate “sexual behaviour” now. These “consequences” also help to identify sexual knowledge as knowing about the physical act of sex as opposed to a

1 See appendix I for interview 6; Female Participant.
2 All Extracts are numbered. These numbers represent line placement within the context of the interview. (I) is used to refer to the interviewer and (P) is used to refer to the participant.
broader knowledge of sexuality; a construction that is evident in the texts. “Consequences” locates a sexual knowledge about the physical act of sex, because pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and STD’s, all hold connotations of coital experiences as opposed to non-coital sexual experiences. That such knowledge influences one’s behaviour is directly implicated in the participant’s allusion to these “consequences” “being such a pivotal factor in like sexual behaviour now” (l. 19/20). Hence, the perception of risk is apparent and is influential in the understanding of sexual knowledge.

This construction of sex as risky – as having negative consequences – is not surprising within a consideration of sex education. Traditionally, reducing the incidence of teenage pregnancy and STD’S has been the aim of sex education and more recently HIV/AIDS has become part of this sex education (Diorio & Munro, 2000; Reiss, 1993). Little reference has been made to “pleasure” in the “Crisis-Instrumental Paradigm” that Morris (1994, p. 15) points to. This paradigm is responsible for educating young people about a sexuality that is bad rather than good. It furthermore enforces a discourse that is centred on sexuality as “coitus” as opposed to “non-coital gestures” (Morris, 1994, p. 22) that may be pleasurable. In its construction of sexual knowledge, this paradigm teaches young people to either “abstain” from sexual intercourse or to use “protection” (Morris, 1994), thereby reproducing sex as risky.

**Extract 2**:  

375. **P:** - but I was enjoying what we were doing – you know – there was no  
376. penetration – there was - it was all fun -  
377. **I:** hmm  
378. **P:** but it was safe fun –

This construction has the effect of establishing an ambiguous understanding of sex made evident in the contrasting positions of sex as “pleasurable” versus sex as “dangerous”. An additional effect of this construction is the establishment of an ambiguous sexual experience. *Extract 2* is noteworthy in this respect with its notion of “safe fun” (l. 378). This extract is placed in the context of the participant talking about

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3 See Appendix D for Interview 1; Male Participant.
his initial sexual experiences with his girlfriend of the time. His use of the word “safe” in conjunction with “fun” is somehow unusual. In line 376, the participant says “it was all fun” but the crucial word that draws attention to the ambiguity involved in sexual activity is the word “but” (l. 378). It is at this point that attention is drawn to “safe fun” or the necessity for safety in sexual activity. It is not simply “fun” but “safe/fun” alluding to the potential risks involved in sexual activity. “Safe fun” is “no penetration” and “penetration” is potentially unsafe. Within this ambiguous sexual experience, it is interesting to note that this perceived risk is largely a male experience or perhaps a gendered experience. The gender differentials involved in this ambiguous sexual experience require further exploration and will be explored in the next repertoire.

4.3 “YOU SEE IT’S DIFFERENT FOR A GUY”

Gender theory as well as feminist theory, allude to gender differentials in sexuality (Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999). Both these theoretical frameworks will be drawn upon to refer to the construction of male and female sexuality as made apparent in this study. This repertoire, “You see it’s different for a guy”, encapsulates the construction of male and female sexuality as one at variance. This variance can be located within sexual culture and addresses differences in terms of leniency, sexual experimentation and virginity. These differences will be examined here.

Feminist theory indicates that gender is socially constructed rather than biologically instituted and therefore to be feminine or masculine means making a set of choices that allows one to take up either position (Measor & Tiffin, 1996). Choosing position locates one within a sexual culture\(^4\), which stands to reaffirm this identity and reproduce the construction of a particular identity. One example of this that this study highlights is the construction of male and female virginity.

Virginity has come to refer to the first coital experience or vaginal intercourse. While the definition of the loss of virginity may differ cross-culturally or across sexual cultures, virginity is almost universally defined as the lack of this first coital experience.

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\(^4\) “Sexual culture is a concept that recognizes that there are systems of sexual behaviour among any group of people” (Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999, p. 26).
(Carpenter, 2001) and in this study will be referred to in this light. Historically, virginity has been framed in a number of ways. It has frequently been understood as a rite of passage. Traditionally and stemming from Christian tradition, virginity has represented “purity”, “innocence” and “virtue”, a state before marriage and more so for women. While conceptions of virginity have changed especially within the nineteenth century from the traditionalist view to one where the loss of virginity before marriage has become practiced, the traditionalist view has not been displaced completely. Virginity has been construed as virtue in women and has often been seen as negative for men (Carpenter, 2001).

In this study, the construction of virginity offers valuable insights into male and female sexuality with specific reference to youth of Indian-descent. Males are constructed (by males and females) as having a leniency towards them by parents and community. It is this leniency perhaps that allows males to be sexually opportunistic as opposed to seeking serious relationships. It is also this leniency within a space of freedom such as “university” that makes sexual opportunism possible. On the other hand, females are given a communal locus and located within a social group control, where sexuality is monitored in the face of family and community honour. This is not challenged by literature. Rather, literature around Indian culture portrays men as having greater sexual freedom to women. It suggests a double standard that is also pointed out in feminist literature (Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999), where men may exercise sexual freedom, while women should be chaste and save themselves for marriage. Hence, pre-marital sex is looked down upon and is seen as compromising “family honour” (Harilal, 1993). Hence, virginity is negotiated differently by males and females in this study. *Extract 3 and 4* illustrate some of these constructions and will be used to further this discussion on the construction of male and female sexuality.

**Extract 3**:  

945. **P:** you know and it’s like letting a child loose in a candy store  
946. **I:** hmm  
947. **P:** you know – he doesn’t know what he wants so he’ll try a little of  
948. everything  
949. **I:** right

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5 See Appendix D for Interview 1; Male Participant
P: and that was basically it

Extract 4:

461. P: hmmm- I have an older sister – we’re only 2 girls in the family and um
462. now - it’s just strange because you grow up thinking, you know, your
463. sister and you are very alike and you probably have the same - you know,
464. belief system, considering, you know, we’re brought up in the same way
465. um - but there is some things like I didn’t at - at a certain age like you
466. know, you don’t want to think about you know, your sister as like being
467. sexually active or you know, even like having a sexuality so to say
468. I: hm
469. P: and um when she was, let me think, how old was she, when she was 25,
470. um she fell in love with someone and she had sex for the first time and –
471. like she only told me about - much later
472. I: ok
473. P: like she’s 27 at the moment, - she told me perhaps like a year
474. afterwards, yes, I was sleeping with him, da,da,da, you know, and like
475. even though I say I have a very open mind, I was like, “Oh, my God, my
476. sister is having sex, that’s terrible” (laughing) I was like “Oh, my God,
477. why is this happening”, you know, “shame my poor parents don’t deserve
478. this”, that kind of thing um but yah, - I don’t know…
479. I: I’m interested in why you say ‘my poor parents don’t deserve this’
480. (we laugh)
481. P: Because it’s - my parents were ever to find out that you know, - that
482. my sister was not a virgin, you know, and that she had slept with someone
483. - it would - break their hearts, I mean my mother would go berzerk, my
484. dad I think would have an anuresis or something (little laugh) and um –
485. It’s just because in Indian families you know, the girl is supposed to be
486. like - this - prize you can give away to someone, you know, give away to
487. someone
488. I: ok
489. P: hopefully at some point um - and yeah, it’s a reflection on the family if
490. like something - if the girl has sex and I mean you know, because sex is
491. such taboo in Indian culture and, you know, sex before marriage is
492. frowned upon, you know, and she will be frowned upon and therefore it’s
493. a reflection on our parents and family, you know, big skandaal and yah –
494. and things like that I think they would be very disappointed and they
495. would probably, you know, question like, you know, what on earth did we
496. do wrong, you know, they probably do the whole, you know, we’ve spoilt
497. you too much - or things like that …

6 See Appendix I for Interview 6; Female Participant.
In *Extract 3* this male participant relates an interesting analogy when he says in *lines 945-948* “it’s like letting a child loose in a candy store...you know – he doesn’t know what he wants so he’ll try a little of everything”. While being useful to relate his experience at university as one of freedom and opportunity to access women, which is the context of this participant’s analogy, it also offers a befitting construction of male sexuality during university years as opportunistic. This depiction of “university” is significant because in this study, “university” has been largely pointed to by males as a place of freedom for sexual advances as well as a place where one has to be responsible for one’s own actions. By contrast, home is suggested as a place of restriction, where parents and community are monitoring one’s actions. At “university”, however, the self becomes the bearer of this responsibility. It is this portrayal of “university” that deliberates a consideration of “space”. For the most part, “university” is a constructed space that takes on many varied meanings. In this instance it is a space that means social interaction and the possibility of sexual activity (Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999).

Females do not portray “university” in quite the same way. It is a place of broadening one’s horizons and it is a “space” in which sexuality can be explored. However, this is so to a differing degree in comparison to their male counterparts. Females are constructed as generally seeking serious or long-term relationships, whereas males are constructed as not having a programme, but rather wanting to just “fool around” and as having a “no strings attached” approach. It is perhaps because “virginity” is still a “dominant framework within which young women are forced to understand their bodies, their sexual interests and any sexual experience” (Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999, p. 36). Negotiation of virginity for a woman and specifically for Indian females in this study is still mediated by two factors. Firstly, maintaining one’s virginity means that one is a virtuous woman who has character and is worthy in the eyes of her future husband, as well as her family and community. Secondly, maintaining one’s virginity is seen as a guarantee that one will find a marriage partner. To an extent in this study, having romantic relationships with males is influenced by these factors as well.

*Extract 4* relates this participant’s experience of her sister becoming sexually active. *Line 469/470* implies the negotiation of virginity using notions of love. Females decide to have sex when in love as opposed to the male “no strings attached” sexual experience. However, that this negotiation of virginity is given a communal locus of
experience is evident in the line “shame my poor parents don’t deserve this” (l. 477). Virginity is compromised in the face of family honour. Lines 485-489 points to social identity of Indian-ness as mediating the female sexual experience. Here social identity means maintaining one’s virginity and not having sex before marriage and not disappointing one’s family. Females should be guarding their sexuality because they are a “prize” to be given away to someone. Social identity of Indian-ness here determines that parents are responsible for maintaining the “prize”. Lines 495-497, identify the parents as intervening between daughter and Indian society or as being social norm regulators and taking responsibility for their daughter’s sexuality.

It is because females are “prizes” to be given away that there is a lack of leniency towards female sexuality and a stronger implementation of social control. Traditionally, because women were framed as needing to maintain virginity and abstain from pre-marital sex in order to remain virtuous, more attention was paid to educating women about menstruation and reproduction (Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999). However, this study suggests a general lack of this preparation, but certainly a framing of women as lacking sexuality in contrast to males who aggrandize their sexuality and often use sexuality to construct their masculinity or “manhood”. Losing one’s virginity for a male is seen as a transition from boyhood to manhood and having a greater sexual knowledge than other males insists upon masculinity and greater respect.

It is evident that the sexual culture of males and females is differing and traditional frames of reference such as “chastity” for women and “sexual freedom” for men is reproduced. “You see it’s different for a guy” highlights a gender differentiated patterning of sexuality for youth of Indian-descent and implicates a responsibility for such a differentiation within in history and culture. This gender differentiation extends to parental responsibility for sexual knowledge as will be made apparent in the discussion below on agency and responsibility.

4.4 AGENCY AND RESPONSIBILITY

This repertoire locates the responsibility of sex education in several agents and highlights the relationship between these agents to be conflicting and problematic.
Peers, school as well as the self are indicated as agents responsible for sexual knowledge. Hence, it is a repertoire that constructs sex as something that someone should take responsibility for and within this construction there is great deal of variability. Firstly, a gendered responsibility is made apparent within parental responsibility and suggests the subscription to traditional parental roles. Secondly, the lack of parental responsibility is constituted through the role of the school and peers. Lastly, it is also evident that youth feel some responsibility for their sex education, which is quite significant within a framing of youth as “foolish” and incapable. These variances within agency and responsibility are discussed below and are seen to reinforce traditional sex education roles (whereby parents are constructed as negligent of their child’s sex education and the school is constructed as having to be responsible for the sex education of young people).

It is significant that a gendered responsibility exists within an overall lack of parental responsibility for sex education. This notion of gendered responsibility is longstanding and suggests that “mother” is responsible for the sexual education of the daughter (Andre, Frevert, Schuchmann, 1989; Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999), if not both son and daughter. Traditionally mothers have been seen as the educators regarding menstruation, and fathers have been seen as absent figures regarding the sex education of both sons and daughters (Bennett & Dickinson, 1980). In this study, this traditional notion has been drawn upon in the construction of sexual knowledge by youth of Indian-descent. Additionally, it is somewhat unusual that this traditional notion is drawn upon in a central repertoire that constructs a lack of parental agency in the sexual education of youth. It appears unusual, as it indicates that youth ascribe to a gendered responsibility when at the same time indicating that parents are generally absent in the responsibility for sex education. However, this ambiguity is may be indicative of a preference for parental agency.

A lack of parental agency in the sex education of youth, in general, has also been central to constructions of sexual knowledge (Bennett & Dickinson, 1980, Delius & Glaser, 2002). This study substantiates this and consequently confirms the media, peers and school to be agents of sexual knowledge. Moreover, the responsibility for sex education is actively shifted to school and peers, reiterating this lack of parental agency. These two sources of sexual knowledge again have been considerable in constructions of
sexual knowledge by youth (Bennett & Dickinson, 1980; Richardson & Cranston, 1981; Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999). These two sources have also been constructed as conflicting with parental agency. Peers have traditionally been regarded as unreliable sources of sexual knowledge that relate inaccurate information (Bennett & Dickinson, 1980; Andre, Frevert, Schuchmann, 1989) and the school as an agent relating a questionable “value-free” or “factual” sexual knowledge (Wyness, 1992). In this study, the analysis revealed a construction of peers as a comfort zone where issues of sexuality could be talked about comfortably in comparison to parents. “School” is constructed as a space in which friends are encountered and the majority of sexual knowledge is learnt via encounters with friends or classes such as Biology, guidance class or formal sex education classes.

Historically, sex education has been the responsibility of the family and parenthood but the transference of sex education to the public domain has led to conflicts between parents and schools as to their rights in educating youth about sex. With the advent of schooling for all children, sex education in the home has been seen as one of the last measures of parental control. The extent to which parents managed the sexual behaviour of their children was also seen as a marker of success in child rearing that furthermore advanced group status (Richardson & Cranston, 1981). Hence, school challenges the role of parents in sexually educating the youth.

**Extract 5**: (P: VN: 5/6)

145. **P**: So, obviously the best thing to do is to stay away, you know
146.  **I**: ok
147.  **P**: just be safe and just, just don’t make any stupid mistakes and
148.  **I**: ok
149.  **P**: try and be faithful, even though when you’re young, it’s hard to be, but
150.  **I**: hmm
151.  **P**: just, just be focused, you know, don’t do anything silly, don’t do
152.  anything irrational, - yah um - and what else? They like - they didn’t
153.  introduce us to a condom or anything, no they didn’t - but they basically
154.  just made us aware of what you can do to be safe and stuff like that, but
155.  they didn’t like come and say this is a condom

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7 See Appendix H for Interview 5; Male Participant.
In this study, the construction of school and peers playing an active role in sexual education, and the absence of parents as active agents in their child’s sexual education is apparent. However, the role of the school is ambiguous. While its agency suggests a solution to the lack of agency on the part of parents, its role as an agent is questionable. *Extract 5* highlights this: In this extract the participant relates an experience of sexual education at school which specifically centres around a person from the Ministry of Health who has come to speak to his class about AIDS. This context in itself suggests a sexual education dominated by an awareness of AIDS and the construction of sex as risky. The teaching tools in this AIDS education class being “stay away” (*l. 145*) and “don’t make any stupid mistakes” (*l. 165*), make clear to youth that one has to be vigilant with regard to sex because one bears the risk of contracting HIV and developing AIDS. This is no different to the education received via formal sexual education classes or traditionalist school Biology. These lines point to school as agents of the “Crisis-Instrumental Paradigm” (Morris, 1994, p. 15) that educates youth about what is bad about sexuality and about young people in “crisis”. Hence, the role of school as agents responsible for sexually educating youth is ambiguous. It offers a solution to the so-called negligible role of parents, but it implements a crisis-instrumental paradigm that reproduces negative connotations of sex which youth draw upon as constituting meaning in their constructions of sexual knowledge and sexual experiences.

This extract further suggests that youth are unreliable and unable to be responsible for their sexuality. This participant goes on to say “try and be faithful, even though when you’re young, it’s hard to be” (*l. 167*), incurring by himself the construction of an unreliable youth. This line suggests that for young people it is difficult to be faithful because it is in their nature not to be faithful (sexually). This holds connotations of being promiscuous and irresponsible about one’s sexuality. This is significant because it highlights the discursive account where youth are constructed as foolish and inappropriately sexual. This is problematic however, as it contradicts an account from this study that suggests youth should be active in their sexual education and therefore responsible for their own sexual education.

That young people are irresponsible sexually in comparison to adults deliberates a consideration of the sexuality of young people. The conception of a developmental approach to education and sexuality firstly, places children as undergoing particular
developmental stages at which they should be learning about particular things. For example, at puberty, young people should be learning about the changes their bodies are undergoing and the consequences of vaginal intercourse. Secondly, the developmental approach marks out what is appropriate sexual behaviour for young people at different stages. For example, sexual intercourse is inappropriate for young people. This is perhaps mediated by a moral discourse that implicates sexual intercourse as being inappropriate outside of marriage for example. That children should not be talking about sexuality or engaging in sexual activity (Paris, 1995) is a time-honoured developmental dogma and one that is reproduced in the construction of sexual knowledge. It is subsequently problematic then that young people have drawn upon notions of the self as a locus of control in sexual education when youth have constructed a sexual knowledge in which youth cannot be trusted with their own sexuality. It poses the question of how youth can construct themselves as a locus of control for their sexual education when they are constructing themselves as incapable in youth as opposed to adults. This is of course drawn from participants’ retrospective stance, but nevertheless still raises these questions. However, it may not be entirely negative and the implications of this will be considered in the discussion chapter that follows.

In this construction of sexual knowledge as one lacking parental agency and responsibility, rhetorical strategies have been identified as constituting this. Two main rhetorical strategies are used to support the construction of parental agency as lacking in the sex education of Indian youth. These rhetorical strategies include othering and the use of social identity and will be discussed subsequently.

4.5 RHETORICAL STRATEGIES

“Social identity” is a major rhetorical strategy used by participants to signify the lack of parental agency and has been used in a range of discursive contexts. Social identity theory offers a framework that describes the dynamics of group membership and is used here as a way of understanding this rhetorical strategy (Cameron & Lalonde, 2001). Social identity has been identified as locating the individual within a membership of a social group (or groups) of which s/he has knowledge of and of which s/he attaches value and an emotional significance (Tajfel, 1982). It points to a community that share
norms and values (Uljas, 2001). In this study, the analysis made evident that the social identity of Indians was constructed in a number of ways and furthermore used as rhetorical strategy to give meaning to the lack of parental agency.

First and foremost, this social identity was construed as a given, coming through statements such as this one: “you know – like - with the whole - with Indians and that - you know its very - when you say the word sex- every one like ‘haaahh’ - you know, shit, shit - ‘don’t say that word’” 8; and made to be obvious. Yet, also apparent was a negotiation of this social identity in terms of one’s South/ern African identity, perhaps within the context of “acculturation”9. This confirms the contested nature of the Indian identity in South Africa, in terms of defining oneself (“South African Indian” vs. “Indian South African”) (Ebr-Vally, 2001). Nevertheless, this social identity was largely constructed as conservative, narrow-minded and uncomfortable with regard to sexuality – sex is “taboo”; “you don’t speak about it”. Hence, parents fail to speak about sex to their children because of this social identity.

What is interesting is the use of “othering” in order to construct this social identity as such. Extract 6 is an illustration of this:

Extract 610:

282. I: I’m just wondering, cos you said you’d been brought up in a traditional
283. Indian household
284. P: yah
285. I: uh - may be tell me more about that and we can come back to sort of
286. P: Well, ok – um - It’s like I told you, I’ve been brought up in an Indian
287. household, I understand the culture and everything but when you live in a
288. foreign country, like X, you do tend to pick up some Western uh
289. ways
290. I: ok
291. P: and um other than the language, obviously we do adapt other kinds of
292. things or cultures I think - So, you don’t - if, if you- maybe if you were
293. living in India or where ever you looked down upon people like this but
294. because you’ve been brought up in this Indian traditional way plus also
295. you went to a white school

8 Appendix D: Interview 1, lines 41 to 43.
9 “Acculturation” can be seen as a discursive account that refers to changes in attitudes and behaviours that less dominant groups such as immigrant populations undergo (Perez & Padilla, 2000).
10 See Appendix H for Interview5; Male Participant.
I: ok

P: and um you’ve been taught white language and um – well not white
language - English and stuff like that, you are obviously open to other
things, you’re not like very narrow minded, you know, you not going to
look down at others that do these things or stuff like that, so it it - I don’t
now how it is for you guys but for us - It’s like if I had to have a nap over
– I’m not gonna go home and tell my parents that I had a nap over- you
know - but I think with whites or blacks they are allowed to like have
girlfriends and stuff like that, so – their parents are even cool with their
girlfriends going over to their house and stuff like that – now when you’re
from an Indian family –it - you’ve got to be engaged or practically married
before stuff like that can happen - Is that the same for you guys or?

In this extract the researcher is clarifying the participant’s Indian background, which the participant drew attention to early on in the interview process. Lines 287 and 288, point to two cultures: the Indian culture which this participant is familiar with and the Western culture to which he has been exposed to. Acculturation or integration of cultures appears to be at work. These two cultures at work are reiterated in lines 292 to 295. Here the participant, once again draws attention to his familiarity with the Indian culture and his exposure to the west. “Western ways” are represented in the form of “white school” (l. 295) and again in the form of “white language – English and stuff like that” (l. 298). Lines 292 to 295 also implicates the “Indian traditional way” as fairly negative in comparison to western ways as it suggests that the “Indian traditional way” looks down upon people who engage in sexual encounters (referring to young people who are in relationships and engage in nap overs\(^\text{11}\)). These lines suggest that because one has experienced both cultures one can be more open-minded. However, without this experience, one is narrow-minded. Hence, the Indian culture is generally narrow-minded with regard to sexuality. Further down in this extract, in lines 298 and 299, this construction is directly implied with the use of the word “obviously” (l. 298). “Obviously” there is greater openness to “other things” and “you’re not like very narrow-minded” once you have been exposed to “western ways”.

Lines 303 to 305, suggest that white and black youth are allowed to have girlfriends and Indian youth are not. It furthermore suggests that white and black parents are “cool” because they allow this. Indian parents on the other hand are not so “cool”. Instead

\(^{11}\) Nap overs is a word used by this participant to indicate Indian females staying over in their boyfriends’ rooms or Indian males staying over at their girl friends room.
they are restrictive and appropriate relationships between Indian males and females to marriage and not outside of marriage. This locates what is appropriate to a communal locus and is suggestive of the construction of Indian culture as marking out appropriate and inappropriate sexuality (Kamani, 1997). Thus, the overall function of this extract and other extracts that have pointed to “otherness” is firstly to construct the Indian social identity. Secondly, it points to the negotiation of identity between two cultures and thirdly, it serves to suggest that Indian parents should be more like the “whites or blacks” (l. 303) with regard to issues of sexuality. There is a perception that whites and blacks are more open about issues of sexuality and that white and black parents talk about sex with their children, whereas Indian parents do not. Included in this construction of whites and blacks, is that this openness about sexuality with youth means greater rapport between parent and child. Hence, through this construction of whites and blacks, it is suggested that should Indian parents talk about sex with their children there will be an improved parent-child rapport. Thus, the use of “othering” or social comparison implicates appropriate parental agency for Indian parents.

Social identity is given further significance and its use as a rhetorical strategy is extended to include both positive and negative ends. While the social identity of Indian-ness has largely been constructed within a pejorative sense, this same construction is used to point to a positive function, however briefly. More specifically, this same “restriction” is also construed as “protection”. Two contrasting extracts will be used to demonstrate this. In Extract 7, the participant is responding to a question about her perception of sex as “dirty” and immediately draws on the rhetorical strategy of “othering” and “social identity” to explain this perception. Her “cultural background” (l. 254), which is Indian is responsible for this perception. Indian culture is fitted into a broader structure of “Eastern ideology” (l. 259/260) and is compared to “Western ideology”. In “Western thought” (l. 255), sex is not taboo, it’s not dirty, “it’s not that bad” (l. 255/256); rather “it’s natural process” (l. 256). However, within Eastern thought, sex is taboo and sex is dirty and coming from the Indian culture, that’s how sex is perceived – as something not good and as something unnatural. It becomes a natural perception and an unquestionable one. The social identity of Indians takes on a number of characteristics that can be regarded as negative in comparison to the construction of other cultures such as the western culture. This lends itself to a
familiarity and only in *Extract 8* do we see how these characteristics are put to use in another way.

**Extract 7**\(^{12}\):

254. **P:** um - ok- see this is where my cultural background comes in to play like
255. Western ideology, well Western thought is like, you know, it’s not that
256. bad. I mean it’s natural process and, you know, it’s a human need, why
257. call it dirty, you know, it’s basically just like smutty magazines and you
258. know, peoples own like perceptions that cause it to be dirty and then of
259. course you have um in direct opposite, Indian or, you know, Eastern
260. ideology saying -sex is taboo - um - it’s dirty and - things like that – um –
261. Now my mom, like my parents believed that - no my mom still believes
262. that, you know, you talk about sex to your young daughter she’s going to
263. go out and have it, or you know

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**Extract 8**\(^{13}\): (**P:** JT: 16/17)

520. **P:** um I’m quite happy with my tradition and stuff like because I felt
521. when I was younger and foolish - because because of these restrictions
522. - um -I was protected from a lot these things – even though I was
523. frustrated at that point in time – I can’t go out and I can’t do this –
524. **I:** hmm
525. **P:** thinking back thinking back right now I just felt – boy am I lucky to
526. have had those restrictions because otherwise I – I myself don’t know
527. to what extreme I would have explored things –
528. **I:** ok
529. **P:** and yah yup- so for those sort of things- ummm – it it sort of served
530. as a good base – or a good sort of like re - confined space to exist –
531. until I made up my mind about I want to be or how I want to go about
532. life

*Extract 8* reaffirms a “tradition” (Indian tradition) (l. 520) of “restrictions” (l. 526), but rather than suggesting these restrictions had a negative impact, this participant indicates the use of “social identity” as a mechanism of protection. It is the restriction, the “confined space to exist” (l. 530) that protected her from exploring the extremes she may have explored. Furthermore, living in the confines of “tradition” serves as a “good

\(^{12}\) See Appendix I for Interview 6; Female Participant.
\(^{13}\) See Appendix G for Interview 4; Female Participant.
base” (l. 530). It marks out what is appropriate and what is not and hence marks out the lines of exploration. Sticking to these lines, means that there will be an end to these “traditional” confines. This may sound like hard work in order to attain trust and freedom, yet it is espoused as “protection” and represents an alternative perspective within the construction of Indian culture and within the use of social identity in these texts. Hence the restrictions familiar to Indian tradition while indicated as one strategy of preventing Indian youth from sexual exploration is also then a strategy of protection and one that reaffirms the inabilities of youth.

4.6 SYNTHESIS

The construction of sexual knowledge by Southern African youth of Indian-descent is one where sex is largely constructed as risky. The construction of sexual knowledge offers a depiction of sex as ambiguous, where sex is both pleasurable and dangerous. This risk or ambiguity mediates sexual experience, particularly that of males. This makes evident gender differentials with regard to the ambiguities of sex and sexual experience. These gender differentials are discussed around the construct of virginity within.

The construction of sexual knowledge is shown to be as much about the “who” as the “what”. That is, it is as much about the agents of sexual knowledge as about what sexual knowledge is. Here, the agents responsible for sexual knowledge are explored and the defining construction is the lack of parental agency and the ambiguous role of the school. This lack of parental agency is constituted through the rhetorical strategies of social identity and othering. The use of social identity offers insight into how particular meanings, such as the construction of a lack of parental agency in sex education, are constituted and reconstituted. It furthermore highlights the role of the Indian social identity in constituting meaning within the construction of sexual knowledge by youth of Indian-descent.
4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has illustrated the analysis and interpretation of interpretive repertoires. There are several findings and these will be discussed in the chapter that follows. The results of this study will be discussed, in terms of their implications for youth of Indian-descent and the broader context of HIV/AIDS interventions, such as sex education.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided the findings from the analysis and interpretation of interpretive repertoires. This chapter discusses these findings in terms of their implications for Southern African youth of Indian-descent and the broader context of HIV/AIDS interventions. The construction of sexual knowledge by Southern African youth of Indian-descent offers a construction of sex as risky and ambiguous. It also offers a construction of the gender differentials that surround the ambiguity of sex. Additionally, agency in conveying sexual knowledge is significant and one that highlights the lack of parental agency and the role of the school. With regard to agency, the social identity of Indian-ness is significant and used to constitute meaning with regard to sexual education.

5.2 UNRISKING THE RISK

The construction of sex as risky establishes sex as ambiguous and for sexually active individuals it establishes an ambiguous sexual experience. It suggests the use of the
crisis instrumental paradigm (Morris, 1994) in which youth are located in crisis and as needing to be taught ways to deal with this crisis. In this construction, youth are then “passive”, or “vulnerable lost souls on the brink of self-destruction” (Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999, p. 48). The implications of this construction places youth as having little capacity to direct their own sexuality and this is disempowering. Yet, the fact that youth draw on resources such as the media suggests that they are not that passive. In addition, the construction of youth as being responsible for their sex education equally suggests this.

However, that constructions of sexual knowledge include the school as active agents delivering messages belonging to a crisis-instrumental paradigm (Morris, 1994), and parents as absent figures (or as preferred sexual educators that are absent) means that youth are still subject to a sexual education that they do not have much control over in terms of subject matter. Hence, youth continue to draw on school-based education to constitute their understanding of sexuality and these understandings are furthermore reproduced by youth in their talk of sexual knowledge.

Discussing these constructions as having negative consequences for youth, leads one to consider the alternatives that may be available to youth and the broader context of HIV/AIDS interventions, such as sex education. The parental role in sex education as absent or lacking has been a central discourse framed in research and fairly common knowledge. It is often suggested that parents can be educated on how to teach their children about sex and this may be a longstanding endeavour. Yet, as this study made evident, to an extent youth see themselves as being responsible for sex education and this can be a useful resource in developing sex education programmes. However, several things need to happen if youth are to be conceptualised as a resource. Firstly, youth need to be reframed as resourceful and capable rather than passive and unreliable (Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999). Secondly, the construction of parents as absent sexual educators lends itself to reinforcing the traditional educational roles (Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999), such as that of the school and this perhaps needs to be addressed openly by all stakeholders.

This does not mean that sexual education in schools should be done away with. Yet, its role in placing youth in crisis, cannot be ignored. Of course, this implies that placing
youth in crisis is incorrect somehow and deliberates a consideration of the aims of sex education. If sex education aims at promoting sexual health, then perhaps establishing sex as risky, places a great deal of ambiguity in the lives of young people and this may not be considered healthy. If the aims of sex education are to teach the facts about sex, this is further problematic, in the light of the problems conceived in a value-free sex education. One such problem is that there is no value-free education (Morris, 1994). Furthermore, the role of the social identity in the lives of Indian youth in constituting meaning certainly suggests conflicting values (or ambiguity within the identity of these young people) and the influence of values in interpreting sexual information.

Consequently, appropriating sex education as the responsibility of the school, while detracting from the role of parents, places enormous demands on the educators within those institutions (Morris, 1994). Additionally it means that sex education is given importance during a child’s schooling years which then suggests that young people do not need a forum for sex education outside of such institutions or when they leave this institution to work or to further their studies. Yet, what are the alternatives that educators have? Choosing the crisis-instrumental paradigm (Morris, 1994) means that teachers do not get implicated in teaching particular sexual values to young people. Historically, sex education was allowed in schools on the basis that it would teach the facts of sex and just the facts, so if particular values are taught it will perhaps mean uproar from parents with differing values.

There are varied sex education programmes and the findings of this study suggest a consideration of several principles. Haffner (2001) suggests a number of principles that should be used in preventing AIDS. A few key principles have been considered as relevant in light of the implications of the findings of this study for youth of Indian-descent (and perhaps youth in general) and HIV/AIDS prevention efforts. AIDS education should be presented within a holistic programme that teaches about values, decision-making, communication skills, self-esteem, peer pressure, drug taking, contraception and sexually transmitted diseases. In this approach, youth are not viewed in crisis and a broader context is given to sexual intercourse beyond the physical act of sex.
Secondly, one of Haffner’s (2001) principles suggests that AIDS education programmes should include values on the basis that AIDS education cannot be value free because it is connected to the most personal parts of people’s lives. However, how this is done may be problematic for educators unless parents are given a role. A third principle that is relevant to this study is that AIDS education should be positive about sexuality. In this study as in many other studies, research findings make evident that sex education programmes typically focus on the dangers of sex rather than the pleasures of sex or non-coital experiences that can be pleasurable (Morris, 1994).

The findings of this study draw attention to youth in crisis and the institution of the crisis instrumental paradigm (Morris, 1994) through traditional educational roles such as the school. The possibility of reframing youth as active and capable within their sexual education is an alternative and has a significant implication towards HIV/AIDS interventions as it draws on youth as a potential resource. The implications of social identity are particularly significant, and deliberate a consideration of a sex education that takes into account the sexual values in which youth are embedded. However, this may be somewhat complex as it challenges the role of the school within a history of difficulty with regard to establishing sex education. The implications of these findings further indicates that sex education cannot simply be located during the schooling years as it is suggestive of the promotion of sexual health or prevention of sexually transmitted diseases during this period and not beyond.

5.3 THE SOCIAL IDENTITY OF GENDER AND INDIAN-NESS

The significance of gender has been contextualised within sexual culture or gender differentials. However, viewing gender differentials within the context of social identity is equally useful. In this study, social identity has been given significance in relation to the constructions of Indian identity and the use of Indian identity to constitute meaning. With regard to gender though, social identity theory suggests that each gender inhabits a social categorisation, categorising the “other” as male when one is female and vice versa. The basis of this categorisation, are beliefs or perceptions of the “other” as different (Cameron & Lalonde, 2001). Traditionally males have been
perceived as the more advantaged group and the findings of this study suggest that Indian males are constructed as the more socially advantaged or sexually advantaged.

The existence of such gender differentials in the talk of youth of Indian-descent reinforces differential sexual cultures. The implications of this for youth of Indian-descent, and for HIV/AIDS interventions are somewhat uncertain, and perhaps requires further research. However, rendering alternatives to this construction means addressing such differentials and what it means for HIV/AIDS interventions such as sex education programmes. A great deal of research has recently been focused on males and constructions of masculinity in an endeavour to more fully understand such differentials as constituted by each gender (Cameron & Lalonde, 2001). It is this type of research that needs to be focused on the social identities of both Indian males and females of all generations to extend our knowledge and shift our understanding of these genders. Furthermore such research may help to unravel the constitution of traditional parental roles with regards to sex education.

To a large extent in this study, females related to mother as responsible for their sexual education and males related to father as a sexual educator. It is the small extent to which parental roles have shifted in terms of sexual education or indeed socialisation of children that needs to be focused on as a challenge to these traditional parental roles. Further research into parental roles in the lives of youth of Indian-descent may help with this task.

With regard to the aspect of gender as a social identity crucial to furthering our understanding of how it affects sexuality, it is clear that further research is necessary. It does make evident that social identity does play a role in the sexual values of individuals such as youth of Indian-descent. Similarly, the use of an Indian identity to constitute meaning within constructions of sexual knowledge is significant. It has been used as a rhetorical strategy that constitutes the lack of parental agency in the sexual education of youth of Indian-descent. Its consequential role in doing so has led to a consideration of why it is used to do so. The use of social identity theory to understand this strategy was employed and points to the use of social comparisons as a strategy that has been termed “othering” in the analysis. That is, youth talk of other cultures by way of comparison with their own and in doing so construct the Indian social identity.
Social identity theory suggests that differences favouring the outgroup are kept to a minimum as it does not enhance the status of the ingroup, which in this instance would be people who claim an Indian identity (Devine, Ashby Plant & Harrison, 1999). The youth of Indian-descent in this study highlight differences that appear to favour the outgroup and undermine the ingroup. It suggests perhaps that the perception of the Indian identity is somewhat negative with regard to sexuality and hence by favouring the outgroup, and aligning with the outgroup (with regard to sexuality), places one as more superior to the ingroup in this instance. The implications of this finding suggest that the sexual values that are aligned with the Indian identity are construed as negative or unfavourable in comparison to the sexual values aligned with other social identities such as white people.

Further research into the social identity of Indians in comparison to other identities in the Southern African context may bring forth how this identity is constructed in such a way. Yet, in terms of the implications of this finding for youth of Indian-descent, it does serve to suggest that youth of Indian-descent generally locate their culture as retrograde in comparison to other cultures and specifically in relation to sexual values. Such a construction may mean that youth seek to fulfil the sexual values aligned to other cultures in order to gain the perceived advantage of those cultures. Furthermore, it indicates that a value-free education is impossible in a multi-cultural context where youth encounter varied sexual values. The solution may be to suggest that the sexual values of the Indian population should change, yet this is nothing more than confirming the perceived advantageous sexual values of the outgroup. A further solution may be to isolate individuals so that sexual values that conflict with those that one has been embedded in, are then never sought out. However, this is to deny the possibility of co-existence and furthermore negates respect and tolerance of values different to one’s own. Thus, it may be necessary to acknowledge the differential sexual values of the varied population groups across the spectrum of sexual education mediums. Additionally, it may be worthwhile to go beyond this and address the youth with the question of whether it is necessary to address the difference is sexual values and how then to go about it.
5.4 A REFLEXIVE VIEWPOINT

This next section offers a break from the discussion of the findings but is equally important in that it contributes to the understanding of this research process. Here, the researcher’s contribution to and understanding of the meanings constituted within the texts produced is examined critically. The outlook of this study which intended to look at the construction of sexual knowledge by Southern African youth of Indian-descent no doubt is central to the talk that participants made available in interviews. The interview is reliant on the interdependence of human interaction (reliant on both the interviewee and interviewer) for the interchange of views and the construction of an understanding about a theme of mutual interest (Kvale, 1996). Hence, this locus of knowledge came to the fore, not only because it was a site where knowledge could be constructed but also because of the dynamics between the researcher and the interviewees. Central to these dynamics was the social identity of the researcher and interviewees. Such a feature is one that is not subject to active control by the interviewer (Seidman, 1991).

With regard to the social identity of the researcher, she perceived herself as female and of Indian-descent. Participants perceived themselves of Indian-descent in responding to the criteria of the sampling strategy. Furthermore, participants were aware of the researcher’s outlook in terms of what the study was about, however, the researcher waited for participants to highlight the significance of the social identity of Indian-ness within their construction of sexual knowledge. Yet, being of Indian-descent the researcher failed to avoid the within-culture dynamics (being of the same social identity with regard to Indian-ness) and failed to avoid bringing her identity to the interview. Assumptions about what was part of this social identity in terms of its relation to sexuality, such as maintaining one’s virginity (for women), no pre-marital sex, the importance of religion were often part of questions and were assumptions that came to be directly addressed within the interview process with some participants.

The initial defensiveness or avoidance of these within-culture issues that faced the researcher is quite evidently seen in the extract below and also brings to light the significance of gender differentials at times.
Extract 9:

297. P: and um you’ve been taught white language and um – well not white
298. language - English and stuff like that, you are obviously open to other
299. things, you’re not like very narrow minded, you know, you not going to
300. look down at others that do these things or stuff like that, so it it - I don’t
301. know how it is for you guys but for us - It’s like if I had to have a nap over
302. - I’m not gonna go home and tell my parents that I had a nap over- you
303. know - but I think with whites or blacks they are allowed to like have
304. girlfriends and stuff like that, so – their parents are even cool with their
305. girlfriends going over to their house and stuff like that – now when you’re
306. from an Indian family –it - you’ve got to be engaged or practically married
307. before stuff like that can happen - Is that the same for you guys or?
308. I: You guys as in being female or you guys as in my Indian background?

In Extract 9, line 307, the participant addresses the interviewer with a question about whether she had a similar experience to him. The researcher responds in line 308, playing on the word “guys” in this context and the researcher relates two central constructs of her identity, that of being female and that of being of Indian-descent. Of course, had this been a female participant, the researcher would have been aware that the participant was asking about her Indian identity. Consequently, this extract brings to light the significance of within-culture interview dynamics and in addition raises an awareness about how often one takes on an essential identity in the face of a perceived “other” identity. For example, the researcher here is aware of herself being female in the context of interviewing a male participant. It is quite possible that such gender differentials or an experience of gender differentials was not greatly apparent in the context of the within-culture dynamics of Indian-ness.

However, the subject matter of this study, and the within-culture interview dynamics served as a challenge to the researcher’s identity. It is quite significant that towards the end of the interview process, the researcher often identified with the participant locating herself as female in the presence of a female participant and acknowledging this difference if relevant, in the presence of a male participant. This happened similarly with regards to mention of Indian identity.

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1 See Appendix H for Interview 5; Male Participant.
The within-culture dynamics were perceived as significant by the researcher as initially and perhaps unknowingly, by avoiding this dynamic, it was one way of managing the power differentials between the researcher and interviewer. By avoiding this issue of identity, it was one way of saying that the interviewer and interviewee are not equal and it perhaps lent control to the interviewer. Yet, within the interview process, an acknowledgement of this identity shed light on how such a shared social identity can be useful in constructing an understanding around the topic. For example, being aware of some of the assumed traditional sexual values, such as no premarital sex, the researcher could address such issues and challenge these assumptions. Most often it is said that the differences (such as race, age, class, etc.) between the participant and the researcher that can inhibit the interview process if ignored or not managed well (Seidman, 1991), yet, similarities can also prove an inhibiting factor within the research process if not managed well.

This research process led the researcher to an awareness of the importance of within-culture dynamics as contributing to the interview situation and inevitably the data. It no doubt affects the whole research process and in this research process, for example, it is believed that the researcher’s social identity was a concern from the very beginning affecting participants’ willingness to participate in this study. Here the researcher draws on a rhetoric that suggests that Indians are uncomfortable with talking about sexual issues (Kamani, 1997), and perhaps more so with someone of a similar social identity. Hence, such within-culture dynamics should be considered with in the research process and not only the social differentials that the researcher and participant bring to the interview site.

5.5 SYNTHESIS

The main findings include the construction of sex as risky and ambiguous, the significance of gender differentials and social identity. These findings establish a youth in crisis and reinforce the traditional educational roles such as the absence of parents and the role of the school in relation to sexual education. The role of social identity of both gender and the Indian identity are additionally significant in considering the implications for youth of Indian-descent and HIV/AIDS intervention.
The implications of these findings have been considered and in summary include such things as the reframing of youth as capable and active in their sexual education. Secondly, the role of the school in instituting the crisis instrumental paradigm that Morris (1994) speaks of is challenged and alternatives are suggested in its capacity to offer sexual education to young people. Thirdly, the implications of social identity, deliberates a consideration of acknowledging the sexual values in which youth are embedded.

5.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the main findings of this study were discussed in terms of their implications for Southern African youth of Indian-descent and the context of HIV/AIDS intervention, particularly that of sex education. In addition a reflexive viewpoint is offered highlighting the significance of social identity, in terms of the within-culture dynamics played out in this research process. The next chapter intends to conclude this study by summarising this research process and offering recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the findings of this study in terms of their implications for Southern African youth of Indian-descent and the context of HIV/AIDS intervention. This chapter concludes this study and recommends areas of future research. Firstly, the research process is outlined in terms of its aims and findings, followed by the possible limitations of this study. Finally, possible areas of future research are proposed.

6.2 CONCLUDING THIS RESEARCH PROCESS

The primary aim of this study was to trace and explore the construction of sexual knowledge by Southern African youth of Indian-descent. The secondary aim was to investigate the function and effects of repertoires of sexual knowledge within this population group. In carrying out these aims a social constructionist discourse analytic approach was used. It is an approach that is seen to give credence to contextual and interactional forces that shape “reality” and therefore was chosen to guide this study.
towards meaningful and culturally appropriate tools for HIV/AIDS intervention. It is an approach that has framed every methodological phase of the research process and has led to the interpretation of the findings of this study.

6.3 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of this study in terms of the construction of sexual knowledge by Southern African youth of Indian-descent, includes the construction of sex as risky and ambiguous. This risk or ambiguity mediates sexual experience, particularly that of males and suggests the existence of gender differentials with regard to the ambiguities of sex and sexual experience. Additionally, the construction of sexual knowledge is as much about the “who” as the “what”. This means that the construction of sexual knowledge is also one about who should be responsible for sex education. Here, the agents responsible for sexual knowledge are explored and the defining construction is the lack of parental agency and the ambiguous role of the school. While the school offers sexual education to youth, it also plays a role in implementing a sexual education programme that fits in with the Crisis-Instrumental Paradigm (Morris, 1994). It is this paradigm of sexual education that places youth in crisis and teaches about sex as wholly risky. However, it is the lack of parental agency that is given meaning through the rhetorical strategies of social identity and othering. The use of the Indian social identity to constitute meaning is significant as it highlights how a particular identity can be used to construct particular notions.

These findings establish a youth in crisis and reinforce the traditional educational roles such as the absence of parents and the role of the school in relation to sexual education. The role of social identity of both gender and the Indian identity are additionally significant in considering the implications for youth of Indian-descent and HIV/AIDS intervention. The implications of these findings were considered and include several alternatives to the predominant constructions. Firstly, a move towards reframing of youth as capable and active in their sexual education is suggested. In this way, youth can be conceptualised as a resource in promoting sexual health. Secondly, the findings of this study suggest, that the role of the school in instituting the crisis instrumental paradigm (Morris, 1994) be challenged. Several suggestions have been made that are
alternatives to the traditional sex education that teaches about the dangers of sex. For example, sex education should aim to teach sexual values that are positive about sexuality and it should be presented within a holistic programme that goes beyond teaching about the physical act of sex. Lastly, the role of social identity in the constructions of sexual knowledge deliberates acknowledging the sexual values in which youth are embedded.

6.4 LIMITATIONS

While this study has aimed to give a full picture of the construction of sexual knowledge by youth of Indian-descent, it is not without limitations. The possible limitations of this study are mentioned below and it is hoped that by making these limitations evident, further research can be improved.

- In this study, the sample size was useful in gaining insight into the constructions of sexual knowledge by Southern African youth of Indian-descent. It was furthermore a pragmatic response as not many individuals were willing to participate. However, with a larger sample size, the variability within and between texts would have been even clearer, if not greater.

- In retrospect knowledge about within-culture dynamics within a research process would have been useful in managing such dynamics effectively or at least comfortably. The researcher cannot say that the research process or interview process was greatly inhibited by such a factor, yet it certainly contributed to the space in which meanings were constructed. However, a subjective understanding is catered for by the research paradigm used in this study, and hence reflexivity has been a tool in which to address such a concern.

- Further limitations of this study are seen as the gaps in knowledge and it is hoped that future research will address these gaps. Such knowledge gaps include for example knowledge about the constructions of the Indian social identity by youth of Indian-descent and the construction of Indian males and
females, which would prove useful in yielding a fuller picture with regard to the constructions of sexual knowledge.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

It is proposed that further research into the areas noted below would be valuable with regard to the topic of this study and to the broader concerns of Indian sexuality and perhaps the promotion of "healthy sexuality" rather than crisis intervention.

- Firstly, further investigation into the constructions of Indian males and females would be useful in gaining insight into the meanings it has for males and females and for sexual health promotion or health promotion in general.

- Secondly, further research into the constructions of the Indian social identity may be valuable in ascertaining the impact of this identity for individuals who claim an Indian identity. Additionally, gathering further information about this identity in relation to other identities may help to broaden our knowledge of the interactional forces that shape meaning.

- Thirdly, a similar study in the future with perhaps a larger sample may shed light on the changes occurring in this population group with regard to sexuality.

- Lastly, there is a lack of research on this population which can be discouraging for researchers interested in researching this population group. It is furthermore discouraging towards developing a respect for the values of this group. It is hoped that future research will be done on this population group, not only with regard to sexuality and in doing it will broaden our knowledge and understanding of this population group. It is furthermore a step towards developing contextual knowledge that is meaningful for those it concerns.
6.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The aim of this study was to trace and explore the construction of sexual knowledge by Southern African youth of Indian-descent. The secondary aim was to investigate the function and effects of repertoires of sexual knowledge within this population group. In exploring the constructions of sexual knowledge by Southern African youth of Indian-descent, several findings have been discussed in terms of their implications for this population group and HIV/AIDS interventions, particularly that of sex education. It is hoped that this study will contribute to our knowledge and that future research will further enhance our understanding.
REFERENCE APPENDIX


APPENDICES
Appendix A: Consent Form

RHODES UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
AGREEMENT
BETWEEN RESEARCHER AND
RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I (participant’s name) _________________________ agree to participate in the research of (researcher’s name) _________________________

I understand that:

1. The researcher is a registered intern psychologist conducting the research as part of the requirements for a Masters degree at Rhodes University.
2. The researcher is interested in my understanding and experience of "sexual knowledge".
3. My participation will involve writing a narrative with regard to the research being done. I may also be interviewed if clarification is needed on my written narrative.
4. If I am interviewed, interviews will be audio-taped.
5. The audio-tapes, transcriptions and written narratives will be retained and kept safely during the course of this study and thereafter discarded at the finish of the project.
6. If I am under the age of consent and belong to a schooling institution, I understand that for ethical standards and legal reasons I need to attain permission from a parent, guardian or my schooling institution (a letter will be attached concerning this permission). However, this should not cast doubt on my willingness to participate.
7. I am invited to voice to the researcher any concerns I have about my participation in the study and to have these addressed to my satisfaction.
8. I am free to withdraw from the study at any time - however I commit myself to participating and unless some unusual circumstances should occur or I have concerns about my participation that I did not originally anticipate.

9. Confidentiality, anonymity and privacy are guaranteed. The report on the project may contain information about my experiences and personal attitudes, but the report will be designed in such a way that I will not be able to be identified by the general reader.

10. If I should feel harm, embarrassment or offence, I am free to voice my concerns and will be given contact details of individuals that are qualified to help.

Participant: ________________________  Researcher: ________________________
Witness: ________________________  Date: _____________________________
Appendix B: Interview Guide

Please describe in as much detail as possible instances where sexual knowledge (that is, informal and formal process of being sexually informed), was conveyed to you from your earliest recollections to your present recollection, indicating the process of being sexually informed.

Please note the question being asked is only a guideline.

You may want to think about the question using further guidelines:

a) What is your understanding of sexual knowledge or being sexually informed?
b) What is your first recollection of learning sexual knowledge?
c) What other recollections do you have about being sexually informed?

In (b) and (c) can you indicate who or what conveyed sexual knowledge to you? When was it conveyed (age/particular memory associated with it, etc.)? How was it conveyed? What was conveyed?

I would like to remind you that confidentiality and anonymity is guaranteed and that you can speak as freely or as openly as you like and in your choice of words.
Appendix C: Transcription Method

The method of transcription is borrowed from the convention developed by Gail Jefferson\(^1\) (in Atkinson & Heritage, 1984, pp. ix-xvi). However, it is followed loosely as the researcher’s primary interest was in the content of discourse as opposed to detailed conversational coherence.

\(\cdot\) untimed interval between or within utterances  
- short untimed interval  
underline indicated emphasis  
CAPITALS indicates that an utterance or part thereof is spoken much louder than the surrounding talk  
( ) interviewer’s comments (for example, researchers notes about a word being unclear, or laughter)  
// overlap in talk  
… sentence fading or end of word/sentence trailing into a softer voice and therefore omitted

An (X) has been used to signify the name of a place that is central to the identity of a participant. While this is not part of the transcription convention above, it was purposefully done to protect the identity of participants.

\(^{1}\) The detailed system of this convention can be found in Atkinson and Heritage (1984).
Appendix D: Interview 1

1. **P:** so you want to know . . .
2. **I:** your experience . . .
3. **P:** on campus . . . or in general
4. **I:** in general, from as early as possible
5. **P:** ok . . . well . . . sexual experience . . . would be like when I was reading porno magazines when I was about seven – no I lie – when I was about 4 or 5.
6. **I:** uuhh
7. **P:** My uncle used to have porno magazines in his cupboard . . .
8. **I:** okay
9. **P:** and um – it was usually just myself and my cousin – we used to just chill and mess around at the main house
10. **I:** okay
11. **P:** and um what happened was uh – one day we like searched through his cupboard and that – like you know when you’re young – we used just mess around and that – so we searched through his cupboard and we found these porno magazines hid under the bed and we were looking at all these naked women.
12. **I:** uuhh
13. **P:** The thing is those days they used to always just cover everything up – you know- they used to cover the breast – they used to cover the vagina –
14. **I:** hmm
15. **P:** - it wasn’t full frontal nudity - it was only like after – I’d say about Grade 7 when I sort of stumbled upon my dad’s collection of videotapes and usually what used to happen was like certain days of the week like Monday, Wednesday, Friday . . .
16. **I:** uuhh
17. **P:** um, my mum used to teach, my day used to work, my sister was always at school and I used to have those afternoons free, so I use to end up coming home - I use to have the whole afternoon free- you know, I’d go home – basically when you’re a youngster, you snoop –
18. **I:** yeah
19. **P:** -so, I used to have a look around the house- see what was there- any chocolates, ice cream, this, that- and I came across these porno tapes and then. Basically since Grade 7- so that’s um – that’s what- about twelve- thirteen years.
20. **I:** And how old are you now?
21. **P:** I’m 22- um- so Grade 7, would have been 6, 7, 8, 9, about 10 years ago- yah, that’s like when I was 12 years old- since when I started I was watching porno magazines- uh- porno tapes.
22. **I:** you said at the age of 7 you were . . .
23. **P:** you see what happened at the age of 7- we were- you know- like- with the whole- with Indians and that- you know its very- when you say the word sex- every one like ‘haaaoh’- you know, shit, shit- ‘don’t say that word’, ‘what’s wrong with you?’ and then, so it’s always gonna be undercover or something like that- but that we were ac- we probably hid under the bed so we wouldn’t get caught or something.
24. **I:** okay.
25. **P:** we found those porno magazines- they were like cuttings of the Scope
49. *Magazines*
50. I: okay
51. P: – that was basically it, and um we found these cuttings and we were
52. looking at them and that-
53. I: uhm
54. P: - and then after that we never had much sexual experience as in like your
55. magazines or actual physical contact and all that with women.
56. I: yeah.
57. P: and uh – it was Grade 7- our teacher- actually like he used-used to like- he
58. used to go off topic – so he used to talk of Maths and end up on English.
59. I: okay
60. P: - start- we’d start with science and end up like on geography or something
61. like that
62. I: uhh
63. P: so somehow or other one day we ended up on sexual education
64. I: uhh
65. P: and he basically drew the vagina, drew the penis and how they interact and
66. you know – basically taught us the birds and the bees and that’s actually how I
67. knew about and the birds and the bees and I think that’s what actually
68. stimulated my interest.
69. I: okay
70. P: you know – and that’s probably that were I was fooling around – I sort of
71. had an idea of what I was looking for.
72. I: hmmm
73. P: but not exactly you know until I found those tapes.
74. I: okay
75. P: and then like basically every Monday Wednesday and Friday, I used to
76. like – you know – you got nothing to do at home – you got a t.v. and you got a
77. video - and no-one can catch you . . .
78. I: hmmm okay
79. P: you can mess around- and basically I watched that - and then – like after
80. Grade 7, Form I, Form II – that’s when you sorta like – your interest, gets like,
81. gets like-more about women – you know- you sort of- it’s like you whole- you
82. know-you know, your whole body changes whatever and you start noticing,
83. ‘eh shit, she’s nice’, you know, ‘nice, nice, nice!’ . So we use to talk between
84. us guys, about this and that and guys used to bring one, two porno magazines
85. that they’d found somewhere along, and by then guys used to already have
86. girlfriends and that – and obviously- like- I only had my first girlfriend when I
87. was 18.
88. I: okay
89. P: and before that –like guys used to come and ‘yah I got a girlfriend and this
90. and that and whatever – so my interest like built – you know . . .
91. I: hmmm
92. P: and then I used to tell my cousin that, or my friends, or whatever- that I got
93. these porno’s
94. I: uuhm
95. P: so they use to come to the house, and we’d watch them together and
96. whatever.
97. I: hmmm
98. P: and then um –yah-like I only had- I only had- after 18- I went out with this
girl for 6 months- and the only reason we broke up, was because we were going to varsity – she was going to UCT and I was coming to Rhodes.

I: okay

P: so um- I sorta asked her out, not because I only liked her but I just wanted to see what it would be like having a girlfriend before I came to varsity- and then- um – we went out for about 6 months- and I enjoyed it and I, when I came to varsity, I was still shy with girls – I mean, surprisingly –you know- I was, I was still shy with girls and then – um, when I came to varsity like, I use to talk to them, but I never use to be myself – I use to, like, what I wanted them to be- what they wanted to see me as – you know-

I: okay.

P: So, I use to act all cool and this, that – ‘I’m a bad boy’ and whatever and then in – um, in um April vac –on the – what hap- on the way to- going home- going up in- going to (not clear on tape!) in Joburg-

I: and this is what year?

P: This is my first year –98’- and um- on the way to Joburg- our bus broke down –

I: okay

P: so- all the people on the bus- we sort of like- not made a connection- but we got to know each other because there was like nothing to do and whatever and I met this girl- and we chatted and this and that and on the way back, after the vac- on the way back- that’s where I probably had like my first sexual experience- and- uh- on the way back; she basically gave me a blowjob on the bus.

I: okay

P: but before that I had never fingered a babe, I had never had sex with a babe –

I: uhumm

P: um, I only kissed

I: hmmm

P: um, I had felt breasts- but that was basically it.

I: okay

P: so, yah, I had no other experience and then, and after that I sort of got confidence

I: uhmm

P: and um – I was still, I was still wary – you know- because, like you never know what’s going to happen or whatever.

I: okay

P: so um – what I use to do –is like –most guys who used to come to varsity –their aim was to lose their virginity.

I: okay

P: you know- and the way guys used to talk in res., the way friends used to talk – the way they used to like to make noise about–like- ‘I grabbed this babe’ – ‘I fucked this babe’ (whispers a question, if he can use the word *fuck*) – basically- you know- okay- (burps and apologises).

I: uhumm (a little laugh at the burp and apology)

P: and um- yah- that was basically it- and after that- even though girls
were willing to go ALL the way with me- some girls- like may be two or three –
I: okay
P: they were willing to sleep with m
I: uuh, uuh
P: I was still like- yah- you know- it was like –
I: yah
P: Because my plan before I came to varsity was I’d keep my virginity until I got married.
I: okay
P: and- but then- it’s so easy- you know- at Rhodes- it’s so easy to get . . .and myself- I mean –I’m not gonna boast but I’ve been told that I’m a nice guy- so I’m just gonna take their word for it and um- yah and every night I’d go- I used to actually go out just so I could score babes-but I’d know I’d be safe because, I wouldn’t sleep with them but then obviously that’s not the only way you can transmit like AIDS- there’s oral thrush or whatever- but those compared to like AIDS–you know- because everyone focuses on AIDS, AIDS, AIDS – they don’t actually think of these small diseases.
I: yeah
P: so I used to grab as many babes as possible – and this and that- which is- um- and that I had this one incidence- tha-and can I mention names?
I: yah
P: I had this one incidence . .with um … I dunno if you know her . X- – they called her X…
I: Okay
P: so – that’s like my first – I mean I grabbed her and everything you know and it was all fine and dandy and then I told her - I guess that’s why I was termed a player – cos I always told babes, ‘hey, I’ll come see you later’ –but I never used to go, because I used to just assume that she’d know it’s a one night thing.
I: okay
P: so then um – this was in my first year – around September – August/ September- and um – no I lie – it was around May –um May or so – what happened was – we out and I was horny and um she was obviously horny and we like – like basically got jiggity with it on the dance floor and what ever – and um we went outside and we were just chilling by ourselves- just talking, talking, talking – then we like grabbed and then we went to great field and we like- she was like – and well I fingered her and um – yah – and she was keen to sleep with me basically – cos like she sat on my lap and she was rubbing my neck and saying ‘what you thinking, what you thinking?’ And um – and I wasn’t keen –this was not what I wanted so I said “let’s go back to res” and what ever – so we went back to res – I dropped her off and then I said “I’ll come see you some time – I’m busy” – what ever and um I never went to see her after that and then the following week – this happened like on a Saturday – early Saturday – you know like 1 – 2 o’ clock in the morning- the following Friday I saw her and she was like drunk and she came up to me – and she’s like you know ‘I felt so
cheap’ and this and that and whatever. I was like “Look . . . you should know” – cos I knew of her reputation – I didn’t actually know her as a person

I: okay
P: and to be honest I really wasn’t interested in her as a person and I just said to her “Look, you used me, I used you – we use each other for our pleasure – just leave it at that – just enjoy the moment and no problems with you. She basically ran down campus and cried rape – right and after that that’s when I became – how can I say – more – more conscious of my actions

I: right

P: - because like when I’d grab with people, I’d actually - I’d sit down, I’d talk to her – get to know what she’s like so that I wouldn’t have that same bad experience – because you know I enjoyed grabbing Coco and everything –

I: uuhh

P: - but that whole incident that took place after that – a whole week after that – when she ran down campus and basically that’s when my bad reputation – after that I sort of realised that yah Indian babes they not fickle – you know

I: hnnn

P: they way too emotional– you have to actually get to know the person even if you don’t want to – you don’t have a choice in that matter –

I: uhmm

P: yah – so then after that that was the last Indian babe I’ve ever grabbed

I: okay

P: – and I think that’s what actually turned me off Indian girls – because there’s like always too much – cos if you going out with one girl, you going out with her friends –

I: okay

P: you know – they can’t keep their noses out of everyone’s business – you know and they always – they always bullshit – you know they always add their spice to it - they always go over board with like stories and that . . .

I: hnnn

P: so that’s when I just decided – no, you know – screw Indian babes, I’m not bothered – and that’s when I latched on to like white babes – I used to always go for white babes and that –

I: hnnn

P: I think that was always my preference – because – when I used to watch pornos and that – I mean obviously I used to get turned on - and it always used to involve white women . . .

I: okay

P: so um . . . I mean that’s probably where I sort of shifted towards white women –

I: uhmm

P: so when I used to go out - not go out – when I used to grab – um – I used to grab –what you call it – white women- white babes – I used to
have no feeling whatsoever – I mean I’d get to know the person –
I’d still be friends with them afterwards . . .
I: hmm okay
P: – but I couldn’t really care less - you know - and stuff like that and
then after first year and half way through second year until about – I
think it was around May . . .
I: hmm
P: – I kinda got like tired – I was just doing one and thinking shit you
know I’ve had enough – I think it’s time I found someone and settled
down – and you know get that sort of get that stability going – cos I
was thinking – my plan was like – enjoy...
I: hmm
P: until you get of tired of it and then find someone – right – which is
what I tried to do.
I: okay
P: but then I think I enjoyed too much . .
I: uhuh
P: and then I asked my current girlfriend who I’m going out with – 19
months – when I asked out – it wasn’t so much for enjoying her
company and that – because all we had basically done – we hadn’t had
like serious chat s
I: okay
P: -but we’d like grabbed quite a bit – and when I - and out of all the
girls I had grabbed on campus I enjoyed it the most . .
I: okay
P: so I though – you know – what the hell, why not , why not try it
out? -so when I asked her out – I asked her out for the wrong reasons
but I don’t actually regret it now.
I: okay
P: cos um – like I say – I’m enjoying every minute of it.
I: okay
P: and um – yah that’s basically it – and then I’ve been going out with
her since 21st August of my second year.
I: okay
P: and uh – and obviously all relationships have their problems and
that. . .
I: hmm
P: but we used to like get hectic – as in like- we’d like dry fuck
basically – we’d be like where you go though motions with your
clothes on –
I: hmm
P: you know – so she’s orgasm. I’d orgasm – but it was like – very
safe
I: okay
P: you know – and then we sort of fell in love with each other and that
and um – we only started having sex about 3 days before our 1 year
anniversary . .
I: okay
P: – and that’s basically my experience of it.
I: okay – and um, you mentioned, you planned on keeping your
I: can you tell me more about that?
P: you see- like, when I was- when I was young – right - I’m like the oldest in the family- like grandsons and all that- so obviously- all the affection was on me- so all my uncles- their girlfriends, and whatever used to love me- basically, you know- but I could see that, that like when I used to go out to nightclubs and that-my uncles are married when I used to go out- I used to see them handling other, other women, like coloured women or white women or whatever, you know- and I could see my parents and my cousins parents, they were, and my grandparents- they were always- it was always them, like husband and wife, husband and wife- so I was like- ‘yaw, what the fuck?’
I: hmm

P: and then when I was about- about- 14- 14 or 15- one of my uncles in - Zambia – I think Lusaka or Ndola, he died of pneumonia, but it was AIDS related . . .
I: Uhuh right
P: and I remember then, there was this big hype about AIDS when I was in Form I or Form II’ish- or somewhere around there-
I: okay
P: and um- and that’s when like, I remember like one like time – I was thinking – like remember I was telling you earlier- um- guys used to boast about their girlfriends and this and that whatever and in Form 4, our Biology teacher –
I: Hmm
P: - showed us pictures of people who had AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases.
I: what form?
P: Form 4 - he showed us pictures of like people who had sexually transmitted diseases and this and that – um and guys used to talk about it – they know friends who are suffering - like who had diorrhea continuously – they’d break out into spots and pus and all this
I: okay
P: and you know they way they described and the looks on their faces and like I went to a Christian school, and they always believed – I’ve been in a Christian school since I was 6.
I: okay
P: so basically from 6 to 18 - I’ve been in a Christian school and we’ve always been told, ‘no sex before marriage, no sex before marriage, no sex before marriage’ –
I: right
P: it’s like the minute you’re born –
I: hmm
P: - automatically no sex before marriage, so I sort of assumed that no sex before marriage –
I: right
P: then when I came – like around 17, 18 – a lot of my friends had girlfriends who were pregnant –
I: hmm
P: and um a lot of guys had girlfriends and were sleeping around and they were fine – you know -
I: hrm
P: so it was like the whole idea, it can’t happen to me, it can’t happen to me – type of thing – you know . . .
I: hrm
P: so that’s actually why when I came in first year – I thought you know - after when that girl gave me a blow job – I was like “oh shit” – I’m gonna get this, this, that –
I: hrm
P: and for about a month, I didn’t touch a single woman –
I: hrm
P: cos I was worried I had AIDS – and I was waiting to break out in spots and whatever –
I: okay
P: - and nothing happened – so I thought ‘ ah, cool I’m fine’ – you know – so I was like under the impression, that yah, it can’t happen to me, but I was still nervous –
I: hrm
P: - you know – you can’t, like you can’t really tell – I mean I could have AIDS now, and um I wouldn’t know until am married or something like that or when I go for a blood test or something – and um – it was only – it was only after started going out with my girlfriend for about – I actually I wasn’t in the relationship for sex- I mean in the beginning it was all physical – you know –
I: yeah
P: - but I was enjoying what we were doing – you know –there was no penetration –there was - it was all fun -
I: hrm
P: but it was safe fun –
I: hrm
P: I was enjoying that.
I: okay
P: It’s only like after we started falling in love and things were getting very emotional – there were a lot of feelings involved –
I: right – right
P: and that’s when I started like thinking about – you know - “what if she’s the one”
I: okay
P: you know - I didn’t worry about this whole Indian idea that grow up, get an education and get married to an Indian girl of the same cast and this - you know that whole shit! –
I: okay
P: I was like – and I was like fuck it – you know
I: hrm
P: fuck what people think about her – I think she’s right for me, I think she’s right for me.
I: okay
P: and she had already slept with someone –
I: okay
but they were both each other’s firsts –

okay

and – they had slept together twice and she had cheated on him –

but it was basically kissing - you know –

okay

and um he hadn’t cheated on her – so I’m assuming she’s still safe

– you know-

okay

and um - now I’m really worried (laughs)

(laughs)

but um – I mean, we’d been having unprotected sex for like 3-4

months until I just decided – we really need - it’s best we start

protecting ourselves.

okay

and that’s basically it.

right- um- you mentioned- you were talking about virginity and how

you were taught at school “ no sex before marriage” and you were

talking about your uncles – I was a bit lost there . . .?

you see the thing is like – they like- they like; whenever they used

to go – they used to go out to have a gas-you’d see them with different

women –

hmm

and then as you going out – my uncles are not – my one uncle is

only 32

okay

he’s only 10-11 years older than me.

hmm

you know- so he doesn’t think of me as a nephew

hmm

– I’m like a little brother – I’m like a friend – a younger friend

kinda – they used to tell me stories and this and that whatever – and

just like the whole way I was brought up and that – it was outright –

you know – this is not done and in school coming back to ‘no sex

before marriage, no sex before marriage, etcetera’- you know – even

though I used to look up to my uncles – I still look up to them and I

still respect them –

right

but by actually being public that they’re married and going out with

like other women

hmm

if I’m gonna go home and get married

hmm

it’s gonna be someone who I love

right

someone whom I want to give something special to

okay

right – and if I ever do – like all my friends like – all my friends will

like – you know when friends talk –(friends who I grew up with) we

used to talk about things like sex – we used to watch the pornos and

this and that – and think ‘yah, this I’ll do with my wife, this I’ll do with
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449. my wife, this and that’ – we’ve sort of like – it was like an unspoken
450. like - pact between us that we wouldn’t have sex before marriage –
451. kinda of thing –
452. I: okay
453. P: and um – you obviously know that guys bond much better than girls
do – it is another unwritten thing – that guys bond better than girls –
and um I wanna of those people - who when I make a friend – even he
treats me like shit he can me at 5 o’clock in the morning and say ‘look
I got a problem with this, this and that’ and I’ll be helpful – you know
-and these guys I’ve known since I was grade 4 or 5 – so basically my
whole life, I think I’ve actually known these guys – they not really
friends – they more like family –
456. I: okay
457. P: you know – so we didn’t make a pact – we didn’t like put blood on
fingers and whatever – we just said that yah, if we ever have sex it’s
gonna be with the one woman we wanna marry – we gonna give her –
you know –how it would look like for example, if you were a wife
supposedly
458. I: right
459. P: - and you had this stud muffin or whatever –been around the world
basically and you know- and tropical diseases walking and the first
time you have sex, it’s the most fantastic sex ever and you don’t give
her anything special, except say AIDS . . .
460. I: right
461. P: or something like that – you know – that’s like shit
462. I: okay
463. P: I mean personally speaking I don’t think I’ve got AIDS – I don’t
know –
464. I: hmmm
465. P: right, but I’ve been very safe – I’ve always made sure that I’ve had
no cuts in my mouth – that I’ve made sure the girls – I have hadn’t like
put my tongue or felt with my finger - but I’ve just said ‘you know –
look, have you get any cuts and that’ –I always ask them - I mean
sometimes I haven’t – but afterwards – like after that – I’ve always
asked - like when you walk them back to res or whatever – I always
them ‘look did you enjoy it – did you have fun – you know - this, this
that – look I’m just worried did you have any cuts in your mouth or
anything like that’ – they ‘d be like ‘no’ – “ ok cool - shot”. Obviously
467. I don’t have proof –
468. I: yah yah
469. P: but I have to take their word for it
470. I: okay
471. P: and then they always under the impression that I’m gonna come
back so I don’t see the idea of them lieing in the first place.
472. I: hnmnm
473. P: you know –
474. I: hrm
475. P: so yah – even I was surprised the first time like me and ‘Y’ had sex
476. I: okay
477. P: it was actually quite shocking – because I didn’t actually think we’d
499. go that far -
500. I: okay
501. P: but she was - put it this I way – I wanted to –
502. I: okay
503. P: I wanted to basically
504. I: before ‘Y’ – had you had sex before that – or that was your first
505. time?
506. P: that was my first time
507. I: that was your first time – so you were worried because she had
508. already had sex
509. P: yah I was sort of worried - because it was unprotected sex as well –
510. I: the other thing I wanted to ask was about your experience of
511. watching porn – if you can go right back
512. P: well you know me – I’m a porno guy
513. I: laughs
514. P: what do you mean? I don’t think– what do you mean? did it change
515. my whole perception about people?
516. I: just how did you experience it? – what was it like?
517. P: I was excited –jeesh – I mean you hear about porn magazines and
518. you’ve seen the book and you’ve watched the movie – and like Basic
519. Instinct had just been released then –
520. I: okay
521. P: when I was in form I
522. I: okay
523. P: Grade 7 – form I – so like that was a big hu ha and I mean – you
524. know a lot of my friends – I mean there was a friend of mine – who
525. was – this was two years after that – he was already sexually active –
526. he’s been sexually active since the age of 15 . . . honestly he’s
527. probably slept with over 150 women – and I mean in those days – guys
528. would be tuning I’ve had sex and it be like ‘Shirt, you’re the man!’ you
529. know – ‘you’re the man –tell us about it, tell us all the details’ and
530. we’d be like ‘I wish I could that, I wish I could do that’ and you never
531. thought that he had a better chance of getting AIDS and this and that
532. whatever - than you because he’d gone and had sex and we know a
533. couple – we already know he’s got an STD – we already cos he got a
534. lot of the herpes
535. I: okay
536. P: right and um he’s basically not screwed for life – but he’s scarred for life –
537. but like among my group of friends I was the first one to watch a porno
538. so that’s like in my eyes – make them – the way they treat – they
539. respect me – cos, eh shit I’m the first one you know - to watch a porno
540. I: uhhh
541. P: and I’m introducing them to it – you know and they’d look up to
542. me, and stuff like that
543. I: hmmm
544. P: and I mean I read a lot of books – but it’s not like novels or
545. whatever – it’s mostly like um like Cosmo- Men’s Health – like now
546. and then –
547. I: yah
548. P: whereas in those days if I could get my hands on any porno
magazines or whatever
I: uuhh
P: just to like get to know stuff – about a woman’s body, about
vibrators- different types of condoms, dominatrix. Leather, whips,
chains – you know – the whole – the whole nine yards basically and I
tried to get as much information on that as possible so that next time
I’d see them –
I: hnnn
P: and they’d do something on that – I’d be like yah no, because this,
this and this and think ‘oh shit – you know’ – ‘how does this ow know
so much shit – you know – he must be experienced’ and that whole
thing when you’re young –
I: hnnn
P: and guys used to sleep with girls and whatever –
I: hnnn
P: -you used to have this sense of like respect . . .
I: hnnn
P: eh shit! – you know
I: hnnn
P: - they like men, because they’ve lost their virginity, they are not a
boy anymore-
I: okay
P: you know that whole idea like even when I was older and when I
used to talk to my uncles and they used to talk about like wanking - or
fist fucks or fingering women and you know – I mean – we were like
what 13 – 14 years old – we were growing up too soon
I: okay
P: you know – and like we used to hang around with each other and
we used to talk shit – but not the same kind of shit – you know
I: hnnn
P: slightly less obscene but with the older guys you know-
I: okay
P: and we used to think ‘eh shit we on par with them’ – you know.
I: right
P: that whole idea of growing up . . .
I: okay -was that the only sort of - I suppose sort of educating
yourself?
P: cos the thing is I can’t even go to my parents and say: “daddy,
what’s a penis?” (uses a child voice for that question) – you know
I: Hmm
P:– because then he’s going to say “oh no, don’t worry about that – I
’ll tell you later – I’ve got to play golf”– or something like that. It was
really – with the majority of Indians - they’re very traditionalist – you
know – its – ‘he’ll find out some day’
I: okay
P: you know - ‘so let him – he’ll find out some day’
I: okay
P: so we - you know- like the whole way – like - obviously our parents
have sex
I: right
P: right – but in public they’ll NEVER show affection
I: hmm
P: my parents, my cousins parents – my friends parents – their parents
- You know- The only people that used to show some form of affection
used to be my white friends – but it would be anything- it would like
holding each others hands, hugging each other close. With Indians –
she’d sit on the next chair but like on the opposite end – try and stay as
far away as possible – for some strange reason – you know -you never
– if you walk around campus you’ll never see Indians – even if they
are going out with their girlfriend – like Indian guy going out with
Indian girl – you’ll never really see them hold hands –
I: hmm
P: its only when they like – when like – like if you walk on campus
and you see an Indian couple and you know they going out – they
won’t hold hands – right
I: hmm
P: they’ll wait till they’re like in familiar surroundings with like people
they know – with like people that know – you know-
I: right
P: they’ll start showing more affection – if you noticed that with
Indians – they’ll show more affection – when they are in a group of
people that they know than when they are in a group of people that
they’re not so familiar with
I: hmm
P: which is quite stupid – because like with men and women – we
actually show more affection when we’re with a group of people we
not – we don’t know- it’s sort of our comfort zone
I: okay
P: you know – and I don’t know - it’s quite ironic – I think it’s just the
way we’ve been brought up
I: yah
P: it’s just like the way with sex – ’don’t say anything-don’t say
anything – don’t say the “s” word !”
I: did you ..
P: I think we had to self educate ourselves about this – about sex – we
had to self educate
I: hmm
P: I mean obviously there’ll be some parents who’d be – who are not
as traditional as others –
I: right
P: - you know - they might say ‘look son, sit down – this is a porno
magazine’ – like you’ve watched American Pie
I: right
P: you know – you’ve see the way the father tried to explain to the son
– it’s exactly like that – but 10 times worse with Indians – for Indian
parents
I: okay
P: or Indian parents that ask – not that I’ve got – but also with the
other -like my parents friends and their extended friends and whatever
– it’s like very – it’s very taboo. Like sort of - the only way we could
actually learn about it – would belike with the uncles we used to talk
shit with – we used to use slang and stuff– cunt and bitch and whore –
you know whatever-

I: hmmm

P: you know - and like penis and vagina and you’d talk about things
like that and you’d have no idea what’s a penis and what’s a vagina –
so you’d go to another friend and tune him “ eh what’s a penis?” – ‘eh
shit I dunno’ you go to another guy, “what’s a penis” – ‘eh shit I
dunno’ and then you go to another guy, you know - another friend –
you know and you ask “what’s a penis” - ‘ah you stupid idiot– that’s
thing dangling between your legs’ basically you know –

I: yah

P: - and the same thing with “ aish - what’s the vagina, what’s a
vagina?” – like the only time – and we knew about – like I was telling
you about that teacher in Grade 7 – the only time –

I: hmmm

P: we actually looked learnt to see what a vagina looked like and that
besides porno movies

I: hmmm

P: was when he drew it on the board and explained to us

I: okay

P: you know – and like when our Grade 6 teacher walked in and she
was a bomb – and you know in those days when used to have crushes
and whatever

I: (laughs)

P: – she was the bomb and she walked in and he carried on explaining
- and the only people that were embarrassed – was basically the
Indians, Indians and blacks – there were a couple of whites but the
majority weren’t – there parents had already told them.

I: okay

P: and I think if Indian parents do that more often and explain to us – it
will be good to have sex only after marriage not before –there’ll be less
chance of this, this and that but if you do make sure you’re always
protected.

I: hmmm

P: I think that was my problem, I very lax on protection – whether its
because we’ve been going out for about what 19 months

I: okay

P: and we haven’t cheated on each other – nothing – I – I assume it’s
safe –

I: okay

P: but then I don’t actually worry about like asking her

I: okay

P: – that’s the only problem – eh it’s hard to tell you girlfriend – “aish,
you know - I have a suspicion you have an STD – let’s go get tested”

I: laughs

P: you can’t – there’s no way you can actually bring it up –

I: right

P: - you can’t actually say ‘look I think you have an STD’ -you have
no proof she has an STD

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I: yah
P: you can’t just like say “go get checked up, come back and tell me what’s the story” – you know – then let’s just say it’s just a suspicion and she just to prove you wrong she decides ‘okay, let me go get checked and suddenly shit she tests positive – she’s not only screwed – you screwed plus all the people – that you’ve had – may be not sex with but all the people you’ve grabbed – you have to go and warn them – that eh look I’ve got AIDS – go get yourself checked and they have to tell all the people that they’ve kissed and had sex with and those people – it’s like – it’s like it’s never ending…
I: yah
P: you know - but personally I think, personally speaking - I think Indians in general sex is very – women for majority of Indian guys – women are just like objects – eh I won’t like I think women are just objects –aish check this out, check this out –nice tits- whatever- you know
I: yeah
P: because I’m in a relationship I don’t have any needs to go and do something about it –
I: okay
P: - shit I’ve never slept around – I’ve never slept with a woman for just one night and wake up the next morning and said ‘shot, thanx for coming’
I: okay
P: in my whole life I’ve never done that – I’ve kissed them, I’ve grabbed them – I’ve fingered them – you know -and they’ve probably wanked me off or whatever
I: hmm
P: that’s is – there’s been no penetration whatsoever – so I personally speaking I think I’m safe
I: okay
P: but then I’m not 100% sure.
I: you said for Indian men – “women are just objects”
P: hmm
I: can you explain that a bit more
P: you don’t see the person – you just the ass, you see the tits you see the nice lips – you see the fantastic looking legs – you see the nice hands – you see the mesmerising eyes – whatever - you don’t actually see the whole package – ‘eh, shit – you know behind those tits there’s a heart’ –there’s a person you actually need to get to know before you know – there’s probably quite a few – infact the majority of relationships that Indians are in now
I: hmm
P: has basically been on a physical – and only afterwards they’ve realised ‘shit there is person – let me get to know her’- and once they’ve gotten to know the person,
I: right
P: they like fuck, ‘this is not what I wanted’ but then it’s too late they’ve already been going with the girl for like for 6 months/ 7 months – a year – you know and the thing is – say if I was going out
with an Indian babe – say An – say if my girlfriend – ‘Y”– right and
say she was Indian - and um – we went out with her – everything was
physical – everything was du da - happy go lucky what ever – you
know- and say some how by chance we had sex – right

I: okay

P: two three months down the line – I get to know the person – and the
person I get to know I don’t like

I: okay

P: - right – it just screws up the whole rotation – you like just fuck
everything up – because then you’ll think ‘ shit – this is not the person
I want to spend the rest of my life with’ – you just tell the person:
“things aren’t working anymore, let’s just be friends and break up
whatever” – that’s not gonna happen because your Indian friends are
gonna get pissed off and say ‘this guy just used you for sex’ - and they
always add their spice – ‘ yah he just used you for sex, he didn’t give a
shit about you – it was just physical’ and this and that – and Indian
girls will think, ‘yah shit - you know all my friends said - there was
something I didn’t see about him’ - and what will happen they’ll start
seeing him through their friends eyes as ‘ he was such a bastard’ and
mess up his reputation - and with Indians that reputation will stick –
it’s like superglue – it doesn’t come off at all.

I: okay, you talked about women as object what sort of influences
that? Where do you think it comes from? Or is that a bad question

P: I think you know when you watch Indian movies – the girl is always
portrayed as an innocent thing – she’s always portrayed as – you know
the guy will hold her hand – and she’ll be like ‘no, no, no – don’t touch
me – don’t hold my hand’ because they under the impression you hold
her hand - oh shit you gonna be pregnant.

I: Hmm

P: so when Indian girls grow up – they grow up on Indian movies

P: – be honest Indians grow up on Indian movies – if you ask an
Indian girl to name 10 English actors/ actresses – they’ll probably be
able to name may be 8 – like Sharon Stone – but if you ask them to
name 10 Indian actors – they’ll be like pa pa pa ( action with hands) –
they’ll name all 10 – they’ll name you 20.

I: I don’t think I’d be able to name any

P: no, no I’m not just saying you…

I: no, I know (laughs) – I could try and name a few, if you asked me

P: myself as well

I: did you grow up watching Indian movies?

P: I grew up on both

I: okay

P: because my mum and them used to watch Indian movies and my
dad used to prefer English movies

I: okay

P: so I had both – only like now I had a choice – what’s happening in
English movies now will only happen – shit – like in another only 3 –
4 thousand years

I: laughs

P: promise you – because in Indian movies now – they only allowing
kissing scenes

P: - they’ll show a woman kissing a guy and that’s like censored and I think the only movie they didn’t censor was I think Bandit Queen

I: okay

P: – where I think they show her getting raped like 7 times or something like that

I: okay

P: - right – the rest of the time when they show a couple lying on a bed

I: hmmm

P: like say for – a guy gets married to a girl

I: hmmm

P: of course you know they’ll be doing the nasty that night – and uh – what they do they’ll do they show the Indian girl looking all pretty and innocent and whatever and she’ll be dressed in red and you know the guy will come sit next to her and she’ll be like be all scared – like what’s he gonna do- and he play with her shoulders or arms or whatever

I: Right

P: And she’ll be like all nervous and whatever

I: Uhuh

P: And she’ll push on her bed and she’ll be like (breathing heavily) – you know – like all hectic and they show him going down to kiss her and then suddenly they gone into sunrises and showing flowers- you know whatever

I: uuh

P: whereas in English movies they’ll actually show sex- you know – they actually show - they don’t show the whole intercourse basically – but they show them - but you know what they doing when you watch the movie

I: Right

P: you know and with Indians they’re very – they very narrow minded and they need to change the whole idea – they make noise about yah AIDS this that but you can’t not expect something like that when you yourself can’t be bothered to educate the people about - you know

I: hmmm

P: and the majority Indian watch movies and in Indian the only thing they watch is Indian movies and if they go and they watch an Indian movie and they see a couple kissing each other and then the scene moves into a sunrise, flowers or whatever – people go back and must think that is what sex is about so I’ll sleep with as many women as possible and it will be the same every time –

I: hmmm

P: right – that’s probably a very narrow minded view of it but if I’m thinking like that imagine the people in the rural areas who have no idea what AIDS is – imagine how they view it – and like I was speaking to a friend of mine and we were talking about AIDS and all that – um – and I was like you know shit – I dunno how

I: yah

P: I know the ways AIDS is like transferred from one person to
another but you don’t actually know the whole details of that –

I: yeah

P: imagine if we – supposedly educated

I: hmmm

P: we supposedly educated and we don’t know things like this here – you know

I: hmmm

P: and when we go out and we have a gas and we grab women and that and we don’t actually remember it -imagine people who haven’t been taught about it

I: yeah

P: right – who have a low income and the only thing – they can’t go

watch movies- they can’t go watch videos on AIDS or buy books about the stuff- you know

I: hmmm

P: they can only get it if its for free and they’ve got lots of time on

their hands – and like the majority – like blacks in general or even like Indians - - they have lots of wives - the only thing they can do is to have sex to pass the time – right

I: hmmm

P: so they have lots of time for lots of sex and it only takes for one person in that little group to get the AIDS virus

I: on this subject of AIDS you mentioned at one point having watched and being shown videos . . .

P: it wasn’t videos , it was a book –

I: okay

P: by our Biology teacher –

I: of AIDS and . . .

P: he had this book about people with STD’S – not only on AIDS but on STD’S and he showed us like people with gonorrhea, syphilis – um - full blown AIDS – In the beginning he showed us -he looked healthy and everything . . .

I: uhhuh

P: and then you opened the thing and it shows the same picture and it says this person has AIDS

I: Okay

P: and then it showed from before he had AIDS right through until he died –

I: okay and what sort of pictures did you see

P: I remember one of the pictures it showed – um - his penis – and it had like a yellow discharge and it was like – YUK – it was actually grosse- you know

I: hmmm

P: yellowish/orange – and it showed it dripping out of his penis – it was like honey

I: hmmm

P: it was quite grosse

I: can you remember the textbook

P: it was these pioneer sort of textbooks

I: we may have used the same text book
it showed a woman like with genital herpes and whatever – you know – and crabs – you know -cut skin – this – you know

P: yeah yeah

I: how did that have an effect on you?

P: I think in a way it sort of reinforced turned me off- I think it reinforced my idea of having sex , not having sex before marriage – that’s why it took me so long – I only slept with ‘Y’ like may be after 3 months – I don’t know what stopped me – but um - I just decided I didn’t know enough about her – and all it takes like that advert says ‘15 minutes pleasure- a lifetime of regret”

I: hmm hmm yah

P: I think I was a bit wary of it  and I mean you come to varsity and the only person you can depend on is yourself so if you make the wrong judgement you can’t just say like when you young but “he told me”

I: hnm

P: you can always put the blame on somebody else

I: yah

P: there’s a time when you have to start taking responsibility for your own actions

I: right

P: so what you do you can’t blame on anybody else – so that sort of made me grow up - so to speak

I: okay

P: it’s like when I came to varsity I was telling my friends – the reason why I grab so many women

I: hmm

P: is cos for 18 years – right – I knew women – right

I: hmm

P: but they were like sisters – kinda thing – you know

I: right

P: I didn’t see them in that way

I: oka

P: and there were other women that I did see in the sexual way but I was too nervous and suddenly you come to Rhodes and like where women are like – like with what’s the ratio in my first year– like 5 or 6 to 1

I: right

P: you could talk to a girl and within 5 minutes you could be grabbing – it was that easy

I: right

P: and with alcohol and drugs overflowing this place – it was effortless – for me it effortless – I could go out every night knowing I could grab a babe

I: hmm

P: you know and it’s like letting a child loose in a candy store

I: hmm

P: you know – he doesn’t know what he wants so he’ll try a little of everything
I: right
P: and that was basically it
I: you used the idea of a candy store …
P: yeah that was before I was in a relationship – you know when I used
to grab all those babes – that’s what I’m talking about and then it was
like what the hell and then I decided I had enough candy – let me find
someone – just chill – and I was getting tired – you know you go out
every Wednesday, Friday, Saturday- you go out - you get drunk –you
see women – grab babes, you dance -you go home –
I: hrm
P: and what do you have to show for it the next day? – right – you got
nothing
I: and sort of leaning home – did that have an effect on you?
P: I guess I could do what I want –when I was at home you always
have certain restrictions – you go out – they want you home at 12 –
make sure you home at 10 – behave yourself- you know there’s always
some restrictions- I mean don’t get me wrong I had my freedom
I: right right
P: but there was always some restrictions- like when I’m here my
parents have NO control whatsoever –
I: okay
P: so If I mess I can’t say oh shit this person, that person or whatever -
right, I’ve got no one to blame but myself - but when I at home and I
come late - I’ll be like oh but this person was only leaving then or if
my friends say stay , stay – and I say you know look I have a curfew –
you know - I can always shift the balance onto someone else
I: right – okay
P: so there’s always some form restrictions being at home compared to
being here where there’s no restrictions – when you at home you know
you dependent on your parents and when you here even though you
know you still dependent on your parents but you still have a greater
form of independence – you know
I: right
P: when you think about it - all your parents do is provide you with
money
I: right
P: they allowing you the chance to educate yourself- it’s up to you –
you know they can’t sit with you at night and say have you done your
homework – well if you haven’t done your homework – then toughes
– you go copy a tut or bunk a tut – this or that or whatever – whereas if
you at home – it’s, ‘why haven’t you done your homework ?’, ‘no, I’m
tired” – ‘well, toughes go do your home work!’, ah parents are so full
of shit – this, this, that, whatever - and then you go to school and
realise you haven’t done your home – you know there’s always some
form of control on you – they always have something on you kinda of
thing– and here they got nothing unless they find out something.
I: do you have anything to add?
P: no not really – just a bit exhausted . . .

(End of interview)
Appendix E: Interview 2

1. I: Maybe you can start by telling me something about you?
2. P: okay - what do you want to know?
3. I: maybe a little background, where you’ve grown up -um – yeah
4. P: ok - I was born in Kenya - um - my parents are both lecturers. At the time - my
5. mum was teacher, and my dad was a lecturer -um - yah - I’m the second child, I
6. have an older sister who is a year older than me and a younger brother who is two
7. years younger than me -um and I lived in X for 8 years and from there we
8. moved to X - um - where I stayed until I finished my A’ levels, then
9. came to South Africa.
10. I: okay- is this thing on? - Just make sure it is.
11. P: uh dunno
12. I: (laugh) may be you can think of something with your earliest memory or
13. maybe start with your understanding of what it means to be sexually informed or
14. of sex education?
15. P: Okay - um - to me- um-sexual knowledge - knowing about sex, knowing about
16. pregnancy -um - - -um not just the act but- you know -everything else that goes
17. with it.
18. I: okay
19. P: The mental, the physical - all that . . .
20. I: okay
21. P: um - I think
22. I: mental - you mean?
23. P: that you know - more than just the act, what it does to people - the bonding- all
24. that sort of stuff
25. I: okay – right
26. P: um and I think sexual knowledge should also cover rape because of all the
27. misconceptions and confusion-
28. I: okay -are you nervous?
29. P: a little bit
30. I: even I’d get nervous - not to worry - um can you think of the first time you sort
31. of - the first you cam e across anything related to sex, to sexuality –uh
32. P: yah - I think the first time I knew about sex was Kenya - when I was about –
33. probably before 8.
34. I: okay
35. P: um - they used - uh - all the kids used to hang out together- so - it was like
36. quite a big age difference between us –
37. I: okay
38. P: um- but we were all primary school then –
39. I: right
40. P: um but there was this song that they used to sing - okay - uh -it was: bi bi na
41. bana ka tete te tona sovari naki nyame
42. I: can you repeat that?
43. P: now -I can translate - and it will make more sense.
44. I: okay
45. P: it means boyfriend and girlfriend - basically when you get together- take off
46. your underwear so you can get busy with it.
47. I: okay
48. P: Okay- so I mean - people used to say that but I suppose it didn’t have a lot of
49. meaning then but I did know about it then.
50. **I:** what did you do then - when you hear that song?
51. **P:** I knew hen that you would take off your underwear and have sex - but um - I
guess - I didn’t really think about it all that much - it was just a doodle.
52. **I:** okay
53. **P:** I didn’t link it, or associate it, or - you know - think about it all that much.
54. **I:** hmm
55. **P:** um - after that when - I remember when we came to Zimbabwe - someone told
me hen - I suppose the whole and move to Zimbabwe - all the other stuff was sort
of forgotten
56. **I:** okay
57. **P:** someone told me - your father had to screw your mother to make you
58. **I:** okay (laugh)
59. **P:** (animated look) WHAT? No Way!
60. **I:** How old were you then?
61. **P:** then I was maybe around I suppose 9, 10 - I was like “NO WAY! I dunno –
maybe that’s what your parents did!” but you know - um I suppose it was all sort
of surprising and yeah --- but I think not long after that I did find out that they did
actually have to do that (laughs)
62. **I:** okay (laughs as well)
63. **P:** um - then I - in Primary school - I didn’t know how much I learnt about sex
education but I did know about condoms and that - you know- obviously – people
use them for - to practice safe sex - yah - that was primary school. I don’t think I
got any sex education from my parents
64. **I:** okay
65. **P:** I’ve never discussed sex with my mother or father –
66. **I:** and have they ever wanted to talk to you about sex or -?
67. **P:** I dunno- they may have wanted to - but they didn’t (laughs)
68. **I:** I mean have they ever sort of tried to initiate a conversation about sex about
how you should - I suppose - how you should go about life with regard to your
relationships?
69. **P:** um - no - I think - with regard to relationships - they made it clear from way
back that- well - basically how they lived their lives - they didn’t believe in having
sex before marriage.
70. **I:** okay
71. **P:** uh so - you know - they expected the same of us-
72. **I:** and did they ever say that? Or is it just an unspoken understanding that that’s
how-?
73. **P:** uh- no- no they haven’t- I don’t think they have actually come out and said it
87. **I:** okay
74. **P:** um - but - I dunno - I can’t really - may be they haven’t come out with it
88. **I:** okay
75. because they haven’t seen me in a relationship or situation
89. **P:** where that would come up-
90. **I:** right
91. **P:** but to - to quote my mum - I remember once we had visitors over and they
92. were talking about me and my brother
93. **I:** okay
94. **P:** I was supposed to be away but I was just walking past then so I heard
95. **I:** (laugh)
P: and I heard my mum saying - me and my brother used to come down on holiday then and all his friends were mostly girls - used to come over and so my mum was saying all the girls come to see Les, Ashley’s not interested in girls.
I: (laugh)
P: ahh- it was quite a blow then –
I: how old were you then
P: - I think about 12
I: 12 - okay- okay
P: yah so - I think it’s because I haven’t really been in that situation that my parents had to talk to me about safe sex or no sex.
I: okay
P: um
I: can I sit here?
P: um - and from there- I think probably - in about form 2 -is when I was probably more curious - yah –
I: okay
P: as to female anatomy and stuff like that - and so my friend’s mum was a Biology teacher but we didn’t go to her but we’d go to her books (We laugh)
I: what sort of books were these?
P: uh -no - very technical - basic drawings
I: okay
P: and I think in about form 2 - I saw my first porno mag
I: and this was -? Sorry-
P: in form 2
I: so in form 2 you saw your first porno mag
P: it was a playboy magazine -yah -and I think I thought he was just kidding - I was at his place for the weekend - ‘My dad has some mags – you want to check them out? ‘ - I said, ‘yeah okay’- and then he brought out this playboy mag - um ---yah so I think then my curiosity was satisfied - well - um - and I wasn’t really interested in porn for most of school –
I: right
P: whereas -you know - being in boarding school with all guys- all they want to do is swap porn magazines and stuff like that –
I: right
P: and people didn’t understand why I didn’t want to look at porn magazines - you know - scope and that
I: why didn’t you want to look at porn magazines?
P: because I knew - well I thought I knew - what I needed to know-
I: okay
P: um - and looking at more and more porn magazines wasn’t gonna actually benefit me or nor was I gonna really learn anything
I: right
P: you know- that I really needed to know then
I: okay
P: um - then I think I saw my first porno video in Form 6
I: that’s like 17 - right? Or no?
P: yeah
I: 17
P: I was in school - so I suppose it wasn’t hard-core porn - but you know- 
I: okay - so it wasn’t like a porn video or movie?

P: no

I: do you remember what it was called?
P: yes -(laughs) - it was called I Zandalee with Nicholas Cage

I: okay – Zandalee

P: with Nicholas Cage

I: oh okay with Nicholas Cage

P: well you see him there like you’ve never seen him before

(We laugh)
P: um - yah - um yah - so after that - um - well I suppose after Lower 6 – I 
I: wasn’t - that was like the first - I saw a couple of videos’ - um - and I 
think for me stuff related to sex - it’s either I’m curious about so I’ll see

I: okay

P: but once I have sort of -my curiosity is satisfied and that’s it -so I’ve 
I: watched a couple sort of those type of movies with sex and that … and at 
I: varsity - my first year at Wits - I wasn’t at all interested in –

P: um - kinda horny (giggles)

I: okay

P: uh - but also - it was more like - Oh Okay- so that’s what they doing - 
I: um - yah - um - I think I also felt kinda guilty- 

I: okay

P: because um --- I think what goes in - usually does come out - at some 
I: stage - and um like say for example - and this goes back to because I am 
I: Catholic

P: and we go to Confession every couple of weeks and we have to confess 
our sins - and um - bad thoughts- go down as a sin - if you think of like se- 
I: then it’s fine - if you think of um sex with uh someone else- then it’s a si

I: okay

P: you have to confess that

I: so are you saying you are held accountable - what goes in you’re held 
accountable for that?

P: yah- so that’s what they say- it doesn’t matter what you see- you can 
I: watch porn 2 hours a day –

I: okay

P: but what comes out - if I watch more than porn - you think about - uh 
I: having sex - [pause] - with the girl next door or whatever it is –

I: ok

P: um or somebody else o whatever it is- because of what you are thinking 
I: of doing is immoral - act- that’s a sin - but if you don’t it’s fine…

I: okay okay

P: uh so I agree that if you watch loads of porn obviously you are going to 
I: be thinking about those things –

I: okay right

P: it’s not that if you don’t watch porn that you not gonna think about sex

I: okay

P: because you do - but if you watch a lot of porn - you do think about it a
I: okay
P: okay - um
I: but do you still feel guilty if you watched sex scenes on - I think- not a
porn video but any other video or movie?
P: no I don’t - I don’t feel guilty if I see them but if I went to watch a porn
movie - then I’d –
I: then you’d feel guilty - okay – right
P: I don’t feel embarrassed or shy (laughs)
I: okay
P: [pause] um okay then my next source of information was the Internet –
I: okay (laugh)
P: had to come up - that was probably like in varsity- 2nd year - uh actually
when I was in first year - Wits - I wouldn’t - guys had magazines and stuff
like that but I wouldn’t go through them - and they had strip clubs but I
wouldn’t go to them
I: okay
P: simply because I just didn’t want to go - I remember once - uh - we
were in the labs - computer labs - um just the computer science guys and I
came - and that time I think I liked Sandra Bullock- so I was trying to get
pictures of her –
I: okay
P: anyway when we got- one of my friends said -’eh come check out this
picture I got of Sandra Bullock - and I wasn’t looking for anything dirty –
I: okay
P: I just wanted quite a decent picture –
I: okay – yeah
P: and they showed me this uh - like naked women in a really odd position
I: right
P: um I dunno - it was just weird - up to this day - it's like- you know – if
you see something- sort of confusing –
I: hmm
P: I'm still confused today - I dunno what it was- it was just very strange-
obviously
I: okay
P: that was just to get me - so that they could say ’ah ha you looked at her'
I: okay (laugh)
P: yah - what else - um yah - so other than that I looked at literature - just-
I suppose if there were like things I didn't know or um just things I was
curious about I'd look it up-
I: as in . . . example?
P: um- for example- Lesbians - what do Lesbians do
I: okay
P: or what attracts Lesbians to each other or you know- just
homosexuality and that kind of stuff
I: okay
P: uh - I know the one thing that my dad did tell me about - was that - I
can't remember where it came up - this was when I was quite small - he
told me that some men do abuse boys
I: okay
P: ok - um - and I couldn't figure that out - you know - I didn't know how that worked
I: hmm
P: um but then later I found about anal sex
I: okay
P: and I was like ughh - that's what happens - you know
I: okay
P: that's I think about all
I: can you remember in what context your father was telling you about this?
P: it was probably - either some article in the paper or - may be- yah - it was something regarding news - maybe it was - probably news - more than a movie or anything
I: okay
P: it may have actually had to do with Canaan Banana
I: okay- right
P: it may have had to do with that
I: right
P: I'm not exactly sure
I: right
P: I just know it was something that came up -some men hurt small boys – they abuse them sexually
I: How old were you then when this happened?
P: um I'd say somewhere between, somewhere between 8 and 12
I: okay
P: I can't say exactly when - or 8 and 11
I: okay
P: um yah - looks like that's about it
I: coming back to the Internet - you were talking about Internet – yah
P: um - yes - so from the Internet literature, pictures, clips
I: okay
P: um - yes - I must say it ’s been quite informative
I: informative - you have to explain - explain some more
P: uh - just um - what you wanna know about- um about sex and pregnancy and I dunno- for me - I think it's just when you look for sexual and sex or whatever it is-
I: hmm
P: - then you find - you get hundred's of pages- some of them - you probably wouldn't even want to go into
I: okay
P: um - like regarding sex - there's not just straight sex - there’s gay sex- there's animal sex - there's all sorts of other things - you know - for me- just knowing that there's other things - I don't actually want to know –
I: oh right
P: um - birth control - pregnancy -I think pregnancy not really related to sex education - but I found stuff on it cos my friend was pregnant
I: okay
P: so I wanted to know what she was going through [long pause] - uh – what else can I say?
I: I dunno - do you find it sort of a satisfying source - the internet - that if
you wanted to find out - perhaps- the sexual act - that you could if you
wanted to or would you prefer possibly talking about it with your friends
or...

P: uh
I: or do you talk with your friends - do you talk about sex rather - or
sexual concerns?
P: um sometimes - not a lot - it's very just off the surface - we don't really
talk much
I: okay
P: I suppose now at our age - um yah- I don't think guys talk much about
sex
I: alright - and when you were younger?
P: when we were younger- um - yah - I did- I suppose the whole- the thing
when you're going through puberty and stuff like that - we did talk about
sex - I think in general guys - in say- in like- in my dorm in form 3 and 4
and stuff- um - they were a lot more into trying to find out as much as
they could about sex- and you know - how to have sex and things like
that...
I: okay
P: a bit more than me because I wasn't planning on having sex then- um –
yah - but I think with guys and some of my friends and stuff we'd discuss
- in school- kissing a lot more than sex
I: okay
P: because- uh - I think I had my first kiss when I was like 18
I: okay
P: but like the lead up to that was- you know - just how we were going to
do it
I: okay
P: so we talked about organising dates- going out- and stuff - and you
know- just planning the first kiss
I: okay
P: but not all my friends are as slow as me (laughs) - um I think out of my
group of friends - that one of them had sex when he was 16
I: okay
P: but //
I: uh - you said 'not all of my friends are as slow as me' - um why would
you say that you were slow?
P: because uh - I think of our- okay - say I hang out with three other guys
- a lot –
I: okay
P: and of then I was probably the last one to - kiss a girl
I: so that would be regarded as being slower- okay
P: um um - okay - on the topic of sexual knowledge - can I talk about
experience as well
I: that's fine
P: I - suppose- when I first learnt about sex - I didn’t really know what
girls thought of it
I: okay
P: I knew obviously the guys side to it- but I didn't know the girls side to
it- and only later - about - um - probably towards the end of school- did I
find out that girls were just as much into it as guys - at first it seemed sort
of one sided to me - because I didn't really know girls - ok - um - so that's
it - uh - when I was –
I: how did you find - well how did you go about finding out?
P: um - I was- I think talking to girls-
I: okay
P: I think until lower 6 - it was just hi and bye
I: okay
P: in lower 6 - in interact
I: okay
P: we used to do all sorts of stuff together- in Upper 6 - um - also
I: okay
P: there was one girl I used to hang out with so I started talking to her –
um (.)
(Tape recorder stopped)
P: I knew about having sex and stuff like that but I think it was only when
I went down to X did I see how easy obviously it can happen –
I: okay
P: When I – we went out to this club once- -probably the first time out in
X – and there was this girl – who was jazzing and I wanted to learn
how to jazz- and I was talking to my friend- like I want to learn how to
jazz- and he was like – why don’t you just go and talk to her- and tell her
you want to learn how to jazz- so I went up to her and I told her- started
talking to her- chatting to her- - and I told her she jazzed really well-
I: hmm
P: and I wanted to know how to jazz – um – well- then she told me-
before she teaches me how to jazz, she’d like to give me a blow job-
I: ok
P: well so that’s how I learnt how to jazz (laughs) – no I’m kidding-
I: (laughs)
P: uh yah – well that’s why I don’t know how to jazz – I was really you
know- uh
I: were you “wow” or were you shocked?
P: like shocked – yah – she was like the perfect stranger- so that was- you
know – quite a ….um…also- um yah –also there was this video I watched
once – called “Kids” – have you heard about it?
I: probably – but I haven’t seen it.
P: um – that was quite a shocking video - because it depicts kids – quite
young – suppose around 13 or teenagers and just what they do – I was
really shocked by it – I suppose because in even –I was in school – you
didn’t know people who really are all that sexually active- and if they
were it was until much later in school and here you saw- young kids-
I: how old were they again?
P: 13 year olds and some of them looked younger than that- but they were
supposed to be 13 – um –
I: you talked about learning I suppose through experience- as in – such as
in X- what about relationships?
P: well what I’ve learnt from my experience – in general – girls don’t
really pressurise guys to have sex –
I: ok
P: I think girls don’t really – if you don’t want to have sex- it’s ok – I
don’t know how guys take it – um – I suppose this is what I think before I
get into relationships – I would – I suppose I would kiss a girl but I
wouldn’t sleep with her and I don’t know how she would take that –
I: ok
P: would she be able to accept that it’s just my choice and that it’s got
nothing to do with her
I: hmm
P: or would she think that there was something wrong – you know – with
her
I: ok
P: I think that’s another reason why I don’t want to jump into
relationships that I don’t really feel are going to go somewhere with
I: ok
P: but on the other hand – I think it was for me – my ego quite good to
know that there were girls who wanted me sexually –
I: ok
P: whom I could say no to
I: ok – in terms of relationships- have you ever been in a long-term
relationship where I suppose you learnt about sexuality in general?
P: um uh – I haven’t had a long-term relationship –um what else
I: ok – uh – I want to come back to- you said that you were Catholic and
how this affects you – how that sometimes can affect –makes you feel
guilty – like back in school-
P: hmm
I: how has this impacted on your experiences or wanting to be sexually
informed or any of that?
P: um – well I think – wanting to be sexually informed- being Catholic-
hasn’t really impacted on it – I feel – if I want to know something –
I: hmm
P: that it’s probably – more out of curiosity – then it’s gonna be something
that I’m gonna use at some stage in my life – I don’t feel guilty about that
– but if I’m watching gratuitous sex- then uh – or excessive amounts of it-
then it’s corrupting the way I think- then I do feel guilty- because you
can’t keep going back and confessing your sins-
I: ok – but the idea of no premarital sex- has that come from religion or
from a mixture of religion and Indian traditions –a mixture of both-
P: yes – I think it does- both- it is a mix
I: ok
P: religiously – yes- uh – they are clear on sexual abstinence until you get
married – um but I think that religion is a very personal thing –
I: hmm
P: so though I believe out of every 99% in church there is 1% I don’t
believe- like the use of contraceptives
I: ok
P: haven’t come to that crossroad yet
I: ok
P: ok- but when I do – I think will regardless of what the church says- but
in terms of premarital sex- yah culturally from my parents, from my
family in India and stuff –no premarital sex- I suppose- from where they
are- they have a very controlled environment- the guys never get to meet
girls-
P: talking about that- this is another thing- we watched at these Indian
movies and stuff
I: o
P: what happens in India- because you don’t get to date – or go with – a
girl even if you were with a whole bunch of friends
I: hmm
P: apart from like the big cities and college
I: hmm
P: you can really go out with your family and your relatives
I: ok
P: um- when people do meet – and the girl and the guy do like each other
it’s usually for sex-
I: ok
P: you know- because it’s like – I suppose if they could see each other
once a week
I: hmm
P: then they might actually have quite a different relationship but if they
know they can only see each other like once this year then it’s gonna be
for sex
I: hmm
P: well, which I sort of feel sorry for them – but that’s how it works there
– so ...
I: you were talking about Indian movies –
P: yah – this is like – a movie – we were watching something or other
I: was this here or back in India
P: no here
I: ok
P: I think with my dad – and he told me this is what happens
I: ok
P: um yah
I: he told you that people don’t get to meet
P: they don’t get to meet – they don’t have a social life- so when they do
get to meet
I: and this came up in the context of watching this movie?
P: watching this movie
I: ok- what was the movie about?
P: um – can’t remember exactly – but it was obviously related to this – I
think love marriages-
I: ok
P: are not all that common
I: hmm
P: right – so movies and that depict them sort of like as a fantasy – you
know
I: yeah
P: and they make a big deal about them – because it is not common
I: ok
P: um – so it was probably one of these – or if they got cast things –
people of different casts falling in love – they know its going to make a
 drama – stuff people want-
I: ok
P: um – yah – but – so they do make a big deal about people falling in
love and stuff – so I think it was one of those kind of movies (not clear on
tape)
I: ok – have you grown up watching a lot of these Indian movies? – I
suppose in particular the region that you come from – which would be the
south – right?
P: South India – um – not a lot
I: ok
P: I think possibly when I lived in X
I: ok
P: but they have two extremes – either it’s slapstick comedy- or it’s really
sad-
I: ok
P: they don’t really have movies in between-
I: ok
P: and when they’re really sad – basically they want you to leave there
crying
I: ok (laugh) – you’ve told me informally – that when you’ve watched tv
programmes where there’s sex scenes- where you ‘re sitting with your
parents- there’s this sort of uncomfortable awkwardness and you sort of
like suddenly may be so something else – may be tell me about that?
P: ok – uh – at home – I think from when we were small if there were sort
of any movies- soaps and stuff- we were sent to bed – I suppose that was
when we were quite young – as we gotten older- um my parents- can’t
send us off to bed
I: ok
P: so we’ll watch whatever- we’ll probably find the best channel-
whatever has the most interesting programme and watch it – but if a sex
scene come sup – my dad will keep quiet – he won’t say anything – but
my mum will-
I: ok
P: she’ll go like: ‘what are we watching? What is this FILTH on tv?’
I: (laugh)
P: you know – and it just makes it 10 times worse and just then that’s
when the remote won’t be working.
I: (laugh) so what do you do in these situations?
P: normally – at home- to avoid these – um – if I see a movie- when we
start a movie – usually it’s got some sort of age restrictions
I: ok
P: uh – and that usually gives away what’s going to happen- sex, violence
and language, nudity, sex and language. If it is has N or S then I just go.
I: ok- what sort of scene does it take for your mother to say, “what sort of
filth are we watching now?”
P: you know- if there’s any nudity-
I: any sort of ....
P: well put it this way
I: ok
P: any naked women – if there was a half naked – might be able to get
away without having to leave the room- but if there’s like a naked woman
– topless- or whatever-
I: right
P: then again – even movies with strong language and stuff – she also
reacts to those
I: ok
I: and that’s because – what do you think?
P: I dunno – cos – my mum’s been through quite a lot of – I mean if she
was in her own she probably wouldn’t be all that phased you know-
because she has – she says like she hears the “f” word and all the other
words – but you know – the way people use them it’s like they have no
meaning
I: right
P: so she- says – it just seems silly to her – uh – but at the same time the
repetition of these words over and over again -it’s enough
I: ok
P: um – I think my mother is quite religious – and she’s just trying like to
instil her values in us
I: ok
P: um – I think she did a good job of raising us
I: ok
I: I am not sure what else I need to ask – uh – you said something about at
the beginning of the interview about sexual knowledge not only being
about the physical, sexual act but also about the mental – sort of – I’m not
sure of the exact words you used – can you clarify?
P: ok well I suppose it depends on how you view sex
I: ok
P: ok – from my point of view – uh sex is something beautiful and it’s to
be had like within marriage or with someone that you love – um and the
act brings you closer to the person you’re having sex with
I: ok
P: but then there’s also sex that – which a couple do just to get off
I: ok
P: and there’s no emotional attachment – it’s just purely for sex-
I: ok
P: um
I: and your recollections sort of I suppose of friends and looking at,
talking about sex – in school – how would you characterise those contexts
– if you had to find a way to describe the way sex was talked about – how
would you?
P: um – ok when it was talked about in school – it was more of a physical
act-
I: is there a tone besides talking about the physical act- a word you could
use to describe the way it was talked about?
P: uh – I know what you mean – I’m looking for the word –
I: ok
P: uh
I: I don’t want to put words into your mouth-
P: uh
I: I’m surprised that the tape hasn’t run out
P: I dunno – I suppose guys in school – nobody was really an expert in the
subject – so everyone would lay down what they thought – you’d only do
it – if you risked the consequences of being ripped or
I: ok
P: or teased if you were wrong or whatever
I: ok
P: so I was slightly cautious but most of the time not on anything specific
but more on something that happened.
I: ok
P: talking about sex would be- more like – this movie was great
I: ok
P: that way you could always say it was a movie- they can’t mock your
expertise – so things like that – for me- would be the most times sex was
talked about
I: ok
P: uh – I think I’ve covered it
I: and do you feel shy talking about sex or any of those related topics –
contraception or -?
P: um – no I don’t have a problem talking about contraception or sex – I
think – um – but I think it depends to who I talk to –
I: ok
P: to certain people I can preach – I think I know enough to be open
minded and stuff like that –like in the this movie Kids – this girl goes to
have an AIDS test and this- and they ask her certain questions like does
she have anal sex? – And she did with like a couple of friends – things like
that – um – I don’t want to guess but I would think that things that have
happened you’d rather talk about or think about – like having anal sex-
I: ok
P: um so like my mum is completely baffled uh – yah – I mean to her gays
are just complete perverts-
I: ok
P: she can’t begin to understand where they come from –
I: hmm
P: uh – but I can’t say I understand gays- but I think at least I can stop to –
um – start to understand them –
I: because -?
P: um – because- um like say if I talk to my mother about gays –
I: hmm
P: she immediately thinks that they’re – basically like trying to corrupt or
they’re corrupt and they’re trying to pervert sex-
I: ok
P: um – so she doesn’t want to hear about gays-
I: um for you – are you more open?
P: for me-
I: I mean you describe it as –
P: and probably because I’ve had gay friends-
I: ok
P: and I know how they’ve become gay – some of them related to childhood experiences and stuff – which I can understand
I: ok – I think that’s about it – any last words – with my tape recorder what is your message to the world? (Laugh)
P: (laugh) – my message to the world? Thank you for using me as your participant (in a child-like voice) – laughing
I: laugh- lets just hope it tape recorded now.
(Tape recorder switched off)
I: Yes – I forgot to ask about that – what did they teach you in school?
P: what did they teach us in school?
I: yes- what did they teach you in school?
P: um – in school – I don’t remember much – I’m pretty sure they did teach us about sex – made it part of biology or something – they taught us male sex organs, female sex organs – aaah a And yes they did teach us something – I remember probably Form 4 biology-
I: ok
P: um – our teacher was showing us – this is like this – is you know – anatomy – and when you have sex basically there’s where you put your penis-
I: hmm
P: and this is where you probably – oh and another – she asked us if you were having sex where would you deposit sperm?
I: hmm
P: and they had obviously a couple of hands go up – and she gave one of the guys in the class a marker to go and mark it on the board –
I: hmm
P: and he put it right up – you know
I: ok
P: on top – and she said ‘none of you are supermen you know’ (in woman’s voice)
I: (laugh)
P: anyway yah – so we did learn – um – they weren’t – they didn’t have anything like giving out condoms and stuff like that at school-
I: they didn’t have a formal sex education class or a life skills class like some schools have these days where you can go for life skills and they teach you about sex as part of that?
P: life skills class- no
I: do you think that’s a good idea
P: I think it is – because – people are not all that well informed- um – about things like contraceptives-
I: ok
P: about – uh – responsibility – guys easily shift the blame onto their girlfriend or the girl –and she’s the one usually who has to raise the child –
if they don’t somehow manage to get him – you know – just feel she’s just got to bear the brunt – you know- something that should be a shared responsibility –
I: ok – you talked about misconceptions – I remember you used the word misconceptions quite a few times –
P: yeah
I: those misconceptions – where, why…?
P: ok in the beginning talking about sex education to be about rape
I: ok
P: where people think it’s a sexual act
I: ok
P: but it’s actually an act of violence using your sexual organs
I: ok
P: ok – so that’s about – misconceptions – um other misconceptions – um
well here in South Africa- there’s lots – I dunno if it’s misconceptions or
just misinformed – like having sex with a virgin will cure AIDS-
I: ok – hmm
P: but there’s a lot – a lot of them go back – having sex with – this was in
X – having sex with an Indian would cure AIDS –
I: this was in X… –
P: X
I: X
P: but I think that was to incite – rape – cos – quite a lot of people would
go out – and if you’ve got AIDS – you think – this is a way to cure it-
I: hmm
P: so that sort of stuff
I: um – you mentioned sort of biology class- and I remember in school –
remember them showing us pictures of sexually transmitted diseases – did
you ever come across stuff like that?
P: not entirely – um – basically pictures – um of what happens when you
get sexually transmitted diseases – um – what the effects are – lots of
pictures – more on appearance of the people – I suppose what happens to
your skin – what happens to your genitals – what happens-
I: ok – did he show this to you or did he-
P: yah
I: or were you just around – and you looked at the book?
P: no – I think – he a bit of both-
I: ok
P: he had this book – um and– he had this book and he was showing – he
was like come and have a look at this –
I: ok
P: but I didn’t even last three pages into that book –
I: ok
P: cos it was really quite horrible-
I: ok – did that have an affect on you?
P: um ---yes it did--- uh I think I’ve had to question sexually transmitted
diseases – purely from just from sex – you know – through just seeing
stuff like that
I: ok
P: or could you get them from saliva?
I: ok
P: um- also I think from sister she –
I: your sister’s a doctor?
P: my sister’s a doctor – in and around X that practice a lot of – um
circumcision-
I: ok
P: and –they still go – um – they basically go into the hills or mountains or
whatever you call it and they got – um – group circumcised
I: hmm
P: and then basically that’s when they become men or do – course of
adulthood- but quite a few of the circumcisions are botched.
I: ok
P: uh – and sometimes it goes gangrenous and stuff like that – yah – so
my sister told me – she’d had guys that would come to the hospital – um –
and they’d take out a little plastic bag – and in there their penis would be
inside – because it would have come off-
I: ok
P: um – yeah – um – I suppose that’s more sort of – I dunno what practice
you would call it – sexual practice or just traditional –
I: I mean you still learn about the effects to a certain extent
P: actually from that people have learnt that it’ not sanitary and stuff like
that – I had friends of mine who were gonna have to go through that –
I: ok
P: and one of them told me that his father told him where he’s going to get
that done – the only place that his son would get that done was at a clinic –
I: ok
P: so I think people are starting to get aware that – um – but still you
know – I think that if they don’t do it the traditional way then basically the
traditional healers and things like that seem to lose out – yah – so that’s
why they keep on emphasizing you have to really be brave, really strong –
‘this is what you have to go through’
I: ok
P: if you don’t then you’re not a real man
I: hmm
P: that’s what I know from here – they have other weird sexual practices –
um but not really here
I: ok
P: that I don’t agree with – like female circumcision – in other countries –
like somewhere in the North of Africa
I: hmm
P: I feel sort of uncomfortable talking about – where they basically sew up
I: ok
P: - not like seal – but sew up the girls’ vagina so that she doesn’t have
sex-
I: I actually saw something about that on tv – the other day – was it a
documentary- was it here? I dunno – well that covers school – then
biology class also I remember they showed us video’s of an abortion - I
dunno if they –
P: yes – I dunno if that was biology – I think it was religious education
I: yes, or something like that – like general – sort of – but I mean I went to
an all girls school so I dunno what they’d do in a boys schools
P: they had them there for religious education and they would have
pamphlets and things like that – quite a lot of literature on abortion – um
I: do you had to attend religious education – from like – all through school
– till like upper six?
P: no in upper six you don’t – no actually you did but I think it was less
frequent or something –
I: was it a Catholic school or?
P: they I think from form one all the way up but at least – um – but it wasn’t – you know Catholicism the whole-
I: hmm
P: we had mass on a Wednesday and mass on a Sunday – um – but if you weren’t Catholic you didn’t have to attend-
I: ok
P: mass- you did have to attend the religious classes – um – but – you didn’t have to pass a test – or exam in religious education – and they talked to us about other religions as well –
I: ok
P: I dunno much about all of them before – they talked to us about Buddhism, Islam, Judaism – you kno
I: you say they had pamphlets and -?
P: yah but that was-
I: was that sort of around or -?
P: they had – like they had – uh – I can’t remember the name of the room – um sort of the head of religious education sort of room
I: ok
P: and in there – they had all sorts – ok from – like on the one sides they had Bibles and then things on what’s happening in the world, on abortion, um child abuse and stuff –
I: you never ever got like lectured on that - in R.E.
P: not really – in R.E. – was mostly religious stuff –
I: ok
P: and yah …
I: but you know those resources were they like –
P: yah
I: ok ok – interesting
P: they did have like a good sort of open door policy
I: o
P: you could go talk to them whenever
I: did you ever have a student council – as well – what’s it – one of those career counselling centres- whatever?
P: we did
I: did they also have stuff like that?
P: yah
I: ok
P: they were very good – there was a guy there- easy to talk to – you could talk to him –
I: did you ever go – like – wandering there- just to see like the pamphlets?
P: yah and occasionally he would take us for one class or another – and talk to us about what’s going on –
I: ok
P: yah – I supposes we did have career day and stuff like that –
I: ok
P: um – that’s basically it –
I: ok – but now just thinking of something- you mentioned sort of how the emotional parts of the sexual relationship and all those sorts of things – do you think – I suppose your parents relationship impacts on that – how do
you see the bonding – the emotional part to sex and relationships? 

P: uh – no I don’t think so –
I: ok

P: um – I think I use my parent’s relationships sort of as a role—ro –
I: like a model or?

P: yah
I: ok

P: a model of how I’d like my relationship –
I: ok

P: um – but for the like the attachments – and it’s more from other people-
actually I think most of my friends in X are at the University lecturing or
teaching

I: ok

P: or working with students and I see the relationships they’re having and
um – I suppose I was really interested to find out how these people
interact –

I: ok

P: and as I find out more and more – like this one couple who I thought
had quite a great relationship

I: hmm

P: they met in school –they’ve been together – you know – well they have
been together ever since – uh – I envy them because I don’t know – I
haven’t found- she’s probably not in X –

I: (laugh)

P: but you know I’d like to have all this time to know this person – I
thought it was really good – um – but yah – from there – later on their
marriage was down - more down then up –

I: ok

P: um – in the beginning their relationship – it was more like rosy and
stuff like that – the thing is I found a lot of guys in X – who were – I
would say very shallow – you know- um – they are with someone more
because they’ve got children – more than anything else –

I: ok

P: I don’t see that bond or friendship – or you know- like love or anything
– like

I: ok

P: it’s more for convenience sake-
I: ok – right …

P: even though they’ve got to date, and have kids and stuff –
I: yeah

P: but that’s just – I suppose guys- but obviously not all guys – there are
some guys who do respect - um – and say like for example – the guy-
they are married to or with – it’s like the only guy they’ve slept with and it
just seems easier to go back to that person to carry on the relationship than
a whole new relationship – you know – with – so for me that signifies
there must be quite a strong bond from their sexual relationship –

I: ok

P: um – but sort of – it’s like that one guy is the one they’d sleep with
even if they were lied to all the time – they wouldn’t sleep with anyone
else.
I: ok
P: so -- yah for me- that's...
I: coming back to your parents- and you said you would use their
relationship as a model for how you would want your relationship -- like in
the future -- what sort of things --how is their relationship?
P: um -- well my dad met my mum when he was in school at one of those
sports meetings and he saw here and was completely smitten and my mum
used to have pink cheeks -- ok
I: ok (laugh)
P: that's what like drew him to her -- back in those days -- they never used
to --
I: and this was in India - right?
P: yeah in India -- he thought that she used to put make-up -- but she
didn't- that was like her natural colour -- and then he kept up with her --
just you know- mailing her every now and then but they wouldn't go out
I: uh hmm
P: this carried in for a few years and then she was looking to get married
then -- so he put in his proposal- and she had other proposals from other
guys -- but she chose my dad because he was the most honest -- um -- and
you know -they got married -- but the thing is- my dad from like when he
met my mum I suppose he liked her and um then they got closer together --
when she was ready to settle down -- I suppose he loved her then and they
got married --
I: hmm
P: and they started off in Kenya with very little
I: ok
P: and all they had was each other -uh and they had us three -- they have
really lived for us and given us things they never had -- they never really
wanted anything -- and they lived us
I: what I mean from their relationship what did you learn or want to take
into a relationship?
P: what did I learn from them? Um -- I think that -- their love and respect
for each other --
I: ok
P: two - they did also use -- I think -- religion to bond our family together --
through like good times and bad times --
I: ok
P: um --
I: I suppose may be with regard to more specifically to sexual- your
sexuality not necessarily the sexual act
P: With regard to sexuality -- can I bring in a bit of morality in?
I: whatever is important to you-
P: um -- yah but they have given us uh -- quite good morals- by the way of
- by their own values -- um what I would do differently from them? I
would do things differently
I: you would?
P: um
I: you would because...
– but I don’t think it would have been difficult for him because uh he actually had to go teach people at the church about sex – lecture (laughs)

I: (laugh)
P: so yah – I know if my kids don’t hear from me, they are going to hear from someone else or somewhere else – um – I think I have - I remember one situation I stayed out the whole night and he thought I had gone and slept with someone – he didn’t quite get the chance to ask me that- when he was coming round to ask me – my mum sort of squashed it.

I: ok

P: so for that – cos my dad is one of those strong silent types – for that – I’m sure it played on his mind for a while

I: ok

P: um– I wish he had just asked me –

I: ok

P: but I dunno - I wouldn’t want to spoil my relationship with my parents

I: so for your future you would perhaps then?

P: have like a more- I dunno what my kids are going to be like –

I: ok (Laugh)

P: Hopefully they’ll be something like me- cos I know me and I - um – you know – like with my dad – sometimes when I talk to him he doesn’t believe everything I tell him

I: ok

P: but I don’t lie to him – I don’t like to him about things and stuff – um which is – but I wish he knew that I don’t lie to him – so maybe if he’d talk to me more and got to know me more

I: ok

P: –it would be easier

I: ok

P: - because he’s like very caring and loving and all that but he is not a man of words –

I: ok

P: (unclear)

(Tape off)

I: did the subject of menstruation ever come up?

P: with my friend - the first time it happened it was like ‘I’m sick’ – but then later on - she couldn’t always just hide it – and she came out – ‘this is my time of month’

I: ok so you have talked about it well not in a very direct way- with female friends and with male friends –

P: no not really – when it does come around it got sort of negative connotations

I: as in –

P: as in “ ah - she must be having her period now!”

I: o

P: but it – we hardly ever talk about it-

I: so even though growing up with a sister and mother you never like?

P: um - I suppose – we learned about it –

I: from school or?

P: even like at home – with my sister –

I: ok
P: got to buy pads – or if we’ve gone to the shops and my sister says ‘I need to go and get something from the pharmacy’ - “Can I get it for you” – ‘No chick thing’
I: ok (laugh)
P: (unclear)
I: it’s interesting to hear
P: and it hasn’t really interfered – I think- in anyway that it becomes – you know – if my sister had major problems – like if she couldn’t travel or she couldn’t do something or the other - you know
I: ok
P: then obviously then we would have to give her a little more consideration –
I: hmm k – I remember like when – like you want to go swimming and male cousins say let’s go swimming – it’s like uh I no I don’t feel like It – yah just whatever you know- - whereas when you say to girls “I can’t” – they sort of understand - straight away – ‘oh ok’ (laugh)
P: talking about it now – I remember once - we went down with the HSS (Hindu Students Society) in X - down to the beach – everyone had their whole frolic in the sea, braai and what not
I: yah
P: yah – then everyone ran into the water before they get dragged into the water –
I: ok
P: and there was this girl who was like ‘no, no leave me alone’ and most of the guys were there – and the she said ‘I’m having a period!’ – dropped her like a hot potato
I: (laugh) – plonk on the sand – I’m just picturing that –
P: no one would be throwing her into water after that (laugh)
I: yeah – it can be useful at times –

(End of Interview)
Appendix F: Interview 3

1. **I:** Where did we leave off?
2. **P:** whether exposure to media actually helps –
3. **I:** okay- yeah
4. **P:** yah, I think it definitely has – I think it helps in an indirect way because
5. um- by kids being exposed to the media- is forcing parents to realize ‘eh, kids
6. are going to consume one way or another’ – I mean I can’t shelter my kid his
7. whole life or her whole life – so if he’s gonna be exposed to this – so I might
8. as well expose my kid to the educational side of stuff and not really the
9. entertainment side of things – so I definitely think like – um – yah- just an
10. outburst of sexuality in all stems of life from television to media to anything  -
11. excuse me (burps) – just helps or forces parents to suddenly wake up and say
12. ‘okay, I’ve been sheltering my kid away from this long enough and he’s gonna
13. see all this on tv . . . it should be time that I had some say ’ and say, ‘you
14. know what- this is the actuality of the situation’.
15. **I:** okay okay – um – I also want to go back to your father – if it’s not easy for
16. you to talk about then that’s fine – do you think had he been alive today, it
17. would have changed your whole . . .
18. **P:** Oh definitely – I think it would have changed not just my view on
19. sexuality, but just me as a person – I wouldn’t be sitting here at Rhodes doing
20. journalism at the moment.
21. **I:** okay okay
22. **P:** There’s no way I’d be here – like now my father – um – let me explain –
23. my father was a policeman for about 22 years –
24. **I:** he was?
25. **P:** policeman – public service – for about 22 years – I think he served his first
26. 5 years in the South African Army and this was back in the 1970’s- where if
27. you know with whites – you were pushed to the outskirts of any faction
28. fighting area and whether you died or not, you just really didn’t matter in the
29. larger scheme of things. My father was brought up in this apartheid system
30. and he made very clear to us like in our early years that this is where he grew
31. up – you know //
32. **I:** uhu
33. **P:** and you know he had sort of like racist comments –like, ‘yah – the white
34. man is sending me to clean up his shit’ – sort of thing.
35. **I:** okay
36. **P:** he was really bitter about it – I mean you can understand why – he was a
37. policeman for 22 years and he was looked over for promotions and if you are a
38. policeman for 22 years you should be much more than a sergeant or a
39. detective –
40. **I:** okay
41. **P:** - you should be in the upper ranks as a commander or whatever-
42. **I:** right
43. **P:** and my father was just – well at the time of passing away he was going to
44. graduate to detective –
45. **I:** uhhm
46. **P:** - but he was sergeant at the time – now sergeant is a qualification you reach
47. in about 5 years –
48. **I:** okay
49. P: - not 22 years – he was very bitter about this and you can understand and I can understand why – totally –
50. I: hmm
51. P: and he was very bitter about this whole thing and that brought him – and that affected his life at home –
52. I: hmm
53. P: - and just the way he looked at things and the way he looked at the system screwing him over all the time- that when he came home – it was the first thing – that at home at least he had to command respect from his wife and from his kids – and you do not step out of line-
54. I: okay
55. P: and he had an alcohol problem and that really I think led to his demise in the end –
56. I: okay
57. P: um and I think the alcohol problem was brought about just by stress in the workplace and the job he was doing –
58. I: okay
59. P: cos I remember there were many a night where he used to come home just covered in blood – they sent him to pick up some bodies – it’s not good psychologically – there can’t be many people who can say ‘ no it doesn’t affect me, I can run a perfectly normal life – laugh laugh’
60. I: uhuh uhuh
61. P: - when just last night you were picking up dead bodies in the field somewhere – and I can totally understand right now-
62. I: hmm
63. P: - but I don’t know at that time – in that respect I can understand where he was coming from – and my father was this staunch figure at that time – when I was in Standard 3 or 4 I mean – sexuality was never an issue and should never have been an issue at that time for children as young as us –
64. I: hmm
65. P: - but I mean as I told you – the case with finding a love letter and suddenly reprimanding me for that –
66. I: hmm
67. P: uh definitely you could see that there was a strict rule that he want to maintain –
68. I: uhuh
69. P: and anything out of the normal like – you know- having a relationship or showing affection of some sort was just a definite no no
70. I: okay
71. P: - and I think – I mean – I think about this all the time – I mean before you could bring up this question – you know – would we, would I have been different and definitely –
72. I: hmm
73. P: because my mother is such that she realized that we were brought up in a very strict household –
74. I: okay
75. P: and so I think for her she tried to overcompensate -
76. I: okay
77. P: - for us being – um – brought up in such a household – so she sort of let us do what we want and I say it in every sense of the word //
I: hmm

P: - let us study what we want, let us do what we want to - obviously she’s gonna have a say - ‘no you shouldn’t be doing it’ –

I: hmm

P: - but she’s not the type of mother who’s gonna like sulk - really scold you and stuff –

I: yah

P: I mean she- my household – is a household – if my friends want to drink and stuff this is the place we go to – my sister like wants to have her first bottle of brandy with her friends and they don’t know where to drink – my mother’s like ‘come drink at my house – just tell your parents that you are staying over for the night’.

I: okay

P: - and their parents phone – ‘yah, no, she’s fine – she’s here in the room = they all watching a movie right now.’ My mother will go to that extent to lie for us because my mother realizes we should be allowed to do what we want to do and grow up and experience these things –

I: okay

P: and if it’s all best than me being out there somewhere and getting drunk

I: hmmm

P: - and my father would never have let us do anything of this sort.

I: okay

P: right now –if my father was alive – I’d be – I’d probably be studying some B Sc or some medical – something – if I was studying at all and not would have joined the army like he would have wanted me to – or started working – because financial situation is tough at home –

I: okay

P: and I’m running on my like my scholastic merit and financial aid whatever – just because my mother lets me – ‘okay you try it – get financial and work from there’ – but my father would never have let me make that first step.

I: okay

P: I can guarantee you that – he would have said – ‘no you keep putting a lot of debt on our heads’.

I: hmmm

P: that sort of thing –so he did play a big role –

I: okay

P: in the direction we took growing up into adulthood and I think as far as sexuality is concerned I don’t think he would have ever allowed me to have a girlfriend until I finished studies –

I: okay

P: like after – it would have been such a major issue and um – it would have been like my friend who hasn’t told his father and mother that he has a girlfriend here and she’s taking up real issues with that at the moment.

I: yeah

P: I mean at our age 22, 23 years – how can you not tell your parents?
and I think he’s been brought up in the same sort of household where
his father this strict – religious – don’t – talk about things like this –
you don’t bring it up – so I think I was lucky in the sense – I mean – it’s
such a sick thing to say at the moment – because my father wasn’t
around – but on the other hand I grew to experience so much more than
I would have – it’s all for the better –
I: you’d be ducking and diving as well
P: yah – I think just generally if at all I’d be away from home- a
relationship – would be such – construed as such an obstacle in my life
– more than bringing something to you as a person.
I: okay
P: If my father would have been around – it would have just been an
obstacle, just another hard thing that you want to avoid.
I: okay (pause) - I’m done – is there anything you want to add? Or do
you want to go back and summarise?
P: I guess we should – um – I think growing up in the community I
grew up in – really affected sexuality and the way we’ve, I’ve viewed
sexuality and the things we could do with it – I mean – we speak of
sexuality – it’s just the whole issue of relationships
I: // hmm
P: the psychological and physical part of relationships…
I: okay
P: and I think we weren’t exposed to much – apart from older friends,
older neighbours and their little stories that they- you know – talk
about and you have to tend to put this jigsaw puzzle about how a
relationship is supposed to be…
I: okay
P: what you supposed to talk about –
I: hmm
P: when I started going out with this girl in Standard 7 – I thought my
whole attitude should change because she’s my girlfriend and so – we
actually broke at one stage –
I: uuhu
P: about like a month later because she just felt that I wasn’t
communicating, I wasn’t talking to her –
I: uuhu
P: - and like I had to actually go ask friends – “what do you do in a
relationship, what do you talk about?” – such a stupid thing – right? –
but at the time it was an issue.
I: hmm
P: because these things were never talked about – they were never
actually – you know – ‘if you have a girlfriend – you guys should just
be normal and be friends’ and whatever –
I: hmm
P: - and even that comment as innocent – whatever- would never have
come up in the community that I’m brought up in – coming to Rhodes
was the best step I could have made - being exposed to so much more
– when I say that – um – my mother is quite cool about these things –
she is quite cool – I mean in – I don’t want to boast – I’m not boasting
I: hmm
P: I’ve been like sexually involved since Standard 8 or 9
I: hmm
P: and I’ve been with like more than one sexual partner and I don’t
think I would have ever done this had my father been around or had the
community as such affected me more than my mother did – because
my mother was the one – she actually told me to ‘go out there, enjoy
life, and explore whatever you want to do’ – so it let me open to
actually try to explore more things and not to worry about these thing
I: yeah
P: - and at the time I was lucky enough to be safe about these things,
and use a condom and do whatever –like- required – but just because
my mother was the type – you know- to be safe- she’d tell you ‘you
have to safe about these things’ and whatever – In general - not the
community I’ve been brought up in – no way you gonna be sexually
involved, or talk about sex or anything of the sort or be caught in
public with your girlfriend –
I: okay
P: so coming to Rhodes – and taking me away from all that – and
actually placing the responsibility on myself – you away from home
and I know – you really not being watched by anyone but you actually
responsible.
I: okay
P: I think I had a wilder life at home in X in the Indian community
than I do here – cos here I’m so mush more conscious about – you
know the sort of sexual promiscuity and all those things.
I: okay –why do you say that?
P: um – just cos (pause) – I was younger – I dunno – I sort of felt my
mother was protecting me there at home and I could do what I want
and the opportunities – were there – and like Standard 8 or 9 there
aren’t many girls who are sexually active but the girls who are are sort
of promiscuous like that –or the guys are promiscuous like that – and
you sort of swing in the same circles and you meet these people you
know are – you know- who you know are willing to do something
further with you.
I: okay
P: it just happened that I grew faster than most people usually do –
I: // uuhh
P: I must say that and that’s just because of the life I was out in – as
early as Standard 7, 8 – I was drinking and hanging out with my bigger
friends, and sort of thing – and I was clubbing in standard 9 – cos – I
could enter clubs ad had my height – I was exposed to much more and
I could experience much more in like clubs and stuff than I think most
people do at my age at that time.
I: okay
P: and I was always looked at like the one in class whose already been
there, done that –
I: okay
P: - so like when all the guys are talking about it – ‘yah but like Shalen
doesn’t have to talk abut it because he’s already been there’ - sort of
thing – and I think at that stage there was the sense of like – “ach – I’m
The Social Construction of “Sexual Knowledge”

249. the man, right now”.
250. I: okay
251. P: - but I’d be like in class – “shut up guys – you dunno what you
talking about – I obviously dunno what you are talking about”- but
everyone turned round was like ‘yeah right’ -
252. I: okay
253. P: - so I grew up much faster than I should have
254. I: okay
255. P: but probably no - I’m not regretting it – like now because I have a
philosophy of no regrets –
256. I: hmmm
257. P: but I did grow up much faster than most people so – so when I came
over this side I had this whole sexual repertoire – if you may call it –
like yah – been there done that sort of thing –
258. I: // hmmm
259. P: you know – and right now – may be I grew up too fast – like may be
19, so –that’s when you’re at your sexual prime and you really like a
little wild – like a dog sort of thing – but for me – it was laugh it off,
and brush it off – sort of person – I can say no to a girl and not ‘oh my
God, did you say no to a girl, are you gay sort of thing” – extreme case
scenario –
260. I: okay
261. P: but yah I think being at home, under my mother’s roof made me
come to realize you have to be responsible about these things –
262. I: okay
263. P: -and think about whether you really want to do this – do you want
to do this because it’s a novelty to do this or do you want to do it
because this is right and may be you should be doing it.
264. I: hmmm
265. P: I think on this side I’m just more responsible –
266. I: // okay
267. P: - with stuff – and I’m reprimanded for that most times because like
me and my friends – like Indian –most of the male/female – whatever
when you hang out together – something that is totally easy for me to
talk about – and they’d be like – nick name Casper = ‘Cas, did you
really just say that, sis man, don’t be dirty’ sort of thing –
268. I: okay okay
269. P: okay, just make a mental note not to talk about this again whereas if
we were 30, 35 – we’d be talking about it all the time – sort of thing.
270. I: okay
271. P: it just shifts me out of bracket – it doesn’t gel with my friends.
272. I: okay – any last words . . .
273. P: as easily – suppose – suppose um the community has a lot to do
with being sexually informed and expose yourself to your sexuality
and I think um acknowledge or not - you going to be exposed to it
through your friends – cousins or younger generation but older than
you.
274. I: okay
275. P: And those who are not exposed in actuality – I think those people
are placed under a huge risk – it’s easy for me to say – but um –
honestly speaking if something is not done – and I say this- and it
sounds so futile – but if more parents don’t get more involved in their
kids sexuality – its just gonna cause a lot more heart ache and mental
strain and stuff- parent on these kids who grow up into this situation

I: okay

End of Interview

Participant’s Narrative (Part of the interview got lost and this participant agreed to write a narrative that would recollect that part of the interview)

1. I grew up in X, which is a fairly small community. Quite conservative. I
2. have 2 brothers and a sister and I am the eldest. My father passed away when
3. I was in Std 4, which is when I was about 13 years old. So I live with my
4. mother and brothers’ and sister. I am in my third year at Rhodes majoring in
5. journalism and philosophy. At about matric exam time, I decided I would go
6. into journalism because of my outgoing personality.
7. When I was in Std 1 or 2, I remember seeing a porn magazine (not necessarily
8. a porn magazine but more like one of those Cosmopolitan) - I don’t remember
9. exactly what I saw, but I remember – that was my first recollection of sexual
knowledge. We also had sex education classes and this will be a bit biased
10. with the whole AIDS education age that we are in. I don’t remember what
11. exactly what we did – but we learnt about condoms and contraception. I
12. remember at the time it caused a whole uproar from the community because
13. the community was conservative and against sexual education. And it lasted
14. for about a year and half and then the class was taken off the syllabus. But I
15. didn’t really think about it much then – it was just another non-examinable
16. subject taken off the syllabus. It must have had some effect but we didn’t
17. really think about it much then.
18. The community I grew up in is conservative – an Indian community where
19. relationships are frowned upon and they think that all the youth are just
20. ruffians hanging around on street corners – they don’t think that actually some
21. of those youth are actually in university. Relationships are looked down upon
22. and girls and boys are not to be seen holding hands and so on. I was fortunate
23. in that my mother was very open about these sorts of things. After my father
24. passed away, my mother let us do whatever we wanted to. We were given the
25. freedom to explore and learn about life for ourselves. We were not sheltered
27. and forced to adhere to any strict Indian beliefs or norms. This went to the
28. extent that we were allowed to decide whether we wanted to practice the
29. Indian religion or not – and as a result I am today an atheist.
30. I remember when I was in Std 2 – liking this girl and we exchanged a few
31. smiles and glances but I never talked to her until (what feels like) 9 months
32. later. But I remember writing her letter and I remember it was raining- I
33. distinctly remember it was raining and I sat one night and wrote her letter and
34. I felt very happy – this was my first love letter so-to-speak and I even wrote it
35. in red pen thinking that was the colour of love. So I wrote this letter and then
36. put it in my school bag ready to give to her the next day. And what happened
37. was that my mum must have been packing my school bag and found this
38. letter. She didn’t know what to do about it, so she gave it to my father. My
39. father was a policeman and at that time he was working the 2pm to 10pm shift
40. – so I remember when he came back, he woke me up and asked what this was
41. all about. He actually gave me a hiding and that had quite a strong effect on
42. me in the sense that I never really gave thought to being in relationship when
43. typically most boys wanted to be in a relationship. This was my first negative
44. experience and I believe it affected me for the next 3 or so years.
45. When my father died – I became quite hardened – I didn’t really think about
46. relationships – I just remember being told that I was to take care of the family.
47. And so there I was not even crying – I remember at the funeral I didn’t cry
48. because that is what I thought I had to do – but anyway for the next couple of
49. years I didn’t really think about relationships and it was only in Std 7 when I
50. actually had a girlfriend.
51. With regard to porn – it was fairly hard to come by but it was something we
52. were proud of in terms of having a magazine in your double desk, which you
53. took out. It did play a role in the sense of making one think of women sexually
54. and also in creating a desire for it in the flesh. The same with the odd dirty
55. film we came by.
56. Sex is something not talked about- it is taboo - only with friends and not
57. parents. Although my mother is fairly open. She has taken a lot of flack for
58. that. People have often made remarks like- “cos her husband has passed, she
59. lets her children do what they want” I remember many a time where people
60. have phoned and sworn her. So it’s been fairly hard growing up but a lot of
61. fun. My mother doesn’t talk about sex as such but she knows she has 3
62. sexually active sons (and my sister well) and she does make the passing
63. comment – like sly comment here and there. For example, when she worked
64. as part of the censor team doing counts and they were given boxes of condoms
65. to hand out and when she phoned she said, ‘I have a whole box condoms so
66. when you come down you must take them’. So it’s those kind of things – I can
67. easily say “I’ve just woken up and I’m with my girlfriend” – it’s as easy as
68. that. But like I have a friend whose here at Rhodes and whose been going
69. out with this girl for 3 years and his parents still don’t know about her. And
70. yet my brothers and sister who are all involved in relationships at the moment
71. – they all can bring their girlfriends/boyfriend over.
72. I am not sure what she would do if we broached the subject though – she may
73. just shut us down – we have never done that. And I don’t really talk about
74. sexual stuff with my brother’s and sister apart from the odd comment. I mean
75. like my sister may make a sly comment but we don’t really talk about sex as
76. such.
77. Topics like menstruation have never been talked about – like with my sister I
78. am sure she and my mother have spoken about it alone and we have never
79. interfered when my mother is with my sister alone – don’t want to walk in on
80. any conversations. But like we know when my sister gets irritable that she is
81. having her cycle. I mean some girls they are fine – but my sister – you know –
82. she gets really irritable and then we know to leave her alone. I feel that this
83. approach to keeping a girl’s cycle away from the males in the family is the
84. best approach because the female may be embarrassed with what she is going
85. through and notifying the males in a family would only further embarrass her.
86. With the media – there is a lot more exposure to sex and sexuality that parents
87. can’t keep their children from it. The whole idea of that if children are not
88. exposed to sex they won’t engage in it – is dangerous. Parents must realize
89. it’s very dangerous – how are youth supposed to be educated into the
90. precautions they should take. Parents are being forced to educate their
91. children about AIDS and other sexual related topics because without this
92. education they get to know about all the hip stuff regarding sex but are not
93. truly educated with more serious issues.
94. I am not sure what I would do differently – It is easy to say that I would do
95. such and such - like go have sex, but as a parent it is much different. I can see  
96. that. I mean already thinking about kids and if I had a daughter – I know what  
97. guys are like – I’ve been there– they want to be all over the place and to say  
98. well, you can’t have sex until you are 30. It is difficult, so I can’t really say.  
99. Things are changing – I think more and more parents are realizing that their  
100. children will be in relationships and will be sexually active. The age  
101. for sexual activity seems to get younger as the years go by. Like when  
102. I go back home and I hang out at this one place, a local game shop  the  
103. younger boys want to listen in to what the big boys are saying about  
104. relationships and sex. And when we see a guy holding a girls hand  
105. when he walks by – it’s like “way to go!” and that sways the guy into  
106. thinking he’ll get more praise if he goes further and so on. This praise  
107. is dangerous as it does not consider the mental stability of the female  
108. in the relationship and this could adversely affect the rest of this girl’s  
109. life.  
110. Overall I think that sexual education is being ignored by Indian  
111. families and girls and boys will seek out any information from any  
112. other (sometimes) ill-informed route. This is most certainly dangerous  
113. as it encourages all sort of deviant behaviour which could result in  
114. tragedy.
Appendix G: Interview 4

1. **I:** maybe you can tell me a bit about your background-
2. **P:** oh ok – I was born in X – ok – 1980 – and – uh was there for about a 
year and from there we left for X – my parents went there and then mum 
and I went over and we lived in X for about a good few years – like 5 – 
6- 7 years – I think – from there I went back to X and I carried on studying 
there for about 2 – 3 years and my parents came to South Africa straight 
7. **I:** ok 
8. **P:** -and I joined my parents about 2-3 years later - so the main countries I’ve 
lived in are X, Y and now South Africa 
10. **I:** ok 
11. **P:** so um but within all of this – sort of the Indian community, cultural 
tradition- all of that- have been like strictly and strongly maintained – 
13. **I:** ok 
14. **P:** in X more so because as a child -um your parents brought you up - in X 
because that is my environment 
16. **I:** ok 
17. **P:** um in South Africa – um I had issues with it – I was growing up and all of a 
sudden I realized –um - you can’t live as a strict Indian within a western 
culture and you can’t take your westernized culture home – so integrating the 
two cultures was a bit of a challenge but I think I have a good balance- right 
now 
22. **I:** ok 
23. **P:** yah 
24. **I:** this must seem obvious to you, and I suppose me as an Indian also 
interviewing you 
26. **P:** oh ok 
27. **I:** – but maybe you could elaborate on your strict sort of Indian culture 
28. **P:** I could maybe put things into a little more context –about what we 
29. **P:** – about what your whole research project is about – at looking at the whole 
thing of sexual education and stuff like that – well my background is more so 
31. – you’re welcome to hold hands and kiss if you’ve got a marriage certificate 
32. and if you’re married and things like that 
33. **I:** o 
34. **P:** sort of comments from India –even going out and things like that are not 
35. accepted – whereas – your parents will sort discern whether you are of 
36. marriageable age i.e. whether you have a degree – if you well set up – 
37. **I:** ok 
38. **P:** at least from my side you have to be economically stable 
39. **I:** ok 
40. **P:** - before they sort of look for marriage options and things like that 
41. **I:** ok 
42. **P:** and um they’d sort of investigate – all extended family would take – would 
initiate procedures or find out people that they know- whose got – who they 
feel are reliable and whose sons are marriageable and things like that 
45. **I:** ok 
46. **P:** um I don’t like to call it an arranged marriage as such because an arranged 
marriage in the proper term is where you don’t have the right to say yes or no
49. **P:** you don’t have a say in it – whereas these are sort of well facilitated
decisions that your parents make. You have the final say whether you want to get married to
the person or not –

50. **I:** ok

51. **P:** and uh no once you decide you’d like to get married you spend a bit of time
with each other and – but – that’s the thing – one you decide then you get to
spend a bit of time and after you’ve decided they carry on with sort of all sorts
of proceedings and things like that

52. **I:** ok

53. **P:** so its really – uh know some of my friends have issues about it and they
like you know- you still call it an arranged marriage because

54. **I:** ok

55. **P:** you don’t have the freedom to explore while at University – things like that

56. **I:** ok

57. **P:** and – it’s preferred that you don’t because society doesn’t approve of it and
things like that

58. **I:** right ok

59. **P:** or whereas others feel – what is the difference you know? It doesn’t make
living through the marriage any more eas …– any more difficult - because if
lets say you met at a night club or you met somewhere

60. **I:** right

61. **P:** on your own – or your parents introduce you

62. **I:** hmm

63. **P:** either way the decision to get married is yours

64. **I:** is yours – yah

65. **P:** and to live through the marriage is also your responsibility

66. **I:** ok

67. **P:** there are different points of views on this

68. **I:** ok - and does religion sort of also impact on your sort of cultural bringing
up? May be you can tell me about that

69. **P:** uhh its – what I find common is – I am from a Christian background

70. **I:** ok

71. **P:** - my parents are Catholics –

72. **I:** hmm

73. **P:** its religion sort of comes into the way of – the way you practice your
tradition

74. **I:** ok

75. **P:** but with regards to sort of uh - sexual education and stuff like that - it’s all
the same – um certain things are - I don’t want to say it’s not been spoken
about because there are some families that discuss it openly

76. **I:** hmm
99. **P:** – it’s more so – what I find is that it depends on the way your parents have been brought up

100. **I:** ok

101. **P:** my grandparents never discussed any of these issues with my parents

102. **I:** hmm hmm

103. **P:** I almost want to say that it’s probably because my parents don’t know that you have talk about these things

104. **I:** ok

105. **P:** or it could be that or it’s never been a major issue for them

106. **I:** hmm

107. **P:** and things like that – um – I would honestly say I think most of us – between myself, my friends that are from similar backgrounds- we picked up a lot from the media – the television does a good job

108. **I:** ok

109. **P:** things like that - but mum and dad very little – very little – yeah –

110. **I:** ok

111. **P:** um – may be what I find is that -um your parents are sort of uncomfortable of talking about these issues with you whereas older people are not –like older aunts and uncles

112. **I:** Ok

113. **P:** – like you know you have a favourite aunt and things like that

114. **I:** ok

115. **P:** – I find it easier to talk about these sort of issues with them than it is with my own parents probably because they have never initiated it - my own parents have never sort of initiated to talk about these things

116. **I:** ok

117. **P:** um

118. **I:** may be you can tell me about some – a situation like that- where you talked to your aunt or a close relative

119. **P:** it was the whole issue of premarital sex and things like that

120. **I:** ok

121. **P:** and how uh it is not preferred – or the main reason that courtships and things like or going out is not allowed is

122. **I:** ok

123. **P:** is um that it distracts from your purpose of study and things like that and also potential problems with pregnancy and stuff like that

124. **I:** right ok

125. **P:** u m I don’t think that conversation lasted for - the conversation lasted for more that 2 or 3 minutes –

126. **I:** ok

127. **P:** the only reason that I remember it is because she gave me a couple of exam, scenarios, examples that had happened to people that both of us know in common –

128. **I:** ok

129. **P:** and I wouldn’t have imagined it

130. **I:** right

131. **P:** so it’s no - the system that we live in is not perfect but it works for the majority of the people

132. **I:** ok
that’s it – it sort of controlled between fear – or um disappointing
your parents and also embarrassment upon your family in society and
things like
ok
– should something like – premarit- like yeah pregnancy before
marriage and things like that
ok
and going out is – there’s some sort of negative stigma associated
with sort of going out and stuff like – that’s what I perceive anyway
ok
– but a lot of the youth still sort of get around it like behind their
parents scenes
is this in India or here?
um here more so - kids that have an Indian background they come
up and its almost sort of like an integration between the cultures – you
can’t really blame them because you are subjected in an environment
where when you are not within - inside the four wall of your house –
it’s okay and it’s comfortable to go out with people - the general public
accepts you
hmm
and it’s when you move back into the confines of your house where
the culture and tradition, and the rules of society almost sort of
imaginarily change
uhuh
that’s a bit for the background
just checking the tape recorder is working- sorry -last thing I want to
do is to call you back again (we laugh)
and those are the kind of things –it’s um - but what I feel is it’s
changing slowly – even
Ok
even um the religious leaders as such – like we have um - the
communities here–what they do is that - they invite speakers or um
priests that are well known around the world – of an Indian
background – at times from India or if they’re touring around- to come
to south Africa and speak to the youth and things like that
hmm
and recently at one of those talks what I heard they advice people to
go out more because what they are finding is that a lot more divorces
are occurring
hmm
because people are not compatible with each other or they just
can’t get along
ok
and they feel if people do go out – but within - what they try to
advise is that – sort of don’t be frivolous in your conduct and stuff like
that – take care of yourself – you can have sensible like relationships
that are based on friendship initially
ok
and later if you want to build it up – then go ahead and do that
ok
P: so it’s like people are - I want to say they’re almost growing smarter and realizing there are potential advantages between um sort of – may be try and find a fine balance between having an extreme relationship or actually basing your marriage on a relationship you’ve had before.
I: ok
P: so go out in the beginning- explore things for yourself
I: ok
P: and later on make your bigger decisions
I: ok
P: um so there’s a definite change that’s taking place – I can definitely see a lot of things changing with my generation and stuff like that – um agreed I have not been able to do a lot lot lot of things as such – but at least with regards to going out and stuff like that.
I: uhuh
P: um because of the sheer difficulty to maintain a relationship without your parents knowing or without disappointing them - it’s almost – the reason I say without your parents knowing – because once they know and find out that’s the end of it unless you make up your mind to stick it through and if you decide to stick it through – then it’s almost like you have to get married
I: ok
P: because then nobody else – it’s all quite possible to break up and then all of a sudden I wanna to get married in the traditional route where my parents find me some one – cos it’s gonna be extremely hard
I: ok
P: as you’ve al- there are a whole lot of things behind it – and
I: can I just say something – you’ve already sort of
P: initiated it - ok - I’ll complete it – what I want to say is that um – it’s –oh my reason for not going out was I just found it really difficult to keep it behind the scenes
I: ok
P: and it’s not fair on the person that I am going to go out with – to say that my parents are not gonna be comfortable so we’ll have to play hide and seek with it
I: hmm
P: and um - yah – for so those reasons I decided not to
I: ok
P: the sheer difficulty of it being - it’s – should you just decide to break up
I: hmm
P: and you’re sitting at a point where you want to get married
I: hmm
P: um with us the two options – the two ways of possible marriages exist is that– you can either go out, um fall in love with your - partner and get married and things like that or you could go through the sort of more traditional stream – of your parents help you find someone sort of thing
I: ok
P: but it’s harder to have explored the option of going out- when the
whole society knows you have and um then walking in to the sort of
normal stream or the older stream of asking your parents to find you
someone
I: ok
P: cos – usually – the as I said the negative stigma associated with
going out – spreads around
I: ok
P: and people feel – she’s been around a bit and things like that – we
don’t know how reliable she is? – things like that- um I just feel we’re
going off topic quite a bit
I: um yah I want to come back
P: sure
I: um from your – I suppose I’ll call it your little narrative that you
sent – you talked about “guidance class”
P: hmm hmm
I: um and then you also talked about Biology – but you talked about
Biology at hm 13 and then you mentioned it again like graphical
images – Biology class – I’m not sure that’s - what age – yah where
along -?
P: it’s uh -a lot of it was – we didn’t encounter much of it in primary
school – um the biology class – the graphical images were in the
biology class –
I: ok
P: and that was – you could say – when was it? – Standard 6/ 7 – that
means 13 /14 that time –
I: ok right
P: um
I: and guidance class was?
P: also the same time – um
I: ok now can you explain to me what guidance class is –may be not
all schools –
P: um guidance class is where you have a teacher in – in - in the
school –
I: ok
P: she’s just – she’s called the guidance teacher – and her purpose or
job in guidance class is to sort of – uh – well the sort intelligent way
they put it – is they say to help - help you - discover yourself – but
it’s not really that – it’s just to inform you about social issues
I: ok
P: – things like this um so that you can watch out for your self –sort
of- it sort of fills in
I: like a counselor -?
P: that’s it
I: position –
P: and you discuss these sort of issues – and it’s not a formal class –
you don’t write exams on it or anything like that
I: ok
P: – it’s just an extra class where yeah these sort of issues
I: so was that compulsory for you or?
P: yup
I: ok
P: at school everything they offered was compulsory and you all had to
attend everything
I: alright
P: is that fine?
I: that’s fine — so was it a she or he?
P: a she
I: so in the context of guidance class what sort of things would she talk
about?
P: um – a few things were – oh uh— the ones I remember clearly were
things like eating disorders
I: ok
P: -um – there was quite a bit on like sexual education and stuff like
that
I: ok
P: that the school initiated —
I: ok
P: it was during a time when – I know AIDS awareness is big right
now
I: ok
P: but it’s when it was sort of beginning and people were realizing –
hang on sec we have a crisis on our hands
I: hmm
P: -um yah – it was – I think it was the beginning of this whole stuff
I: ok
P: and that was issue – and that was discussed quite extensively
I: ok
P: um other stuff – um it – at times I felt it was directed more so at the
girls living in boarding school and stuff like that
I: ok
P: because they just felt they were having more issues um than people
that were living at home — and stuff like that
I: ok
P: so it was just to help those sort of girls out – um yeah
I: I forgot to ask one thing — did you go to an all girls schools or ?
P: I went to an all- girls school
I: or co-ed – ok
P: most of my life I’ve gone to all—girls schools
I: ok
P: um – well the guidance teacher was someone we sort of got in touch
I: ok
P: with if you were having problems and issues- as you said more of a
counsellor kinda role — that sort of thing
I: cool and then biology class?
P: oh – yah – bio classes were – the sort of so-called biology that they
teach you
I: ok (we laugh)
P: that’s where I think where we got to learn – or sort of explore
sexually transmitted diseases and things like that
I: hmm
349. P: and uh – yeah a whole awareness of all of that came about through  
350. bio class –  
351. I: ok  
352. P: where it was material we had to learn for exams and things like that  
353. I: ok  
354. P: and um  
355. I: you said that – – you didn’t -you didn’t really understand it or – you  
356. were 13 – or it wasn’t really?  
357. P: it was just that one talk – um – the thing with that – I was – how  
358. was it? – I remember being two years young for my class-  
359. I: ok  
360. P: and I matriculated when I was 16  
361. I: ok  
362. P: so I dunno – how old does that make me when I am in standard 6?  
363. I: -uh - I’m not familiar with the South African school system – um  
364. P: - ok – alright - usually with the South African school system – when  
365. you 18 – you matriculate  
366. I: ok  
367. P: and since I came in from India – I got like a two year jump because  
368. I covered a lot of material at home in India  
369. I: ok  
370. P: so I dunno – how old does that make me when I am in standard 6?  
371. I: -uh - I’m not familiar with the South African school system – um  
372. P: - ok – alright - usually with the South African school system – when  
373. you 18 – you matriculate  
374. I: ok  
375. P: so these sort of things interested them a lot more – I remember that  
376. as a first talk and it was two hours long and it was just excruciatingly  
377. painful just to sit in that room and I remember like a few of the images  
378. that were shown  
379. I: ok – why don’t you tell me about those  
380. P: ok  
381. I: if you can remember them –  
382. P: um – it was - I remember – the teachers explained the whole thing  
383. of sexual intercourse and stuff like that  
384. I: ok  
385. P: and how it’s possible to fall pregnant  
386. I: ok  
387. P: um the other thing they did was – um – they - oh – they wanted to  
388. sort of discard a whole lot of um – a whole lot of sort of premo- no um  
389. – misunderstandings around it – um  
390. I: ok  
391. P: there were odd questions like if you stand up and have sex will you  
392. fall pregnant? Things like that – and explaining – they really just  
393. wanted to help us understand by having sex and falling pregnant –how  
394. does the whole thing work – through – how does the sperm and egg –  
395. ovulate – how does fertilization occur all those sort of things – so that  
396. you really understand what your body goes through and that sort of  
397. thing  
398. I: ok right  
399. P: um yah – images – where was it – oh – the things like – the penis
I: ok right
P: um – yah
I: you said you found it quite long and excruciatingly painful
(we laugh)
P: just because it wasn’t stuff I was aware of as such and it wasn’t
stuff I was interested in at that point in time – it’s sort of like you still
in childish mode or child mode
I: ok –hm
P: and it doesn’t sort of fall into your domain yet
I: ok
P: um – I think my sort of maturity levels came in Standard 8 when I
was like 15 – 16
I: ok
P: and that when you were more aware of what’s around you
I: Ok
P: it’s - I dunno when exactly you wake up and you realize it’s more to
your world and things like that
I: yah
P: um - it simply didn’t interest me and I wasn’t –I didn’t listen to the
talk as such – But what I- what I usually find is that you tend to absorb
things even without yourself knowing and then when you come across
it again – you – oh so that’s what it’s all about
I: yah
P: – things like that - um and it sort of builds naturally
I: I kinda remember going through the same thing when I was like –I
think the same- well probably 13- form 1 – yah -and also science class
- we only did biology when we got to o’levels
P: ok
I: it didn’t mean anything to me at –until – it wasn’t meaningful for me
P: yah
I: – at 13
P: exactly
I: um – but yah - it’s quite interesting that you say that- uh
P: I’m glad that you understand that – because I was like I don’t know
how I’m going to try and explain this
I: a lot of people would think – like of course you supposed to
understand what - what – you know what - how intercourse happens or
things like that
P: yeah (laughs)
I: what else did you talk about – you also spoke about movies
P: movies – um - in my personal opinion – I think they’re the best
educators
I: ok
P: they’re not in anyway like restrictive or concerned about what they
say – how it’s projected – it’s the director’s wish and you see
everything he like he wants you to see sort of thing
I: hrm
P: –uum –um- like focusing more on like social issues and stuff like
that
I: ok
P: that surround sexual education and stuff like that
I: hmm
P: those sort of – uh – I’m just trying to think of any movie that I saw
– that really had an impact – um- hm- um – the only recent one I can
think of is Monsoon Wedding – I dunno if you saw it?
I: not yet
P: oh you haven’t – ok
I: yah
P: um – if you can watch it – watch it
I: ok
P: the setting is- it’s - the director is an Indian lady
I: ok
P: and the setting is an Indian family and how things go on and work
around things like that
I: hnm
P: – and uh – concept of incest and a few other things explored in it –
um it’s – it’s like – oh – I’m just trying to think of how did it
contributed to my education as such
I: ok
P: it was it sort of increases your awareness that – even though I come
from a society where all of these things are not spoken about – they do
happen
I: ok
P: - they really do happen and it- there’s a whole lot of mentality too –
if something bad happens – just brush it up – sort of like brush it up
under the carpet – seal it – nobody ever talks about it - but the family
unit must carry on
I: hnm
P: there is - there is an explicit sort of scene in the movie where – one
thing I’ll always remember – where – uh - one of the uncles of the
family- I mean –sort of - you could say molested a young girl –um his
niece when she was really young –and now that she’s –you know she
grew up and she was sort of a problem child and a rebel and stuff like
that and she was about 25 or 28 – heading to thirty years old and she
isn’t married yet
I: ok
P: and it’s a concern for her mum and stuff like that– and her dad
passed away a long time back and um all of sudden – and she - speaks
out –it’s her younger cousin’s marriage and she speaks out that this is
what happened to me and he’s doing it all over again to a younger a
girl
I: hnm
P: - so in order to prevent it happening again she speaks out of her
experience –
I: hnm
P: and the whole family’s attitude was– they were shocked by it but
the next day –it’s –it’s – the young cousin’s wedding
I: hnm
P: so – um - the scene was portrayed such that everyone was happy
and they were taking pictures for the wedding- they were taking
photo’s
I: uuhh
P: and we carry on as a family unit and that sort of struck me as saying
that – I mean when I thought of family and stuff like that that – I mean
we haven’t had issues like that – but simple sort of like arguments and
fights and stuff like that
I: uuhh
P: and you get people not talking to each other and stuff like that – but
a point of crisis or a marriage or anytime where families have to unite
they still come back together
I: ok
P: and you present a picture of unity happiness and you move on –um
– and the issues that exist inside – are not really – are not really sort of
elaborately explored as – which is very different to a western situation
I: ok – right
P: where either extreme action would be taken
I: ok
P: um – yah – no -what I got out of that- was awareness that these sort
of things happen –I feel very secure with my background
I: hmm
P: um I’m quite happy with my tradition and stuff like because I felt
when I was younger and foolish - because because of these restrictions
- um -I was protected from a lot these things – even though I was
frustrated at that point in time – I can’t go out and I can’t do this –
I: hmm
P: thinking back thinking back right now I just felt – boy am I lucky to
have had those restrictions because otherwise I – I myself don’t know
to what extreme I would have explored things –
I: ok
P: and yah yup- so for those sort of things- ummm – it it sort of served
as a good base – or a good sort of like re - confined space to exist –
until I made up my mind about I want to be or how I want to go about
life
I: ok
P: and what I’ve actually realized that – now that I’ve gained my
parents trust about the person I am – and they see me going about my
activities- um – they aren’t imposing anything on me – it’s almost as if
she knows who she is
I: ok
P: it’s her life now – it’s up to her to live it the way she wants
I: ok
P: so its yeah – there is a way out of it – that helps –
I: on the subject of movies, again
P: uuhh
I: and this has come up in other conversations and things like that –
about how the uncomfortable sort of awkwardness maybe around sex
scenes –um and I’m not sure whether you’ve experienced that or not?
P: ok um (laughs) in – when I started sorta watching movies –or more
so –ok -yah adult
549. I: adult – you could say that sort of movies
550. P: – in the beginning yes there was – but nowadays it’s in so many
551. movies that – at times between friends we sort of classify every movie
552. as a mild porn and that you shouldn’t really – you sort of get used to it
553. I: ok
554. P: – and you like “oh ok!” and um - so – it sort of like where – it
doesn’t have an effect on you anymore
555. I: hmm
556. P: because you’ve seen so many movies and almost every movie has it
kind of thing – uh – but it’s sort of uncomfortable when you’re sitting
and watching movies with your parents
557. I: ok
558. P: and (laughs) I remember
559. I: yah
560. P: (laughs) um yeah –um - ach I dunno whether I’ll ever get to the
stage where I’m quite comfortable – it’s sort of all of sudden you feel
like you need to like tie your shoe lace or you need to go get some
water –(laughs) or grab the remote and fast forward and things like that
–yah that’s still a bit uncomfortable
561. I: so that awkwardness between you and your friends or – that’s no
longer there?
562. P: no longer there –yeah
563. I: ok
564. P: the nice thing about being in sort of this society here – like within a
South African context –is that- um - we sort of have a bit of every
culture here – and I have a diverse group of friends
565. I: hmm
566. P: and uh they’re Indians, they’re whites, they’re blacks and we get
along quite well – I just find that –I sort of – I can sort of get along
better in a mixed crowd than in a crowd where there’s like a serious
intensity of any one race
567. I: ok
568. P: and we’re all of different extremes – like I could say – um well my
friend from the States – she’s quite open about a lot of things
569. I: ok
570. P: so sort of the hanging around with people and um with different sort
of styles and different natures
571. I: hmm
572. P: – you get a little bit rubs off on everyone – a little bit of me rubs off
and a little bit of them rubs off on me
573. I: hmm
574. P: and hanging around people that are very open about these sort of
things – was – last year something happened – was that um – it’s – oh
we were discussing the whole thing of movies and stuff like that – and
um it was- oh – a friend of mine said that – you know she sort of hangs
around nude with her mum and stuff like that – or you know when and
–oh -when her mum’s having a bath – it’s no problem walking in and
things like that
575. I: ok
576. P: and I had a whole issue with it – and I was like “how’s that possible
– you know shouldn’t – no man that’s really uncomfortable sort of thing’
I: hmm
P: and it sort of boiled down to – we were trying to – we were trying to decide between in movies – what is wrong-is it- do I have an issue with nudity as such or the way it is used?
I: ok
P: and um – it – I remember the conversation came up after some movie we saw
I: ok
P: and it was - it was sort of – I realized that – just because I’m not comfortable with the way nudity is sort of exploited and things like that – I shouldn’t attach those feelings to just – just - a nude person – or – or - or I should be able to appreciate like models or that - lets a figurine that’s being made or a figure – or a sculpture
I: ok
P: a nude sculpture –I mean the body has beautiful contours and it’s really a nice object and you should be able to appreciate that
I: hmm
P: not – whereas earlier on what I used to associate all my other stigmas – everything that I felt about it to
I: ok
P: to these sort of things and separating issues and stuff like that
I: hmm
P: and these sort of realizations and awareness comes through conversations that you have
I: ok
P: and um – yah - that’s how my friends have helped as such
I: I was just gonna ask on the same topic about friends – and you’ve mentioned them along different subjects – now
P: different subjects – yeah
I: and sort of- what sort of conversations have you had that maybe have contributed to your understanding of sexuality or just gaining sexual knowledge –
P: ok
I: for your self
P: I can’t think of any explicit ones as such but uh – as I said it sort of like simple conversations that crop up – something might trigger it –it might be movies that we’ve all been to see
I: hmm
P: and the nice thing about the friendships that I’ve had within the university context and things like that– is that they’re all open friendships and each one us - it’s like I have the freedom to be the person I am
I: hmm
P: and it’s understood that there’s many things I’m uncomfortable with in these sort of areas
I: hmm
P: and we openly discuss them –ummmm there’s a great deal of tolerance for each other’s culture and stuff like that
I: ok
P: and that’s all very nice - so it - it gives me an open domain to bring
out things I’m not happy with
I: ok
P: or things I’m not quite comfortable with – and uh – it – I – my – the
greatest way my friendships have contributed – have been – sort of
helping me open up – um – and except – and accepting that sexuality is
not necessarily a bad thing
I: hrm
P: Where - whereas I’ve always perceived it as some sort of a taboo –
because of the culture and stuff that I came from
I: ok
P: because it was never discussed and as soon as there are certain
things you don’t talk about – you know – you sort of – I had the sort of
impression that you shouldn’t –
I: alright
P: you shouldn’t explore it and things like that
I: uuh
P: whereas with my friends what I’ve – sort of perception – or the
understanding I have of it right now is – um - it’s something that’s
really great and it’s something that’s really beautiful - if you put it to
use properly
I: ok
P: you know don’t- like anything – don’t abuse it – but it can serve a
constructive purpose in your life
I: hrm
I: and um - and I would say it’s my friends that have helped conjure
that sort of realization about it – yeah
I: ok
P: – um – their attitudes- their background- those sort of things have
helped and I – I’m – I am grateful a point of view that exists of that
nature – because I feel it - it helped me in my life and hopefully with
my future generations as well
I: uuh
P: – where you have to impart knowledge – and it’s not – it’s about
life thing – it doesn’t have -it doesn’t have to be like condoned or –
things like that
I: ok alright - uh you said it doesn’t have to be condoned
P: oh
I: –um may be you can explain
P: like um um – oh - what I’m saying – like I dunno the reasons why
my parents never sort of discussed it with me - I dunno if it is – I
dunno if it is because they didn’t know how to or they were – it could
probably be -they were never comfortable with it or comfortable
explaining it to others – uh – probably because it was never done to
them
I: hrm
P: and I know – okay – not I know as such –but I tend to believe that
had I remained in the Indian context and carried on my education over
there
I: hmm

P: um I would have never been able to change my point of view because I would not have encountered people who have different points of view

I: ok

P: as I do here

I: hmm

P: over there everyone sort of holds the same point of view of of sex and sexuality and things like that

I: ok

P: and

I: you say

P: So you never sort of talk about issues it or you never go beyond and things like that - and the only sort of people you could probably talk about it with would be older people and that won’t happen all that frequently either

I: ok

P: so yeah - um and what I wanted to say at least in my case that is removed

I: ok

P: so I’m more open about it – I’m more comfortable with it – and I might not go back to discuss it with my parents or anyone like that

I: hmm

P: but I’m I’m quite comfortable talking about it with people sort of my age – younger than me or who I perceive have an open you know frame of mind and don’t mind these sort of things

I: um um I’ve read sort of on the same sort of subject of condoning I’ve read sort of articles that have sort of talked about how within the sort of Indian culture and when they talk of Indian culture they talk about it quite broadly

P: hmmm

I: and I’m not sure – I suppose that’s probably not the issue of debate now – but

P: ok

I: um – how may be it’s perceived that if you give information

P: hmmm

I: to the youth about sex and sexuality

P: yah

I: that it will be condoned – that more or of these sorts of situations will happen-

P: ok

I: there’ll be premarital sex- I’m not sure what you think about that

P: what I think about that- its – I can sort of see where that sort of thinking and mentality comes from

I: hmmm

P: I think that my grandparents would support that idea and things like that – my parents may be not so much because we’ve lived outside so much – I dunno about my uncles and aunts that are still in India- would they speak of it like that - but what I do want to say is um I personally don’t believe that would be the case - I really feel it it’s better to speak
of these things with the youth

I: hmm

P: uh – what would probably happen like if we go back to the Indian context where

I: ok

P: where if let’s say we were going to get a speaker from here and take them to India or at least where I come from and get him to talk about these things – it will be very hard at the beginning – a lot of people would be shy – uh you probably won’t be able to reach like a large audience

I: hmm

P: especially in the village or rural kind of setting – in the open cities and things like that where people are a lot more open minded and things like that

I: ok right

P: – possibly it’s not a problem but um looking at a very sort of conservative rural context – um – you might even be asked not to talk about it

I: ok

P: you know should they realize this is what your

I: hm

P: what your speech is about or talk is about – umm – ummm – so but my belief is that people should actually talk a lot more about it – get – you know not just sort of ordinary chit chat on it and things like that – get authorities on it – um get sort of – help people move out of the frame that it’s a taboo and that you need to talk about it – because it’s something you all go through in your life

I: hmm

P: um it’s a part of your life - so that to help you grow comfortable with it

I: hmm

P: and also to be wise about it

I: ok

P: I think that’s the most important thing that we need to learn to focus on – we have to be wise about it

I: ok

P: and use it as a constructive tool

I: ok

P: um at least within an Indian context I think that’s what we need to look for

I: right – umm- you also talked about magazine articles

P: magazine articles

I: yah

P: it’s it’s – as I said – it’s the sort of snippets of conversations that you have –um– pick up a magazine – browse through it – you know

I: hmm

P: and you’re like, “oh this looks interesting, let me take a look at it”

I: yah

P: um – as I said – sort of when I grew to Standard 8 and things like that – by then most of your friends know a lot of things – you know –
you pick up on snippets of conversations

I: hmm

P: this and that – odd magazine articles here and there – and the thing

is – when you don’t know you read a lot more

I: right

P: of that sort of articles and when you - once you know certain things

or once you’re comfortable with your knowledge about these sort of

things – then you move

I: hmmm

P: and it’s something else that interests you and things like that

I: ok

P: but um – yah – odd bits that I read here and there

I: ok

P: sort of all played a role

I: can you remember

P: remember

I: it’s quite interesting – you’re sort of using “these sort of things” and

I’m just wondering sort of – I know you know what you’re talking

about but I don’t know what you’re talking about

P: O-oh oh ok

I: when you say “these sort of things”

P: ok

I: I know I’ve read magazines where you come across articles about

different types of orgasms or um -you might pick up a Cosmo and it’s

got pictures of um

P: the different sexual positions or

I: vibrators or things like that

P: yah

I: um I’m just wondering when you say “different sort of things”

P: ok

I: there’s from sexual advice columns to um

P: you could include everything in it

I: ok

P: everything um – it’s it’s - I read a lot of it when I was between the

age of sort of I think 15, 16

I: ok

P: – um last few years of school

I: hmmm

P: that’s when you tend to pick up a lot more of these sort of things

and once you move to university – it’s other sort of things- um – it it –

I remember reading like letters to the editor from I have issues with

this- um to – like std’s and things like that – a lot of those things were

explained – um to – just general articles on how to keep your boyfriend

I: hmmm

P: um to what is the best way to take care of yourself – um to – ha- it’s

typically the the kind of things you’d find in the Cosmo or like

Fairlady –that sort of stuff

I: ok

P: um – ah – I wanna say like general magazine articles

I: ok
P: um – can’t really think of anything particular but you could – it really falls into the range between how to have sex – to – to – um – k – I dunno what the end point is – but um – just trying to think of other stuff that I would have probably read – uh – yah – um – constructive ways of taking care of – um

I: hrmn

P: yah – I quite don’t know how to categorise them – that’s all- but it’s along the lines of what you mentioned-

I: ok

P: um it’s quite- yah – similar

I: ok

P: that sort of thing – things that surround the issue – cos you you hear these words sort of thrown around and things like that or you come - like at times you know- you pick up a poster or a flyer in the street or you go to the doctor’s waiting room and

I: hrmn

P: you know you see – ‘do you know about – like m syphilis?’ or ‘do you know about this? ’do you know about HIV?’ – ‘Do you know how it’s transmitted?’

I: hrmn

P: it’s um – and - at times you tend to pick up like small words

I: hm

P: here and there – you don’t know what it and later on you come across where let’s say syphilis is better explained or how HIV is contracted- you know how to protect yourself and things like that

I: ok

P: and um – it’s sorta like fill in the blanks kinda reading

I: hrmn

P: so you understand what it’s about – but its- I know what I never did I never sort of actively like sort of set out to search and find out what everything is

I: right

P: it was more – if it came my way – I read it kind of thing

I: ok right

P: and here I never really initiated or never really went to the library or spoke to people “I don’t understand what this is, could you explain” especially with the whole sexual education phase – never

I: hrmn

P: yup - things sorta came your way and you sort of filled in – it’s probably because I never thought of it as a priority

I: ok

P: It’s only know that I’ve - I’ve come to some sort of understanding about it – and it’s, it’s very recently that I’ve realized how big an issue it is and also how important - how important it is

I: hrmn

P: yeah

I: ok

P: but when I was younger it was never really a priority and

I: ok

P: this is where I said having the traditional constraints on me helped a
I: ok
P: because out of my ignorance I could have done a lot of stupid things
I: ok
P: so it gave me time – to find out – and now that I feel I know a lot
I: ok
P: um I feel – yah – I can sort of exercise what I – what I understand of
it
I: yeah – there was something that I was actually thinking about – but I
can’t remember now– maybe I’ll come back to it – um – um – I can’t
remember now
I: ok
P: it will come some time
I: you also talked about your mum?
P: ok – O- oh-
I: um in Standard 5 –um
P: (Laughs) – it was just this one incident – I think
I: ok
P: it’s the only thing we discussed – it was in Standard 5 and um – she
decided she was going to explain certain thing to – oh no – um um she
was trying to teach me biology
I: hmmm
P: cos um I was just being a lousy ass – I wasn’t really doing well-
work
I: ok
P: you know- so she was going to get me down to it – and um – it was
the whole thing of- uh – what was it – mate – it wasn’t really a chapter
on mating – but I remember it was pollination and cross pollination
and how seeds are formed and fruits are formed and things like that –
and also about um the different amphibians, reptiles and things like
that
I: hmmm
P: and how for each – each different categories of animals- oh yah
infusion and fertilization is all different
I: ok
P: but the common thing is that they all have to mate – at some point
in time
I: ok
P: so she was explaining all of this – and it was – you know by then
you know people have sex and that’s the way you have a baby and
things like that
I: ok
P: all of that was just fine – but I just remember thinking – what was it
– it was – oh – it was (laugh)- she was like ‘yah’ – people have sex and
they have a baby- and frogs’– it was all explained and I just couldn’t
figure out how chickens had sex – because (laugh)
I: ok
P: because you never really come across it
I: yes
P: – and um um I just wanted to clarify do all creatures have sex and I
asked her” do chickens do as well?” and she was like ‘yes’ and I
remember not quite believing her because I’ve never seen it

I: hmm

P: and I couldn’t imagine how it happened (laugh) – um – it’s probably the only reason why I remember that day so clearly

I: ok right

P: um

I: I know for like most girls they always say they got the “menstruation talk” or the – um um

P: ooh

I: you now - we now need to buy like pads or

P: or

I: or um tampons or whatever you choose to use - that sort of talk – but uh

P: I didn’t get any of that – none of that

I: ok

P: it was actually – now that you mention – may be I could um – ummm- huh- when I got my - yup – when I got my periods it was – I sort of – before that – as I said the whole sort of

I: hmm

P: it’s – you know something like that this happens – I didn’t even know it was called periods

I: ok

P: – I just know that

I: but how did you know that sort of thing that happens if you mum didn’t tell you?

P: I think it was all the pad ads on t.v.

I: ok – did you ask or did you just assume…?

P: like I said I never asked about these sort of things

I: ok

P: umm – I – it’s – you see your mum using it- um it’s– oh – your friends begin getting it

I: ok

P: that was thing –

I: right

P: when you people you hang out with begin getting it

I: ok

P: and they’re like ‘oh yeah I had to go buy pads and stuff like that’ and things like that

I: hmm

P: so yeah – and uh –in my case I think I got it pretty early - um – what happened was that – normally – at – with my mum’s generation

I: hmm

P: it was that - it was after 15 or 16 that they got it

I: ok

P: whereas with our generation – kids – I think – when did I get mine? – I think I got it when I was like 11 or 12

I: ok

P: so that was pretty early and it was a surprise for my mum that I got it so early

I: ok
P: it could be one of the reasons why she um never bothered to talk
about it
I: ok
P: cos she thought it was rather early to have it
I: ok
P: but um – even after I got it things were not properly – I was – you
know – was bought pads – and not told how to use it – it was more so
my aunt that then took on the responsibility of explaining it to me
saying that um um – sort of helping me to get use to it – i.e. it happens
to everybody
I: ok
P: it’s part of our biological process- it’s not like anything is wrong
I: ok
P: um – and she is the one that sort of got me comfortable with the
idea –ummm- I remember something she told me was that um – In
India in certain states and cultures – it’s big when - for most parents
it’s big when their girl gets their periods – it shows that first of all you
have a natural biological process
I: ok
P: and that you growing up healthy and things like that um and usually
presents and things like that are given but – an open party is not thrown
because it’s sort of the thing that happens that behind the scenes - you
know like the parents- so that the male part of - the male group of the
family don’t really get to know about it
I: ok
P: but all aunts and everybody would find out
I: ok
P: I just thought it was amusing – that – the distinction between – keep
it separate – umm- the whole cultural thing again
I: from the males and
P: yah
I: ok yah – I think I experienced may be a little of that –ummm – I also
wanted to ask – um do you have any brothers or sisters?
P: I had a younger brother – um – yeah – um yeah
I: no no one
P: no – um – I do have a lot of cousins my age
I: ok
P: and um what – atleast I’ve been fortunate with my family – is that
um we tend to move around together - in that once my dad got here
then my aunts and uncles came over as well
I: ok
P: so I’ve got extended family in South Africa as well – and um – very
close with my cousins – we sort of live as a big family – I consider
them as my brothers and sisters- so, I’ve had people um while I was
growing up that were my age to discuss these sort of issues with and
things like that
I: ok
P: um yah
I: can you recall any situations or things you might have talked about
or may be not – yah – some specific time or specific subject?
P: Between my cousins as such (laughs) – there was one where um I remember it took me a long time to get sort of comfortable with the idea of getting my period periods on a monthly basis
I: ok
P: it just annoyed me to death and – uh – I was I was always – you know I felt it was just unfair to lay such a heavy burden on a female and the male had an easier life
I: ok
P: and then all of a sudden I had this thought – “what if they don’t?” so I wanted to find out if they do have something like this and I don’t know about it
I: ok
P: because no one speaks about it
I: ok
P: I remember asking my cousin (laughing) whether they have something like this on a monthly basis – if they got periods or anything like that
I: hmm
P: – and he was like ‘no, we don’t – we have the easy life’ – so I remember being quite disappointed after that (laughing)
I: how old were you then? you said you were 12 then
P: yeah I think (laughing)
I: and your cousin
P: oh same age
I: ok
P: yah that’s sort of the one conversation I remember – umm – hmm – m – the other stuff was that – I was with one of my cousins that I’m really close with – um same chap – um
I: ok
P: as he was growing up – and he started noticing girls and things like that – you know – he would - we’d always talk about – I’d give him tips about – you have to be a sensitive kind of fellow – you have to understand these sort of things
I: ok
P: - and he would ask me ‘when can I know when a girl has a got her periods and stuff like that?’ and I’m like “ no she’ll be really grumpy” you know – “ and would probably say no to everything she likes doing or would hate hanging out with you and things like that” – he was like ‘oh ok alright’ – that sort of it’s m – it’s sort of -when I look at it from the point of view is that a normal conversation for our kind of background – then you could say no
I: hmm
P: but the nice is that - was those kinds of conversations were always kind of comfortable
I: ok
P: because you comfortable with the person you are with
I: ok
P: and it didn’t really matter what you spoke about
I: ok
P: yeah – those sort of early childhood conversations – afterwards
can’t really think of any
I: I found it interesting that you said – like – you never – you never actively went to look for material around sexuality and sex and that what ever came your way – you sort of read that – um may be you can tell me a bit more about that –
P: why that was so?
I: yeah
P: ok – um – reason probably cos my background was where it wasn’t prioritized- it wasn’t an issue
I: ok
P: um and most of my learning took place here in South Africa
I: ok
P: and there were a lot of things available
I: hmm
P: I - you know things could have been quite different – had I been in India and I wanted to know more
I: hmm
P: um – where things don’t- are not freely available –the media doesn’t advertise a lot of things – the movies - the Indian movies are not sort of explicit and vivid as western movies are – and um if – I probably wouldn’t have had a chance to watch so many western movies to sort of educate myself
I: uhh
P: I might have gone out of my way to find out more
I: ok
P: it’s just I think in this sort of context and in this sort of background – there’s no need for me to search like explicitly – what I wanted to know tends to belying around or you know
I: hmm
P: there was never a point in time where there was like a nagging issue on your head and you couldn’t figure it out within like two or three weeks you know
I: hmm
P: something would come or someone would talk about it – or you could easily talk to a friend about it – different opinions and things like that – there wasn’t um – you were never short of information so maybe that’s why you never had to seek information
I: ok – I know with the information age and the internet and …
P: oh yah – um m that’s one thing I’ve not really used for any of these sort of things
I: alright
P: um – probably cos when I wanted to know about these things I didn’t really have all that many – I didn’t have much access to it – it’s more so in the past five years that internet has sprung up and it’s almost like a necessity for life
I: ok
P: you know - and uh - when I was in school and that – we pretty much did without it
I: ok
P: and it was sort of like a privileged tool that you had pay if you had
to use

I: hmm

P: so you’d reserve it for the momentous occasions like when you
want to do your research project and things like that

I: ok

P: um – I mean the tiny projects that you do in school

I: ok

P: internet opened up a lot once I moved into university and doing a
degree in Computer Science – you have access to it like 24/7

I: yeah

P: but by then I didn’t - I sort of knew every – not everything – I mean
you constantly learning and re-evaluating what you know and things
like that – but – uh I had a basis to work from and I didn’t – I didn’t
feel information deprived or confused or um …

I: ok

P: that’s all

I: I think that’s all unless you can remember anything else

P: oh um – do you think I’ve given you everything you need?

I: yah I think so – what I was interested in was sort of – do you feel
you know enough and if you were to be married just say at the end of
this year would there be any anxiety around sex - and going into

I: ok

P: when I think of it – the only thing I would be uncomfortable about –
depending on the way I get married- should I get married to a person I
know very well but it should it be someone that I’ve just recently met
i.e. the scenario where my parents introduced us – where I’ve just
known the dude for less than a month - then I would be a bit hesitant

I: ok

P: that’s the only scenario that I can think of

I: I have another question - I can’t quite remember – it’s sort of – I
think may be for Indian females – like you were saying you don’t
actively go out – you wait for things to come to you- in a way

I: that’s true

P: and you sort of wonder what happens when you go into that
situation – um you know - there isn’t any sort of sexual class to go to
before you get married

I: you’re right

I: or those kinds of things

P: you’re right – no you’re absolutely right – it’s uh – I remember in a
couple of western movies – like – you know those old English movies
where they portray the sixteenth century or the eighteenth century
where before the girl gets married or she’s married and before her sort
of first night – her mum takes her aside and explains what’s going to
happen and things like that and that sort of thing –um – often I’ve
wondered do things like that happen within – within like the Indian
context – where you’re gonna get married to someone you don’t really
know

I: hm

P: but yah -(laugh)

I: I was chatting about Indian movies --it sort of came up - Indian
movies and the influence it has on sort of the way Indian youths perceived sex or even relationships – I found that quite interesting how that whole fantasy element is sometimes placed on it – or um – again it’s little snippets – you see them on the wedding night and then you don’t see them – sunrise, flowers – it’s all happened kind of thing – and how that – whether you’ve watched a lot of Indian movies – I’m not sure

P: uhh yeah
I: how – whether that’s had an impact on you in any way
P: agreed there’s the whole of that fantasizing element that’s placed in it – there was a time in my life when I was much younger when I thought life was the way it was portrayed in the movies – but then something else happens – you carry on living and you get a reality check
I: hrm
P: you consciously sort of tell yourself that you must understand there’s a clear difference between movies and the way life is lived – and uh – I think I’ve been able to establish that – so I don’t expect or anticipate - should I want some sort of fantasy element I would have to create it myself – and that it’s not going to actually happen
I: ok
P: I agree – I think a lot as much as quite a lot of the western movies sell because of the sexual scenes – quite a lot of the Indian movies sell because of the fantasy elements – yah
I: It was talked about how in rural India – how it needs that sort of – the imagination – what happens in city life – just talking to people it has come quite a bit
P: it’s true – it does come quite a bit - even that trend seems to be changing – I’ve watched quite a few recent movies - it’s no longer they show like the night before and the next day sunrise and flowers – they actually fill you the whole thing –
I: ok
P: that’s where the whole thing of sitting and watching with your parents becomes uncomfortable – you like – the funny thing is when it’s in a western movie and you’re with your friends and you’re at the theatre or at your personal residence and all this happens – you’re like “oh great – they’re having an awesome time” – no problem
I: ok
P: and when I go back home and you’re watching movies with your parents – you’re like “why do they have to put these things in?” – you know “it’s spoiling the movie” – just because you’re uncomfortable for a couple of minutes
I: ok
P: – but um
I: and I suppose before you could be guaranteed if you take out an Indian movie you know it’s safe – well safe to watch with your parents
P: absolutely
I: to avoid the awkwardness – and now
P: now – you don’t have those guarantees anymore
I: it’s changed a bit – I suppose
I: but there’s quite a few of these programmes – I know sometimes I watch Eastern Mosaic –

P: uh

I: they don’t have much movie clips – or do they - music clips and stuff

P: music clips - that’s true – you’re right

I: you do see some of the … and you think ‘oh OK’

P: Absolutely, no you right, yah

I: uhm - It’s quite interesting because I was actually chatting to a guy as well - how the perception of women - how it changes the perception of women growing up with that sort of influence, sort of interesting

P: ok all right

I: um - yah I think this is about it unless you can think of anything else

P: Oh, no no (laughing) I’m actually surprised at the amount I’ve said – because when I was walking up I was thinking of now what can I tell you that I not already written in my mail.

I: Ok (Laughing)

P: And (uhm) sorry, I feel we might have like tracked off

I: No, no, no (uhm) I think I was also explaining to someone else how for me the context is fairly important for me from where I am coming from and, and I can’t just put in the words (pause) as maybe other people would say well, you’re Indian you should know what it’s like

P: that’s true

I: um and I have chatted up, doing an interview last year – I was chatting to an Indian guy and he would use Indian words assuming I know

P: what it …

I: what it means – um - and despite the differences in language and you coming from different parts of India –um also the problem is using the term Indian as well, because

P: absolutely

I: you commonly known as Indian in South Africa,

P: you’re right

I: yet there is differences in

P: Oh, definitely- you’re right

I: yet there’s differences in culture and differences in tradition

P: and also the way were brought up – yah

I: Those sort of things – yah

P: You’re right, because um I think living on campus covers that um – you can get at - ok to say that a white person and a black person is different and the or - I mean the moment I say that, sort of, what I assume that people will understand is that we’re looking at two extremes, ok

I: ok

P: Within the Indian context, if you get that, you can get Indians that are two extremes - you could call them a white and a black person

because they are so different

I: ok

P: if you’re so sort of catch my drift along

I: and yet you still…
P: grouped under one common
I: and at the same time you maybe different but there is the whole
concept of clan and, and unity where just being Indian can bring you
together
P:// together
I: in a different context, for example you come to South Africa
because you’re Indian you automatically
P: //grouped together
I: grouped together but you can also sort of start up a conversation
with somebody who is Indian and you feel comfortable with it even if
you don’t know them, because you assume that, that sort of similar
family bringing up or similar values – somewhere
P: some sort of common ground
I: different, obviously – varied um – continuum sort of thing - degrees
P: You’re right, it’s -um- quite often what I find is that because I’ve
got friends are from different cultures and um - in my digs where I stay
– um - there are quite a few white girls and you know there are other
Indians and things like that and we’ve got a nice mix –um- and the
thing is that when I chat to my friends that just hang out with Indians -
they don’t really open up to others – um - I often get the feeling that
we are actually two, we are different kind of people because of what
we’re exposed to
I: Yes
P: and uh and that’s why I felt you can actually have diversity within
just one group
I: That’s what I find the problem with using the word Indian, yet at the
same time you read literature –and it’s Indian and when I hope to write
up my thesis I mean I will mention differences in religion, differences
in language – um - yet of course there are similar things I can relate to
in a sense of, I mean I may speak a different Indian dialect or come
from a different part originally, so but I can still relate to you at the
same time about your cultural values or things like that - at the same
time then I think it is ok. to use the word Indian but you ask the
question what makes you Indian – it is a difficult question
P: It is
I: um- and when you move away from sort of, like you sort of coming
now to S.A.
P: hmm hm
I: it might even be a more difficult answer
P: I know - if a person has to say what makes me Indian, I, I don’t
think I can really define it as such – uh - but yet if you ask me who I
am, I would say I’m Indian
I: Yes (we laugh) um It’s like the food you eat and then you think
about the language an then you think ...
P: you want to say the way you think but then I find that - that’s no
quite true as such - because that’s were I think we all are different in
so many ways, ‘cause uh as much as you have a some sort of a
common culture basis that we all work off – there’s many things that
we choose to keep and um and there many more that we choose to
leave out
I: yah
P: so um at that level we are all individuals so you can’t
I: Yes, yah (laughing) yah, I suppose it is sort of coming into research
P: I can, I can … understand, yah
I: and to explain to other people, It is a bit difficult to find any
P: It isn’t
I: it may be as simple as that if I weren’t - who I am - and yet at the
same time it is such an important issue because a lot is going on in the
Indian
P: yah
I: and maybe - I don’t know all of it that is going on but we hear
things or what is happening or
P: Absolutely
I: or we not any special, any more special than any other person that
we can’t contract AIDS or that we can’t get any disease
P: Mm
I: or what happens when an Indian girl does get an STD - does she
know what to do or all those kind of things
P: Mm
I: I mean how do you confirm a situation like that if no one is talking
about it
P: talking about it (laughing)
I: And that yah,
P: this is where I almost well want to be corny and say (unclear)
I: (laughing) It’s yah, yah. It’s, that’s the privilege that you get if you’re
an Indian living in S.A. If you were living in India you are pretty much
doomed unless you pitch up at the doctor or you get in touch with an
older family member but if you not, you not
I: the doctors bound to (laughing)
P: Yah, there we go.
I: yaj, it’s like here, I remember working at the sanatorium for a year
and I lived there and you get a few Indian girls – coming to ask for
contraception and nervousness and awkwardness when they pitch up
and they see you’re an Indian –um - and I really don’t, I guess I don’t
have any judgements, my, my, personal standards
P: Of, course
I: my cultural values and and I suppose I wouldn’t really say like Ooh,
you know,
P: No
I: how can she be doing this and yet there is this whole (unclear) and sort of values and judgements placed and which is part of why (tape stopped)
P: worked around it to explore the issue to find out is it really right and then –um – yah
I: Why are things that way and – um –
P: it’s true
I: Context is important to me and –um- I sort of don’t want to sort of, why do you want to know that or what does my culture got to do with, with my sexual education or anything, it shouldn’t be any different
P: I’m South African or I’m, you know, Zimbabwean, why should it – um - and I’m suppose I’m not trying to say it does but at the same time I think, we think the way we do because of sometimes where we come from or
I: hm
P: No, I agree with that, I do -um - As I said my culture did play a role on my sexual education, in that, ok not quite that in me knowing the things I do but also the way things worked out on my life, ok, I mean, I would say, I don’t, it’s not like if, had I had all the information I have now when I was 13, then I would rather say no it’s what I knew that guided me through but –um - between the ages of 13, 15, 16, 17, you know, sort of finding out what it is all about
I: hm
P: it was my culture that protected me i.e. you weren’t allowed to do certain things therefore you did not do them and sort of after 17 - 18 you start making up your mind about who you are, what you want to be, what your morals are, your set point, things like that and,
I: yeah
P: and uh now that you’re old enough you work off those - culture does have it’s important, it’s like everything is good depending on the way you use it – um - too much of anything is bad, I would say that, if culture rules you, as you grow up you find that it is more restricting and you eventually go insane, that’s my theory. (Laughing) So, when you young, I mean, it has it’s purpose, it does,
I: ok
P: but aah, yah.not everyone will agree with that.
I: Yes, yah
P: So
I: But yah, it is sort of important from sort of find out where, why do you think that way or
P: that’s right, that’s right um um I say these things and now when I sit back and I reflect but when I was in those situations when I was 15 and when I wanted to do things I hated being an Indian and hated being in that, so, so, (laughing – last words unclear)
I: We sort of think about things differently as we grow up
P: yah, yah
I: you may think about your sexuality now in this way, 10 years from now think (.) you know um (.) I should have done this or I

(End of Interview)
Appendix H: Interview 5

1. I: Ok may be you can start by just telling me something about yourself.
2. P: something about myself - ok I’m 23, I’m from X, studying a B.Com –
3. initially I started business science but I didn’t get into business science for this
4. year – so I just I’m doing another major, so basically it’s a relaxed year – this year
5. – Um yah
6. I: may be something about your family or
7. P: Ok I’m the youngest out of 3 children, uh dad is like semi-retired, mom is like
8. the normal Indian housewife um - mom’s from India, so, there is a lot of Indian
9. culture within us - 3 children, cause like we all know to speak the language and
10. that - uh
11. I: What language do you speak?
12. P: Gujarati um, yah -what else?
13. I: Ok right. – Uh – Next thing I want to ask is, can you tell me something about
14. your understanding of what it means to be sexually informed?
15. P: Sexually informed, ok, to me it’s knowing about sex, you know like, um like
16. the uh - when you mean sexually informed - what do you mean like sexually
17. informed, what do you mean, how much I know about it or where I learnt it or
18. where I heard of it or
19. I: Uh - You tell me, what is your understanding?
20. P: About sexually informed, ok, is that I understand what it is, and that uh you
21. know without, if you having unprotected sex you could get AIDS, you could
22. make somebody pregnant, stuff like that. Sexually informed, yah
23. I: So when I, So to you it means, uh- it basically refers to the sexual act then?
24. P: yah
25. I: ok – understanding sources around that …
26. P: yah
27. I: Um and if I say the word sex education, does that mean any different?
28. P: No, it’s basically the same thing yah
29. I: ok – is there anything else you want to mention?
30. P: no
31. I: - Can you remember the first time that you received any information?
32. P: No, because I’m like the youngest right, obviously my brothers, are older than
33. me, so,
34. I: ok
35. P: they always like used to talk about it, you know, well not talk about it but their
36. friends talked about it and I just happened to be there, maybe like (uhm) I think
37. the last, first time was liked when I was 10, 11
38. I: ok
39. P: because as I told you I’m the youngest and I’m always there, and you know
40. like – when you’re growing up and you’re a guy, you know that’s like the big
41. thing, you know, sex or porn or (uhm) just stuff like this.
42. I: ok
43. P: So you like - just like pick it up, like – that’s the first time I heard of it. It
wasn’t from my own friends - this was my brother’s friends, because when they
got home they might have said something - because there’s like a 2 years age
gap between me and my brothers, 2 years between my middle brother, and 2 years
between my elder brother, so my elder brother is 4 years older than me. So, when
I was 10 he must have been 14, 15…

I: ok

P: so, you know that’s the age when you’re at school and that’s the in thing, or
it’s the most talked about thing.

I: ok – right - And after that? After10?

P: yah, well obviously, then I started growing up and then you hear of it –
yourself and then you go to High School and stuff like that.

I: You mentioned sort of a big thing about Porn and uhm do you have any
recollections of that?

P: Ah, not really because (giggle/sigh) if they watched they wouldn’t have let me
in the room or anything, you know, but I knew exactly what, what’s happening in
the room I just wasn’t there. So no not when I was 10.

I: After that?

P: yah, I think it’s the whole growing up thing – bound to bump into porn once in
a while - I think it was like13, 14. When I got to high school as I told you, when
you’re in high school - your first couple of years, that’s what it’s all about getting
your first kiss and uh talking about it sounds cool and all, you know

I: ok I know a lot of guys have mentioned that um I suppose - like magazines are
passed round school and they are hidden under their desks

P: yah yah yah

I: it’s something to look – like look I have a porn magazine

P: Like like I was at a co-ed school and it wasn’t only guys –even girls used to
talk about it, you know.

I: ok

P: So, to them - at first you think it’s just a guy thing but there are some girls that
do watch, or do read out of interest or out of peer pressure, the whole peer
pressure thing because of my friends are doing it, I’ll also do it - I think maybe
that is the reason why I did I think a lot of it was just peer pressure - You know
like uhm - You come back on like Monday after a weekend and you hear your
friend behind you just talking about it and you like, “Ah I’m missing out on
something and that’s when you go and do it”

I: ok - and what was your reaction to sort of porn? (.)

P: Um

I: magazines or videos or

P: to be honest – disgust

I: ok (soft laugh)

P: ever since then I’ve never watched it, I just find it - it’s like they, they bring
down - sex, you know like they, by advertising it and by showing it and - I, I’m
not for it. I don’t watch, I don’t read stuff anymore.

I: ok

P: So like - since maybe 14, since - like almost 9 years now.

I: So, literature likes create a desire for women

P: For me it didn’t do anything, you know like, it doesn’t interest me in anyway.
91. It’s like one of those things, been there, done that, (ah), it doesn’t work for me
92. kind of thing
93. I: So, it satisfied your curiosity?
94. P: yah yah
95. I: And you moved on?
96. P: yah
97. I: Do you remember the sort of material that you looked at or what magazines
98. they were?
99. P: I think they were Scopes, I, I, can’t remember the video cassettes
100. I: In X, Scopes, (laugh)
101. P: yah
102. I: And after that any other information received or been answered
103. (unclear) phonographic material
104. P: No, - nothing
105. I: Nothing
106. P: when you say beyond phonographic material what do you mean?
107. I: I dunno - sort of talking peers, or yah what did you talk about, you
108. talked about sort of the first kiss was a big thing, where along in your sort
109. of in your age group or where did that come up – at what age?
110. P: I was 14 – everything happened at 14
111. I: (Laugh)
112. P: flashback - yah –um - Nothing pornographic after that
113. I: ok
114. P: you know, like after 14 yah, first kiss at 14, so yah
115. I: ok – um - there is nothing else that you can remember?
116. P: It’s a long time ago - uh - no, not much.
117. I: Not much
118. P: No
119. I: Not even before 10?
120. P: Before 10? No
121. P: No
122. I: No
123. P: I’m – that’s when I can first remember that – I heard about it and stuff
124. like that
125. I: But did you know before 10 sort of what sex is?
126. P: No
127. I: or that your parents had sex to have you?
128. P: No, I was always my mum used to tell me they went to a toyshop and
129. bought me –
130. I: (laugh)
131. P: there’s this one toyshop in X that they went to and bought me and I
132. thought like ok
133. I: (Laugh) and you beli…
134. P: yah, so I believed it you know (laugh) - there wasn’t anything else - it
135. was just they picked me up from this toyshop.
136. I: and when was the first time that you sort of realized that …
137. P: uh ok, like when I was like 10 and that like - I heard about porn and
stuff like that but because I had never watched it, I didn’t understand exactly what was going on, you know, so I think about the birds and the bees must have been like - You know when you’re in Grade 7 and they teach you about AIDS and stuff like that. So that’s when I, when I first realize I wasn’t bought from a toyshop.

I: ok

P: Something else had to happen in order for me to be – born

I: You mentioned something really interesting about Grade 7 and Aids education. Can you tell me more about that? what was, what was content and what was it like?

P: uh - basically, at the school I went to – it was a like a must – you know when you’re in Grade 7 - this teacher or this lecturer or what ever you want to call him used to come from the Ministry of Health and he used to talk to us about the birds and the bees and, and, not like, not like, give you a fully blown explanation of everything, because obviously we not like 21, we still 12.

I: ok

P: But basically just tell us that you’ve got to be careful and that make us aware of AIDS and

I: hmm

P: they used to past around this book that used to show you this photos, all the things that happen to you after you’ve got AIDS, you know like, you start wilting away, and that basically, my understanding of it was that uh – they just want you to know what will happen if you get it, you know.

I: ok

P: So, obviously the best thing to do is to stay away, you know

I: ok

P: just be safe and just, just don’t make any stupid mistakes and

I: ok

P: try and be faithful, even though when you’re young, it’s hard to be, but

I: hmm

P: just, just be focused, you know, don’t do anything silly, don’t do anything irrational, - yah um - and what else? They like - they didn’t introduce us to a condom or anything, no they didn’t - but they basically just made us aware of what you can do to be safe and stuff like that, but they didn’t like come and say this is a condom

I: ok - and do you remember sort of what was in the pictures?
P: um - to be honest like I opened like one or two pages and that was it because it was quite bad - I remember there was like a growth on someone’s tongue

I: hmm

P: or like, like a rash

I: ok

P: and there was like pimples or something everywhere, boils, I can’t remember and that was just to disgusting to look at, so basically I just closed the book and past it on.

I: ok

P: pass on the buck – you know – I didn’t like look through more than two pages –I like turned, read the contents and turned and that was it

I: ok right – yah - and Biology classes or and any other sort of school classes – um – sort of – that may have informed you?

P: I didn’t, I didn’t do biology, I did core science, you know X core science - I did that and basically all in one, you know you got your chemistry, you got your biology, and your little bit of physics, whatever, so I think, have I done biology I would have gone deeper into it - so I just had like the basis, you know like when they talk about the sperm and stuff like that.

I: ok

P: Nothing into, nothing into - like, like I know my friend that did A’level biology, he told me, that you go more into detail about sex and or sperm and growth and menstruation and all these things but aah we hardly do it – not that much –

I: ok - um - and after that, sort of your school years, is there anything else that you remember

P: As in what?

I: being sort of sexually informed?

P: Ah, no. no I think that – uh - all I needed to know about sex education or about sex itself, I, I’ve been told of or heard of in my schooling years – you know –not - University wasn’t like something new for me, like oh when you going to University you gonna learn something else, it’s like, ok you know all about it now, you know the good things, the bad things, the after effects, you know like AIDS or pregnancy and stuff like that

I: ok

P: So like, I haven’t learn anything new here and this my fourth year on campus, you know – I haven’t heard of anything different

I: right – and Who had told you – you said you’d been told or you heard of?

P: No, but just like - I told you, like maybe from my brothers or overhearing them and their friends or - at school

I: ok

P: uh

I: Can you remember any specific things that they told you?

P: mmm - Nothing about them actually having sex but it always used to revolve around the porn they watched
I: ok
P: or the magazine they read or - nobody ever said that 'oh I had sex last night', you know
I: ok
P: uh ok maybe in that aspect it's different here at university because everyone is like free and independent
I: ok
P: so you do hear of nap overs, - nap overs are when a girl stays over in a guys room
I: ok
P: and stuff like that or the guy stays at the girls place.
I: right
P: So, that maybe, that will be the only different thing I heard about. I wouldn’t say sex because it doesn’t necessarily mean if they sleep over that they’re having sex, you know what I’m saying
I: ok hmm
P: but to a guy it sounds all macho and that to say that they had a nap over
I: ok
P: So, basically, they won’t go into much detail but you know suspense, so the worst you can think of – is yah may be he slept with - you know
I: ok
P: yah
I: That’s a new word for me (laugh) nap over
P: oh ok –
I: I sort of -in being told about – sort of (unclear) I don’t know, the topic arouse out of a porn video or pornographic material, um what sort of words would be used? Can you remember any sort of?
P: ok, firstly I would have very little input because I – I wouldn’t - what was going on, you know but uh – a lot of ‘shit she was nice’ or ‘shit she was a bat’ as in ugly
I: ok
P: or uh - they would talk about different positions and stuff like that,
I: ok
P: yah
I: Sort of making you uncomfortable? (Laughing)
P: yah – uh – That th tha that (stuttering) always used to b be – um – they mainly used to talk about whether the girl was hot or whether she was a screamer or the positions - um the language also, whether it was English or French, or German
I: ok
P: or whatever and then like the whole duration
I: ok – uh coming back to nap overs – there was something I wanted to ask – um - the sort of whole macho, you said it was macho to say that you had a nap over - um what’s your sort of experience with – I’m not sort of saying nap overs but your reaction may be to something like that?
I: ok
P: oh - obviously you want to know exactly what happened, you know, you don’t want to be left in suspense, you want to know more, what
happened, you know. yas, um I’m not disgusted at all, I don’t look down at people that have nap overs or whatever. It’s just still - what happened, tell us, tell us, you just want to know more.

I: I’m just wondering, cos you said you’d been brought up in a traditional Indian household

P: yah

I: uh - may be tell me more about that and we can come back to sort of

P: Well, ok – um - It’s like I told you, I’ve been brought up in an Indian household, I understand the culture and everything but when you live in a foreign country, like X, you do tend to pick up some Western uh ways

I: ok

P: and um other than the language, obviously we do adapt other kinds of things or cultures I think - So, you don’t - if, if you- maybe if you were living in India or where ever you looked down upon people like this but because you’ve been brought up in this Indian traditional way plus also you went to a white school

I: ok

P: and um you’ve been taught white language and um – well not white language - English and stuff like that, you are obviously open to other things, you’re not like very narrow minded, you know, you not going to look down at others that do these things or stuff like that, so it it - I don’t now how it is for you guys but for us - It’s like if I had to have a nap over – I’m not gonna go home and tell my parents that I had a nap over- you know - but I think with whites or blacks they are allowed to like have girlfriends and stuff like that, so – their parents are even cool with their girlfriends going over to their house and stuff like that – now when you’re from an Indian family –it - you’ve got to be engaged or practically married before stuff like that can happen - Is that the same for you guys or ?

I: You guys as in being female or you guys as in my Indian background?

P: yah

I: yah I guess so – I could say the same

P: In that aspect it’s very different, so you know, you used to these things - the whites obviously - things aren’t always strict for them or the blacks, or whatever, you know. So, when they say they have nap overs, it doesn’t come as any surprise to me

I: ok

P: because, like when I was at High School, I was – um um - like there were only 5 Indians in my whole High School

I: ok

P: so there was always like whites around me and stuff like that

I: hmm

P: and like – they they you just like hear from them talking, that there girlfriends stayed over or like when I played cricket - the girlfriend used to come and watch cricket with uh, with like my friends’ parents, you know.

I: ok
P: Now in an Indian family that will never happen –
I: ok
P: Your parents won’t even know until like 20 years later or something like that – but they like can be going out with someone for a day and their parents already know - So even like I’m from an Indian background I’m open, I, I used to these things, you know, western way of thinking or whatever.
I: ok - Maybe we can go into a little bit more detail, my understanding of the Indian culture is that, although there are quite a few similarities because a lot of us has come from India originally, our grandparents have, that there is still differences – maybe religious differences - or differences in language or differences that stem from the the origin we actually come from, maybe you can describe your
P: Well, ok. in my family, I don’t know if you guys have this – but you have casts - cast system
I: ok
P: whereby you have like the tailors, shoemakers, you know, like all that different casts
I: ok
P: so like in my entire family as a whole, not just my immediate family, like my dad, grandparents, my cousins and whatever that are in X. At first it used to be big deal if someone once heard of – from our family - going out with someone from another cast
I: ok
P: but obviously with time things have changed, because even in India itself things are changing –
I: ok
P: So, now it’s not about just being a different cast, as long as they are Indians. It’s ok you know um – what else – I can’t think of anything lese- the main thing is just casts
I: ok – um and anything else, how does that influence you bringing up, how you’ve grown up?
P: um like at first when you were growing up - you obviously knew, ok – these are things that used to happen around us – like - that if one of your cousins was heard of going out with a shoemaker, you know because we like - our cast is drycleaners and whatever. It was like you better not do that when you grow - you better be like with a dry cleaning girl or whatever. um so there was that pressure, oh shit if I get caught it’s over, you know, like I don’t want to disappoint my parents, you know but at the same time it’s about my happiness and that - but the older people in our whole family changed things because like someone married out of cast and. I was always brought up thinking that I was going to have an arranged marriage that there is someone that had a love, so, like through that I could see my parents changing their whole outlook – because now to them - it is not about arrange marriage or whether it’s the same cast - it is just as long as she’s Gujarati or Indian
I: ok
P: you know, so, they never told us but before they would just tell us you
needed a drycleaner girl, you can’t have somebody else, it’s not that I’ve
noticed a change – it’s because we’ve told – as long as she is gujarati –
then it’s good enough
I: So, they actually told you
P: yah
I: ok when you say Indian – are you referring to - I’m assuming you are
coming from a Hindu background?
P: yah
I: when you say Indian – do you refer Hindu or generally just Indian?
P: uh including Tamils and Moslems as well
I: ok right
P: uh yah I say we all Indian - you know – we just different – like
Hindus, Tamils, Moslems
I: ok – and your religious background? How has that influenced – sort of
the way you’ve grown up?
P: Well, obviously uh
I: if you practice – I’m not assuming that you do
P: no um - with my religious background - like I’ve always been aware of
what we can do and what we can’t do as Indians, you know like
I: hmm
P: uh - like I told you, you you - I’m not saying that we have more respect
for our parents than other cultures
I: hmm
P: but you just you worried about whether they find out or you just like
more aware that you know that you not gonna – if you have a girlfriend
you not gonna go and tell them because you know they won’t be to
chuffed about it, they’ll be like - yah - maybe she’s going to affect your
work or whatever – uh – yah
I: ok – um - and at University, you’ve sort of described as more free and
independent,
P: uh hmm
I: maybe you can tell me more about that?
P: uh yah – ok - like nobody knows you, you’re from a different country
I: ok’
P: how many people – even though this place is flooded with
X – um - You basically free to do what you want, you know, like you
could sit up until 3h00 in the morning and your mum is not going to phone
you and say go sleep - because they’re already sleeping - they don’t know
what you up to here
I: uh hm
P: You can go out – you can get drunk - you can go and get high, stoned,
whatever
I: uh hm
P: and no one is going to tell you, you know, anything – so in that aspect
you obviously independent - uh whether you have a girlfriend and that –
the stories hardly go back home or of they do you can always just lie about
it and say no – it’s just a lie - someone lying. So in free and independent –
I mean that - nobody know what’s going on here – you know
I: ok
P: yah
I: ok and with regards to sort of – I guess your sexuality and how has that
impacted on?
P: uh - what do you mean sexuality?
I: uh - I suppose your explorations in relationships or not so much sort of
sexual experience but discovering who you are in a relationship – may be
P: Mmm, well like I’ve only been in just one relationship, the rest have all
been like arb things - you know – uh - so I wouldn’t be able to give you
like a fully blown explanation on that because I haven’t been in enough
relationships or like in a relationship long enough to, to make any uh
conclusions
I: ok
P: but uh yah - it is nice to have someone, you know, uh - nothing –I’ve
never experienced anything sexually but, just to have someone – uh
yah - I don’t know what else to say.
I: I think my question – I think phrased it wrongly – what I’m trying to ask
would you say that I suppose your experience with relationships whether
they - are purely platonic or uh I suppose based on attraction or love, um
has that contributed to your education um in terms of sexual education?
P: uh no - not really.
I: ok
P: No
I: ok – right -Is there anything else you want to add? (laugh)
P: No - I think - I told you - everything
I: I sense this is sort of uncomfortable, uh - nervousness
P: yah – just got up so -
I: (laugh) – it is a bit nerve wracking – having a tape-recorder as well –
There is nothing you liked to ask may be
P: No uh
I: I think I’ve covered everything - There is no specific situations or um
recollection of any events that you can remember that may have
P: as I said – I’ve told you everything – so -
I: ok – I’m sort of curious about your understanding of sort of being
sexually informed – I find it quite interesting that you sort of um – that
you sort of locate it in sort of the sexual act – as opposed to a more – what
people say - includes the emotional or it includes the bonding or
relationships –um that sort of thing –wh –or what makes you think that
sexually informed means referring to sexual act
P: mmm – I just think, to me, sexually informed means like the
understanding of sex, like, what it means to have sex
I: right
P: or what it means to do it or not or yah
I: And have your parents ever sat down with you?
P: No, no never
I: (Laughing)
P: No, they’ve never. They just assumed that you’ve learnt it at school, you know
I: ok
P: and their assumption is right because you have
I: ok - You have as in from peers or
P: No, no from, from teachers
I: From teachers
P: yah, like I told you, like that guy from the Ministry of Health came and spoke to us.
I: ok - would you regard that as enough or do you feel confident with that amount of information?
P: yah – definitely
I: ok - and when you’re a parent, would you do anything different?
P: um yah, I would - I would, I think - it will be just like sitting here and talking to you about it – it would be like very nerve wracking - because you’d be - not embarrassed but shy to talk to your children about it – because you know - no one spoke to you about it, you know, other than some arb Ministry of Health guy.
I: ok
P: uh - but yah - I think it is important as a parent to inform your children about it.
I: ok
P: So, cos when they hear it from you it is different, you know, it comes from somebody that they know
I: hmm
P: and in this way if you open up to them maybe they buy in the situation they can maybe approach you I’m not saying they will - but maybe they can. And that’s very important to have a relationship like that with your children. Like, as I told you, I think that’s how the whites do it or that’s how the blacks do it
I: ok
P: um their parents must have told them about it so, hence they can be open with their parents.
I: ok
P: I mean in our situation is not like that, so
I: Do you think Indians in general - I suppose the youth is becoming more sexually experienced or
P: yah I think yah
I: ok – in that sense – it would be – it would be actually a necessity to sit down
P: yah
I: ok
P: Definitely
I: I was thinking of something else I wanted to ask, I’ve forgotten -um – oh yes – I remember – there’s sort of this understanding that if you don’t – I read about it at least that if – amongst Indians that if you don’t tell your
children or or – it’s on a need to know basis – when they need to know about sex – then that’s ok - but if you do tell them about it, then it will sort of encourage sexual experience and um

P: I think that mainly depends on the individual
I: ok

P: what kind of person they are, you know, like maybe for some they become more aware maybe some of them would want to know, that want to go and find out for themselves exactly what it is - Some just might restrain from it some might go for it, it just depend on the individual – I think it’s unfair to make any generalizations
I: ok right – I think that’s about it - anything you want to add?
P: No, nothing
I: ok

(End of Interview)
Appendix I: Interview 6

1. I: Maybe you can start by telling me a little bit about yourself and background
2. wise and – if you
3. P: Well
4. I: if there are any questions you have
5. P: I think it is pretty clear - I don’t think I have any questions -um - I am 21 years
6. old, I am an X citizen, I have lived in South Africa all my life, so,
7. I: ok
8. P: - so I have good cultural background either way, (laughing) um - and yah –
9. basically, I don’t know what else I can tell. I’ve been at Rhodes for 2 years this is
10. my 3rd year
11. I: ok
12. P: academic –
13. I: ok -um - we can go straight in then – um - maybe you can tell me about your
14. understanding of sexual knowledge or what it means to be sexually informed?
15. P: Sexually educated, well, - um - let me think – I think it, it entails knowing, you
16. know, what sex is, and the limitations that it has um also other than like, you
17. know, the nitty gritty of what sex is, I think it is also um you know, the
18. consequences of sex, like pregnancies, knowing all the limitations and things like
19. that, STD’s, you know HIV/AIDS - being such a pivotal factor in like sexual
20. behaviour now
21. I: ok
22. P: it is knowing almost every aspect of it, yah, - ‘cause you know, I think it’s,
23. it’s a bit um different, like people my age being, you know, sexually aware and
24. people who or children like, you know - there is a slight difference, I think, yah.
25. I: And how did you come to this understanding?
26. P: Sexual knowledge, um (laughing) well – let me think - that’s a bit
27. I: broad
28. P: yah
29. I: if you want to maybe go right back to the beginning, like
30. P: ok – when
31. I: um - what’s your earliest recollection of, of sexual education, whether it be
32. formal or informal.
33. P: ok I can start by saying that my parents have still not have the sex talk
34. (laughing). Coming from an Indian background it’s –you know sex is very taboo,
35. sex is very taboo and you know, Indian parents generally think, you know, if you
36. tell children about sex they going to try it out and things like that, which you
37. know, I would have preferred it if my parents told me but um my earliest
38. recollection is formal, you know, sex education, school, you know, I think we
39. went Sub A or Sub B, you know, and they use little books, and it’s very cute, and
40. you know. It was never like - I can’t - it wasn’t something that was a big thing, it
41. just happened, you know, um most of the sex – um - like my knowledge about
42. sex, you know, was formed from school and friends, you know, little girls – you
43. know - you get to 13 and sex is like something you discover (we laugh) and things
44. like that.
45. I: I find that interesting – maybe you can tell me more about that sort of you get
to 13, and sex is something you discover.
46. P: Well, yah, you know, 13, so to say, you know, your hormones start like raging
uncontrollably (laughing) and you’re in Std. 5, or you know, the time where boys
- you start (laughing) um you start um noticing the opposite sex – and like you
know and that’s when, that’s like almost a secondary phase where they teach you
sex again um they give you another like bout of formal sex education and yah you
just become all embarrassed and start like getting little in jokes and stuff like that,
you know
45. I: yah, that is basically sort of like it - sort of Sub B, what what age is that?
45. P: Sub B Sub B is about what Std - 6, what 6 7 yah
46. I: 6 7 and then at 13
47. P: yah.
48. I: 6 7 they probably introduced you to books
49. P: Yah, and I mean … yah
50. I: like how does one become pregnant or what sort of material?
51. P: Things like, how how were you born, you how were you made and things like
that
52. I: ok ok
53. P: and um - I think yah at 6 and that - they concentrate on like you know, how
you, know conception and things like that, where as 13 you’re getting older
54. I: ok
55. P: and you’re entering your teenage years which is like danger zone - according
60. to parents for sex um and that’s when they start telling you about STD’s and you
know using protection and condoms and things like that, yah
57. I: ok, alright –ok - What sort of school did you go to?
58. P: I went to, well, I was, I lived in X most of my life and um it is one of the
schools, well it was one of the first schools to accept non-white students in, so I
59. come from a very - multi cultural background you know, racism was never an
issue and things like that you know, it was a nice mixture of white students,
60. Indian students, black students –
61. I: ok
62. P: Chinese – you know
63. I: ok right – you spoke about, you would have preferred your parents to have
given you the sex talk
64. P: Yah, -I mean like my, the fact that my parents have still not – well – I can’t
80. really say my parents –I think my mother, the fact that my mother has still not
81. actually like formally spoken to me about sex and things like you know, every
82. now and again she will like ‘oo hoohoo’, look at that - in a movie or something,
you know, “Oh, my God what is happening, doesn’t she know” I mean – you
83. know -um I would have preferred it because it would have made me a lot more
84. comfortable talking about like my feelings towards sex with my mom, I mean I
85. would never talk about sex with my mother, even now, I mean, I don’t think I
86. want to, you know, when I get married I’m probably going to - It’s something that
87. we will very briefly - but um yeah I think if she had spoken to me about it I think
88. our relationship would be a lot closer, I would feel more comfortable talking to
90. her about boyfriends you know and even now like my parents maintain that I will
92. have a boyfriend only when I’m 25, which you know, so I’ve kept like the fact
93. that I have boyfriends from them and things like that - you know
94. I: right um - other reasons that you would have preferred them to have spoken to
95. you rather than maybe friends?
96. P: um - well, you know, what what do 13 year olds know about sex - I mean well
97. –ok -obviously - nowadays you know, a 12 year old, you know, can have
98. experienced sex, you know, obviously it was a bit different back then in my time,
99. you know, it’s like - you feel so - insecure like, you know, when - discussing sex
100. at that age, I mean, I remember feeling I’d never had it, I’d never had it,
101. I’ve –let me think
102. I: (laughing) don’t worry
103. P: yeas I’m trying to think how do I word this –um - if my parents had
104. spoken to me about it, I would have felt more comfortable and more
105. secure on my views, like you know, and even though like views as such at
106. 13 years old age is a bit dodge but - like at least I would have known – you
107. know - this is what sex is, you know, it’s nothing dirty about it, or you
108. know, it’s how it’s perceived and thinks like that.
109. I: ok –hm –you spoke about your mum - the relationship with your mom –
110. did she ever –  for most girls we have the common sort of menstruation
talk
111. 112. P: yeah
113. I: or you’re going to get your periods soon – did that ever happen to you
114. or did you get that talk from someone else –or through friends or?
115. P: uh - for me, ok well, when I was younger - I had friends who were
116. older than me I had friends who were um about 2, 3 years older than me,
117. I: ok
118. P: - so they’d experience like periods a lot earlier than I did
119. I: ok
120. P: so my first knowledge came from them and then when I had my
121. periods - at it was like 11 –um - you know, my mom - I don’t think my
122. mom actually told me like what it was and stuff, I mean -
123. I: ok
124. P: I think just, it just happens naturally, I mean she didn’t explain – you
125. know this is your body, this is your body reacting and you’re becoming a
126. woman, and you know, the whole like ovaries and uterus thing,
127. I: ok
128. P: um yah, she didn’t go into the biological
129. I: ok
130. P: - reasons for why I was menstruating but - yah, I mean, you know,
131. even then, at that stage, had it like you know, ok it happens because wha,
132. wha, wha …
133. I: ok
134. P: Yah.
135. I: I’m quite interested in that because, I don’t know in some way it is
136. related to understanding your body, and understanding sex, sexuality
137. P: yeah
138. I: um - it’s quite interesting that you say you mom sort of in a way – it
was something that passed by and was never really acknowledged or-
P: Yah … I don’t know, - in my culture it’s not – you know - like a girl
going her periods – it’s not really something that you celebrate or it’s not
a bad thing, it’s just something that happens, it is a natural thing, so - um
my mom didn’t tell me what um the biological – um – you know –
meaning of it – what it was - but my aunt, who is like a second mother to
me, you know,
I: ok
P: she’s lived with us for a long time – um - she was the one who told me
I: ok
P: yah, so that’s basically…. But I mean by then like I knew what it meant
I: ok - and after that, after sort of – your thirteen year - another sort Of
class at school, sex education class, what was that about? um
P: That was, um let me think, that was Std. 5, that was when we went into
High school
I: ok
P: and you know we went Std. 6 and we were the babies at the school and
you know, teachers I think felt it was necessary for us to have - what was
it called, it was life education skills
I: ok
P: and things like that and you’ve find out – it’s where you study about
career choices and things like that and one of the first things we studied
was sex education and they showed us a very embarrassing video, (we
laugh) it was traumatizing (laughing)
I: Why was it traumatizing?
P: That was because um when, in - when we were in Primary school they
divided us up into boys and girls
I: ok
P: and they would give us a little talk and then this was the first time that
it was a formal viewing of sex education with like the opposite sex, and
like you know, in standard 6 - you’re 14 and boys were disgusting and
irritating and you know you like, “Oh, my God” the jokes the flew there,
you like, - it’s embarrassing, yah. (laughing)
I: I can imagine
P: yeah
I: ok - so they showed you a video of
P: Yeah - and I think we had like a class discussion – I mean – when we
had – physical education classes – you know – if we didn’t go play netball
whatever – sometime we’d have little talks with our like teacher
I: ok –can you remember what sort of video it was?
P: It was a cartoon (laughing)
I: ok
P: - anyway, I think, I can’t remember it was some actors, an old actor,
who or actress who um who was narrating it, - yah it was just an
embarrassing cartoon- it was like “oh my God” – yeah (laughing)
I: ok – and any other –can you can recall anything else during your
schooling years?
P: About sex education um –
I: Or anything that may have contributed to your understanding of -?
P: um – let me think - well, - I think definitely with like menstruation - um
- I got to know a lot more understanding when we did - um Std. 9, I think,
biology
I: ok
P: I mean like - we got to know everything like you know, you know your
endometrium and things like that –
I: ok
P: - that’s that’s something that I found really helpful, like you know, I’m
hoping that, you know, when I have my kids or perhaps imparting
knowledge to my niece or nephew or whatever, you know, I’ll be able to
say, you know, this is what happens and give them a fuller understanding
to what’s happening to their bodies, well my niece you know,
I: ok (laughs)
P: and things like that.
I: ok - and friends – um - how does that relate, your relationship, you said
at thirteen you sort of talked about sex
P: yah
I: but how - later on, did that contribute to your understanding of
sexuality?
P: uh – I don’t understand
I: later on during your schooling years
P: yah
I: I imagine you must have formed close friendships
P: oh yah, yah
I: and how did that contribute to your sexual education?
P: Oh, um ok - well, obviously some contributed more than others like um
- um there were, I had friends who were sexually active in school and like,
you know, every now and again they’d be like, ‘oh you know’ - tell –
impart a little wisdom to my way and things like that
I: ok
P: yah you know, you get to know a lot more in school because of that,
um I can actually say that most my friends were sexually active –
I: ok
P: - most of my - actually no I can’t – a good number of my friends were
sexually active in school by Std. 8
I: right
P: - yah and like then of course then you had like the virgin crew – who
had like - we had our little discussions and stuff so - yah, so um – sexual
knowledge, yah I mean basically like you know, your in high school, you
read Cosmo and you just slowly mature without you you – without you
even like knowing it
I: ok
P: and I can’t tell you like where or I got my sexual knowledge
I: ok
P: it just happened like, you know, Cosmo, watching movies, talking to
friends, media, education, things like that

I: and I’m assuming now – in high school you weren’t sexually active or?
P: No, I wasn’t and I’m not

I: ok - So how did you feel about your friends being sexually active or a
lot of the girls being sexually active?
P: um - at, like, the first time a very close friend of mine said: “I’m
sleeping with my boyfriend”, I was like – “Oh, ok” - “Aren’t you a bit
young?” and she was like – well you know a little conversation ensued
about that

I: ok

P: but um – you know - I’ve been taught, I’ve been brought up to like
accept most people’s - actions and stuff

I: ok

P: so - yah, I didn’t judge or it wasn’t like overly shocked, or I didn’t like,
my mind, it didn’t prey on mind for too long

I: ok

P: it just happened, yah

I: right - the perception, probably an inappropriate question to ask now,
but the perception of sex being dirty

P: Yah

I: how, what was your relationship to that perception?
P: um - ok- see this is where my cultural background comes in to play like
Western ideology, well Western thought is like, you know, it’s not that
bad, I mean it’s natural process and, you know, it’s a human need, why
call it dirty, you know, it’s basically just like smutty magazines and you
know, peoples own like perceptions that cause it to be dirty and then of
course you have um in direct opposite, Indian or, you know, Eastern
ideology saying -sex is taboo - um - it’s dirty and - things like that – um –
Now my mom, like my parents believed that - no my mom still believes
that, you know, you talk about sex to your young daughter she’s going to
go out and have it, or you know

I: ok

P: it’s a stupid id - thing to think, I mean, I get so upset with my mother, I
mean I really wish I could, like you know, trust her enough to talk to her
about it but you know, it’s old school mentality, so I can’t –

I: ok

P: - do anything like that, um I mean, yah - India is like - it’s so –
protective - you know

I: ok

P: um my parents are fully Indian um - you know, they lived in India
most of their life

I: ok

P: and then you know - when they came here how can you not – you know
- bring over that - that type of thinking um – yah

I: Do you think it would be different if they were sort of like second
generation or third generation?
P: um perhaps, - um yes - I think definitely because as it is my parents
even though compare to some of my like South African friends um but by
their standards my parents are strict - like I know my parents are very laid
back, I mean you know, at least they are saying to me you know - you
won’t have an arranged marriage and you know, you can marry who ever
you want and you know, you can have boyfriends just until you know, just
only after you know at least you can stand on your own two feet, they
believe in like you know, women - being empowered and things like that.
That way they very understanding and open minded
I: ok
P: and yes if they were given enough time, if they were second generation
Indian you know
I: ok
P: I think they would be, I would have, like I would call maybe have a
perfect like relationship with them, I think there would be a lot more open
minded about what they taught their children and stuff.
I: ok
P: yah
I: alright – um - I just want to go back now you talked about sort of
quickly you mentioning about marriage and how it would be like a passing
sort of moment where you would have talk about sex perhaps with your
mother
P: yah
I: do you have an anxiety about that?
P: um well, um I’m trying to think, like um - um - when I get married, or
if I get married (laughing) that way yah, um I think some where along the
line like I wish that I would, like you watch movies where, these olden day
movies where like mother sits her little virgin daughter down, and you
know,
I: hm
P: and she like imparts her knowledge and says you know ‘it’s really fun’
(laughing) and things like that and I mean I get a bit um anxious that like I
won’t be able to have that conversation with my mom
I: ok
P: I doubt that she’s going to tell me like, you know, the joys of sex or
anything (laughing) um but - um like maybe like in normal Indian families
like you know if you haven’t been to an Indian wedding you know, they
will have like these little riballed jokes about sex and um on the
honeymoon and stuff like that and you know, maybe something like that,
something like that will pass but as like a - a concrete conversation on like
you know, this is what to expect and I don’t thing that will happen, - yah.
I: I always wondered ‘cause I always think about um me being also of
Indian descent
P: yah
I: I wonder what it would be like when I get married, is my mother gonna
sit me down and say: “So um dear” (laughing) so this is what sex is about’
(laughing)
P: (laughing) I think, I think our parents you know, I think they live in um
blissful ignorance about what we do and like what we know and - um I’m sure, like I can picture my mom saying “I’m sure you know everything there is to know” so like in as in - not that I have experienced sex but that I have friends who are sexually active and that you know - I watch movies and things like that

I: ok

P: so I know what sex is about so I don’t think she’ll feel as if she needs to tell me

I: ok alright - In your relationships also um that you had, have had relationships keep them - sort of - I suppose a secret in a way

P: Oh, yah definitely I have had to

I: um and I can understand that but - but how, - how is that - your relationships – uh I don’t know what age you started going out, how, how has that helped to sort of maybe just understanding the relationship sexuality, the whole I mean – you know - the whole lot

P: um - when did I have my first boyfriend, I had my first boyfriend in Std. 7 ok - and um - um yah well, in Std. 7 – little innocent person - the first thing I thought holding hands was just horrific, I mean I broke up with him the next day (laughing) so um - let me think, ok - I think it’s just recently like - that I - when I got into University that my relationships have liked moved from you know, just kissing to you know - like the next level whatever you want to call it and um - if anything like - you always read how people, - how um what, in the heat of the moment you can’t control things and you know you end up having sex and like I know that that - is - I’m sure it’s true for some people but like I know - - for a fact – that for me like I can say stop, no, you know. I actually want to be a virgin, I am a virgin right now, and I mean there are times when, you know, things could have gotten out of hand but they didn’t because my own views, you know, it has to be someone I love and trust ok I might not marry this person but if I can trust him and um I know that he loves me then you know - I probably if I’ve been going out with him for a long time could maybe I feel like - it’s the right time, you know, to sleep with somebody or someone - but um sexual knowledge, yah like, - from going out with guys in University um I’ve come to understand like male sexuality a little bit more –

I: ok

P: like you know, as a female - you know - you get told like you know, be careful wha, wha, wha and then –

I: ok

P: yah, I think you have to go out with a guy and reach that certain level to find out …

I: that’s very interesting - I mean if you can tell me more about that, sort of understanding of male sexuality

P: Male sexuality um (laughing) it’s (laughing – diplomatically and unembarrassingly um (laughing)

I: it’s ok it’s all confidential (Laughs)

P: ok – um - let me think like - um - in all yah, one of the generalizations
about female sexuality is that we can’t control ourselves and like you
know it’s men who are always in, in control and they’re the ones who are
like initiators and you know, some, some of my relationships in University
you know - it’s not true, you know, these are, these are stereotypes but um
- you know - yah male sexuality is not as rigid and you know um straight
down the line as people like …

I: I would think it the other way, that men actually lose control …
P: yah - see see - that’s the thing –
I: in terms of…
P: most of the things that I’ve heard is are like, you know, women are the
ones who
I: ok
P: are yah – not the straight and narrow –so
I: right (laugh)
P: so that’s my like – thing on male sexuality –
I: ok - that’s very interesting - we do assume a lot about the other sex
P: yah
I: and when we get into relationship it actually challenges our views and
that in a way also contributes to our understanding of sex and relationships
P: Like - I’m in third year - I’ve had 3 boyfriends in Varsity and um like –
not one of them has um said to me – you know - do you wanna have sex
or has pressured me or you know, I’ve never felt as if I needed to have sex
with them
I: ok
P: right, they’ve never pressured me and that’s another thing, like you
know, male sexuality it’s not um - quite as - like you said out of control as
um some people would see it - like they don’t want it all the time
I: ok
P: and obviously - you know, they don’t need it all the time because you
know, I never had to - yah
I: um I’m assuming are these all Indian males or?
P: No, these are - 2 white males and 1 Indian, yah
I: ok right - I suppose this is my own assumption that you assume that
Indian males and females goes through a similar thing in terms of of
negotiating our sexuality in relationships like how far would we go um –
that’s why I’m interested in whether
P: um yah, well my Indian boyfriend we were both, we were both virgins
and um
I: ok
P: yah and um - I mean we were both like mature enough, the thing is
with me I physically I know I’m ready to have sex
I: ok
P: it’s just emotionally I know that it would be a bit of a if I didn’t trust
the person and if I didn’t know that he loved me it would be - I would feel
regret the next morning or the next day and yah that’s what, that’s
probably what’s holding me back like I haven’t found - someone who I’m
totally comfortable with
I: ok
P: and I think that was probably he’s um actually I don’t know what, he’s
(laughing) I’m assuming that was his um um reasons as well for not like
wanting to have sex with me, you know or wanting to have sex with
someone because - um guys know that if you - if you going out with a
virgin and you sleep with her you like, you become their, their first and
that’s a big thing like you know, a girl’s first is someone you know, they
stay with you for life, you know
I: ok
P: so to say - I mean in your mind, like you know - I lost my virginity to
this man, you know, most of the time it’s someone that you fell in love
with and …
I: ok
P: yah
I: right -um - I’m also interested in how religion features in this or if or
not?
P: I am Roman Catholic
I: ok
P: at the moment I am not practicing - um - actually no, no why use a
euphemism – I’d rather think that I’m agnostic –
I: ok
P: I have not - had the courage to tell my parents this - so every Sunday
they phone me I have to lie to them and say “Yes, I have gone to church”
and you know, I feel very guilty and but that’s just Roman Catholic
Ideology coming into it um - when I was young, I don’t know, I really
don’t know how to say how religion has played a part um obviously you
know, Roman Catholic - church, um
I: ok
P: you know, no sex before marriage, no condom use, things like that um I
think maybe that tied in a little bit to my, ‘cause my parents are staunch
Roman Catholic’s I mean we’ve belonged to a long line of Roman
Catholics, you know - scary people - in general (laughing) and um yah it
had, maybe it’s like interwoven somewhere a long the lines of what my
parents taught me but - because religion no longer plays a very important
part of my life
I: hmm
P: - I can’t say that it’s had a impact on like my view on sexuality.
I: ok alright - I’m just trying to think is there anything else - any other
recollections of learning about sex or anything that you think is connected
to it
P: hmm- I have an older sister – we’re only 2 girls in the family and um
now - it’s just strange because you grow up thinking, you know, your
sister and you are very alike and you probably have the same - you know,
believe system, considering, you know, we’re brought up in the same way
um - but there is some things like I didn’t at - at a certain age like you
know, you don’t want to think about you know, your sister as like being
sexually active or you know, even like having a sexuality so to say
I: hm
P: and um when she was, let me think, how old was she, when she was 25, um she fell in love with someone and she had sex for the first time and– like she only told me about - much later
I: ok
P: like she’s 27 at the moment, - she told me perhaps like a year afterwards, yes, I was sleeping with him, da,da,da, you know, and like even though I say I have a very open mind, I was like, “Oh, my God, my sister is having sex, that’s terrible” (laughing) I was like “Oh, my God, why is this happening”, you know, “shame my poor parents don’t deserve this”, that kind of thing um but yah, - I don’t know…
I: I’m interested in why you say ‘my poor parents don’t deserve this’ (we laugh)
P: Because it’s - my parents were ever to find out that you know, - that my sister was not a virgin, you know, and that she had slept with someone - it would - break their hearts, I mean my mother would go berzerk, my dad I think would have an anuresis or something (little laugh) and um – It’s just because in Indian families you know, the girl is supposed to be like - this - prize you can give away to someone, you know, give away to someone
I: ok
P: hopefully at some point um - and yeah, it’s a reflection on the family if like something - if the girl has sex and I mean you know, because sex is such taboo in Indian culture and, you know, sex before marriage is frowned upon, you know, and she will be frowned upon and therefore it’s a reflection on our parents and family, you know, big skandaal and yah – and things like that I think they would be very disappointed and they would probably, you know, question like, you know, what on earth did we do wrong, you know, they probably do the whole, you know, we’ve spoilt you too much - or things like that …
I: ok right - I find that quite - in a way challenging because there is always this male versus female – what males are allowed to do and what females are allowed to do
P: Yah
I: I’m not sure how you feel about that.
P: ok- In Indian society I think it’s disgusting - the amount to which guys can get away with things than as compared to us, like I belong, I’m a Maliyali which is the south Indian um – tribe, clan –
I: ok
P: group – like a group –there we go (laugh) It’s like no no it’s not a tribe - um and I live in X and it has a very big Maliyali\(^1\) community, now, I try and avoid these people as much as possible because - they are – small minded and they are honestly gossip mongers of note - but um - it’s it’s interesting like, - I had a friend, or you know, I don’t much really like him um a classmate whose Indian, whose Maliyali, and um when we were in

\(^1\) Not certain as to the spelling of this word.
school, I remember, there was a big scandal, so to say, about him – you
know, he apparently, he slept with um a black girl or something like that
and - that story was just, I mean it is true, I know it’s true, you know, - um
he’s parents found out like you know, - through rumors and stuff these –
news travels - but it’s amazing like that was just squashed down so
quickly, I mean, you know, you never hear about it, my parents, you
know, didn’t even hear about it and
I: ok
P: I mean that’s something um - and then um - for example - yah for me,
I went to Germany in in Std. 9 and um one of the rumors that was
circulating in the Indian community was that I went to Germany to visit a
German boyfriend that I have and I mean that spread like absolute wild
fire and that got back to my parents and my mother thankfully was like,
“Oh God these people are so stupid!”, you know
I: ok
P: like in that sense and I mean - yeah guys can basically get away with
murder compared to us and - not only that but I mean the little things who
we hang around with um what we do with our spare time the clothes we
wear like, when I go home - I generally, - do a whole different wardrobe. I
wear jeans and I try and wear long sleeve tops, I mean I can’t go out um in
a shirt and a sleeveless top, you know, without my mother saying “Oh
God what will people say”, you know, I don’t want like her to tell, I
definitely don’t want her to tell me, you know, you think this is bad see
what I wear on Friday nights when I’m in Grahamstown, you know, I go
out, like just, you know, just with totally a lot less clothes, I mean, so to
say
I: ok
P: yah - and I mean - guys can basically do what they want and I mean –
when - guys like, I tried to think like - oh, yah when I go and visit friends
um they live in like this little comm. - like colony, so to say and it’s
mostly Indian people there - I go driving and I drive alone - now I usually
get like strange looks, like you know, what on earth is this girl doing
driving alone to - her parents are so irresponsible wha,wha,wha, - a friend
of mine you can drive, you know, he’s what, younger than me and he
drives and you know, it’s nothing, it’s like oh, well, you know, that’s a
man for you, you know, very independent, very good, you must be proud
to have a son like that - you know, it’s absolute bullshit, you know,
(laughing) so, so I really feel strongly about that, - yah
I: yah, I find that – yah - it’s quite interesting, to see the difference, in a
way it’s almost as if our family controls our sexuality
P: yah
P: and not just our family, our community
P: yah - um - oh, definitely, I think definitely in my community – I mean
if they knew - -like I have very close Indian friends who are sexually
active
I: ok
P: then, yet again, you know, they are first generation Indian, you know,
they weren’t born in India – they were born here just like me and you
know, if they, if like community at hand like you know, gone wiff this girl
is not a virgin or that girl is not a virgin, you know, - like the family would
become like social pariahs you know, it would be terrible, you know, it’s
() not pleasant
I: Yah, it’s quite a whole pre marital sex, it’s quite still so strong despite, I
mean I was told that when I initially wanted to - to initiation this project
and um the whole idea was very interesting in that (unclear – softly)
before and a lot of the Indians on campus are sexually active and I was
quite shocked by that because I would assume most of the girls are not but
clearly I obviously been away from social scene too long (we laugh)
which is actually why it startled me that, you know, there are lots of girls
who are - and yet – what - you know, where are we getting our sexual
knowledge from and what are we basing it on
P: I know, like this going to sound really awful – but this is like – a truth –
that, you know, it sort of unsaid - that people who are Indian like um –
there is like a definite rift between Indian Indians and South African
Indians and I mean, you know, and so like - I consider myself - can I just
call myself Indian (laughing) there we go um - consider South African
Indians to be - because they’re South African because they’re like, what
5th generation, 6th generation their - almost um - impure because um they
have a lot more Western Ideology, you know, rather than Indian Ideology
I: ok so they relate more to a western culture
P: yah, there we go, and um - where as, you know, Indians, like you
know, come from India their children are mainly taught Indian ideals and
opinions and you know - They would like to think, you know, that we are
minimally, you know, affect influenced by Western thought, I mean
I: But is that true?
P: um well, my parents don’t see it like that, you know, my parents
understand that,
but you know, it’s basically, you know, it’s more, I’m more South African,
not more South African um I’m more – I’m neither so to say, um – ok for
the sake of this I’m more South African than I am Indian, in my, in my,
world view um
I: Ok
P: - but like my morals have been in – that have been entrenched into me
are more Indian than South African, so to say
I: ok
P: and um yah, so like - I was talking to a friend of mine, no she is like
really hectic Indian, I mean she is scary, (laughing) on the side of being
scary Indian um and she was, she said, that you know, it was not
particularly um surprising that South African Indians are more sexually
active or you know, sleep around - was the term she used, um you know,
than we do, meaning her and I, I was like “My, God this is scary”, yah and
I mean, - I can’t, I don’t know like - where she gets that from, I mean, I
can see somewhere how she, how people like that think - but I mean it’s
never been an issue for me, so uh I don’t know um but yah, there’s
definite rift between South African Indian and people from 1st generation
or come from India.

I: I was thinking that must arouse a lot of guilt in the sense that, I’m trying
to imagine if I were 1st generation Indian and I had a friend who obviously
had similar standards or values instilled – for something like that to be
said – I would feel incredibly guilty – If I – sort of – I suppose – partook in
sexual practices – may just not other than penetration – but I can imagine –
there must be that sort of – like how much do I say to my friends or not
because there’s this – what’s allowed and what’s not allowed

P: hm yeah - well, this is a person who I know, from home and other than
like you know, saying hello to each other every now and
again and having like having coffee together, and talking about whatever,
um we don’t travel the same social circles and yes, you right, I mean um –
I don’t think I felt guilt like at when she said that to me, I was just like
cooohh ok - make sure, make a point, you know, point out like not to tell
her my little like history type of thing, you know, all I could have think
about was God, what on earth would she think of me? - like you know,
like if I had to tell her, if she knew like, you know, sort of things that I’ve
done or you know, or sort of things I know that have been done and things
like that - and um yah it’s definitely not guilt, it’s just like ok

I: You become more conscience though

P: yah - yes I do and I found myself being a lot more careful about what I
say and around her but I mean, you know, she’s …

I: Probably not just around her but around other people as well

P: um I think

I: say beyond just friends of course

P: yah, beyond friends, yah obviously, you know, you don’t exactly go
say, you know, - the odd things like, you know, how many men –

I: yah

P: and things like that um - but yah

I: That’s another thing, talking about how many men (laughing)

P: yah

I: I find this a lot – k may be not a lot - But certainly it’s been instilled in
me as a person of Indian descent

P: yah

I: and I come from a small community as well

P: yah

I: and I think other people as well, it’s like, you should never disclosed
how many men you’ve been with to another man, especially your husband

P: (laughing)

I: and I find that sort of like in this day and age can they be serious –
because surely men today know that Indian girls go out, whether it’s like
undercover

P: yah

I: or they know that you’ve been out, they know that you’re probably
engaged in a few things and how can they expect you then to like not say
that I’ve been out with maybe 5 people and, you know – I find that
incredibly strange

P: Yah, um trying to think um - the chances of – ok - my parents
unfortunately, you know, did give me like a few guidelines, I mean, you
know, perhaps like, you know, people I should marry like later on, like
you know, even though they not giving me an arranged marriage um they
did give like a few, like please don’t let him be black, I was like “Oh, God
parents” - yeah, they have this big thing um or you know - don’t let him be
Muslim because, you know my parents quite worried about Shariah law
and things like that

I: ok

P: so basically then you know, marry someone, who is preferably, you
know, Christian, you know, if not Hindu, you know, ‘cause yah my
parents come from a community that where Hindu and Christian –

I: ok

P: were very close - now this is what like they told me when I was say in
Std. 8, 7 when, you know, things like that sort of coming to mind, now
they know and I know the chances of me marrying someone who is really
an Indian, like you know, from India are very slim - you know it’s, -
women who have been educated overseas and who have Western – who
are influenced so largely by Western culture and stuff, you know, it’s very
unlikely that they going to get along very well with Indian men, who’ve
been, you know, indoctrinated with Indian culture, and you know, it’s it’s
gonna be a conflict of note

I: ok

P: So like my parents know or I know that I’m going to probably marry
someone who has been educated overseas - just for my own, like the
comfort factor, you know, it’s going to be uncomfortable dating someone
who, you know, has never seen me smoke or has never seen a woman
smoke and things like that

I: ok

P: Now from that point of view like - I would expect someone who, a man
who’s been educated - overseas and things like that, - he would - I mean I
probably want to tell like you know, - ok (laughing) considering I haven’t
actually had sex like, really know how I feel about that um

I: Even the just the fact of being with other men

P: yah

I: where um

P: I mean, yah

I: it’s equally I think

P: uncomfortable

I: challenging I suppose

P: I think it would probably um - rely on how serious the relationship was,
like - I don’t think I would want to tell my husband you know I fell in love
with this person and I was willing to marry them but they broke up with
me and so (laughing) and then I met you

I: ok

P: but um yah, sorry I totally derailed from the topic (laughing)
I: No, that’s fine - There isn’t much else to ask unless you can remember any, any other sort of occasions or any other things perhaps - may be not just occasions - that have contributed to sexual knowledge (laughing)

P: sexual knowledge (different voice/ commentator type voice used) (long pause) - um - Sorry, I really – when I start thinking of things - it really gets interesting um a very good friend of mine, one of my best friends um we are practically like you know- same upbringing, same um you know, um income bracket um – um we were in X we had, we used to have a cinema house, you know, closed down- X, wha,wha,wha, and one of the movies that they played was the Kama Sutra, now um - we have like, at that stage we both wanted to be journalists and things like that and we, you know, one of the things we had discussed was how India has sort of like, um is experiencing a retrograde um movement, how like – centuries ago they came up with the Kama Sutra and like at the moment they censoring everything.

I: ok

P: you know, it’s definitely you know, regressed – um society has regressed um and so we decided ok we are going to go and watch this movie because you know, we just wanted to see what’s it like or what’s it about, you know, we know what’s it about but we want to see how like an Indian woman, um an Indian director would have done it and how they would have done it and you know, it’ so when we went to watch, we found it was really interesting that - you know - they used um people educated in England and things like that and um - um the movie house was basically empty, I mean, it was just us and then God forbid a couple – an old middle aged Indian couple walked in and it was someone we knew and we were like “Oh, my God this is disgusting”, this is terrible rather not know this about them, because yeah, you know, you don’t look at people who are older than you like Indian middle aged couples and you don’t really want to think of them as being sexually active

I: (laughing)

P: I do not now, how they got, you know, wind pollination please and things like that, so - yah that was just, that was just an interesting little I: I find it quite interesting ’cause it’s come quite a bit – about movies and how, especially East versus West um and how like you’re saying sort of in Indian movies they probably might show a kiss I’m not sure – I haven’t watched many at all

(tape stopped)

I: ‘cause we have this, especially if you’ve grown up a lot with Indian movies, there’s this fantasy element

P: yah

I: women change clothes and run through the roses

P: (laughing)

I: among the trees and and that’s my assumptions coming through again

P: For all my like, you know, my open mindedness that I keep like harping on about there was, it was really um interesting because I watched Mohabat Tein - which is, I don’t know if you know
I: I’ve heard of it but I haven’t watched it

P: it’s it’s one of the many big blockbuster movies that came out, I don’t usually watch Hindi movies, like one, I don’t understand the language – I need an interpreter or any subtitle and you know unless it’s Sharuk Khan forget it, you know,

I: (laughing)

P: this had Sharuk Khan and it had my other Actor – you know – um Amitabh Bachchan – so I was like ok I will go and watch this movie – and everyone – it’s a three hour long hour movie and it’s supposed to be really good – wha wha wha – and I watched it – now no one – like warned me that there was a kissing scene in this – ok

I: ok

P: but – it was like a full on kiss – like – there was tongue and everything – I was like “Oh my God”

I: ok

P: (unclear) if it had been a white – a movie with white people in it – or like a wes – an English movie – I would have been like – oh ok – well you know – moving on – sort of thing

I: ye

P: that’s sweet – but it was Indian people doing it – and I was like “Oh my God – what the hell – how did this get past the censors?” you know

I: yes

P: I was shocked – and I mean – you know – and yah – it’s almost – as if like – um even with my – like my um – western knowledge of of life and stuff like that

I: hmm

P: I can’t escape the – the – restrictions that Indian society has put on like you know - things like – movies –and like you know – things – how you see things – yah

I: ok

P: so I was like – “Dear God, what’s happening?” (shrill voice) (Laugh)

I: (Laugh)

P: I feel so old – (laugh) this has never happened before – so yeah

I: I mean I wasn’t aware of it – until – I think somebody else mentioned it to me – and I thought “Really, I didn’t know that” – cos – I was – as far as I was concerned – you might see like a hug –

P: hmm

I: or I dunno

P: or or two faces coming together and there’s like a rose in the middle

I: (Laugh)

P: or rolling on the - I dunno – on the lawn somewhere – kind of thing – um – so I had no idea – that this sort of (unclear)

I: yah

P: yah

I: ok – is there anything else you’d like to add or - can you think of anything (laugh)?

P: no I don’t think so (laugh) – exhausted my mind – yah

I: yah no – thanks a lot – I really appreciated this
P: k cool
I: um I was wondering I haven’t taken up too much of your time – it’s you
only free afternoon - if you do think of anything else – please email or
P: yeah sure
I: let me know
P: oh sorry – please can I just tell you one thing –
I: ok
P: I firmly believe that parents should have the sex talk – like – I think
Indian parents should definitely have the sex talk with their children
I: ok
P: because I mean – um – it just – it – like the way they believe that if
they talk about – the children are going to go and um try it out – the
reverse is true - you know
I: ok
P: if they don’t know about it – they mig- you know – the parents have
never spoken to them about it – what is it – let me go try it out – I mean –
I: (laugh)
P: um – I heard about – some boy at home- who was caught – you know-
peeving at some woman changing – I was like “oh my God – that’s
disgusting” – right
I: ok
P: but then like – you know - if you think about it like – what are the
chances that his parents have had the se –he’s what – 15, 14 – something –
grosse age like that –
I: hmm
P: “it’s ok looking at woman –but you know – wha wha wha …”
I: ok
P: slim – slim to none – you know - they probably haven’t spoken to him
– I mean you know – and that’s probably why – I mean that’s what I see –
I: ok
P: slim – slim to none – you know - they probably haven’t spoken to him
– I mean you know – and that’s probably why – I mean that’s what I see –
I: ok
P: and yeah – it’s just – if you look at the relationships – Indian children
have with their parents – like we were just doing self disclosure for Psych
– for our practical and for our report
I: hmm
P: and I mean like – I realized – that I don’t self disclose to my parents as
much as I self disclose to my sister or to my really close friends
I: ok
P: and it should be – the other way round – like – I think my parents and I
would have a much more rich relationship – of I could tell them – like you
know – what’s going through my mind – if I could tell them my fears –
I: hmm
P: and I mean – it’s starts with little things – like your parents being
comfortable enough and secure enough and confident enough about
themselves to impart like knowledge like that to their children
I: I think it’s important that you mention that – because – what I also
found quite exciting was sort of how parents relationships –
P: yah
I: act as a model for your own relationships- in a way – and whether they
disclose or how comfortable they are talking – with each other
P: yah
I: as well as talking to their children – I mean – that’s important for us
later on –
P: yah
I: so that’s my personal – um – personal sort of
P: I mean you wouldn’t be far off
I: and that’s sort of quite interesting
P: yah
I: so sort of – also their own sexuality is important for informing and their
comfort with that
P: yah
I: I know like – I was chatting to somebody – and they were saying how
Indians never like show affection in public - // um
P: I have never seen my parents hug – I’ve never see them kiss – I’ve
never seen them hold hands – and you know - and that’s why I maintain –
you know Maria and I – are probably you know conceived through wind
pollination – you know – God
I: (laugh)
P: you know – honestly –yah –I mean that’s true – it’s very seldom
I: very seldom you do
P: they don’t even exchange that look that couples are supposed to
exchange every now again when they’re letting each know that they’re
thinking of them – you know that love each other – I mean – yeah – and
me – I mean – if anything I would like to model my relationship with you
know- with my significant other – I don’t want it to be anything like my
parents relationship
I: (we laugh)
P: because you know – I believe – you know –you should – there’s
nothing wrong with showing affection and you know –like – um – like I
think Maria –my sister – Maria and I have like minute problems with
intimacy because my parents have never been intimate – like you know in
front of us – and you know – things like that –
I: yeah
P: like – I mean – I would f – I have found that I – I have to be very very –
you know very comfortable with a person for me to – you know – be
intimate – tell them interes- - like intimate details about my life
I: // yeah – or even friendships – and even just – I know like male friends
– it made it equally difficult that I went to a Convent school – all girls
P: oh god (soft)
I: that my parents also – you never expressed affection –
P: yah
I: you never showed affection unless there was a reason for it
P: yah
I: um like an anniversary or a birthday
P: yah
I: so it meant I found it very difficult accepting a hug from somebody
from a male – obviously grown more comfortable
P: yah
I: now – but that there’s that whole sort of modeling going on
P: yah
I: and you wonder now – if you don’t – you had the privilege of coming to
university – being educated and – and intelligent enough to think for
yourself – sort of – what about those people who probably don’t have
P: yah
I: you know- are not fortunate enough –
P: yah
I: how do they sort of come to terms with – with that sort of side of
themselves – not being able to express intimate things
P: yah
I: or just
P: things like that – that was me feeling really strongly – (Laugh)
I: (laugh) – I was actually going to ask that – but you mentioned it already
P: ok
I: Thank you – and for your time and for your knowledge
P: cool cool –

Participant remembered something and contacted interviewer with this to
add: Indian culture dictates only heterosexual knowledge – taboo on
homosexuality
Appendix J: Interview 7

1. I: just check everything is on
2. P: do I just talk?
3. I: yep you can just talk -may be you can just start by telling me about
4. yourself? – a little about yourself
5. P: like where I’m from
6. I: yep like where you’re from
7. P: uh do you want my name?
8. I: yep - it won’t be used - your name won’t be used
9. P: Uh I’m from X – I’m of Indian- descent –I’m 24 –um (laughs)
10. I: sorry - ok you’re uncomfortable with this on?
11. P: no just that….laughs
12. I: ok tell me – tell me what does it mean to be sexually informed- to you –
13. your own personal understanding?
14. P: um I think it is to know – to know – about sex – about a man and a woman
15. – alright - the thing to know that it is, it’s sacred and also that it can be
16. dangerous at the same time- so I think being sexually informed is to know that
17. – um – in a way – it can be um – I suppose it’s to know - (laughs)
18. I: ok
19. P: I think its just to know about a man and woman and that it’s not only for
20. procreation but it’s also for pleasure and all this – but there’s limits to it – I
21. suppose
22. I: ok
23. P: yah that’s my idea
24. I: ok
25. P: um – do you want to stop that?
26. I: no
27. P: oh um (.) shouldn’t you ask me questions specifically?
28. I: (laughs) if you’re uncomfortable just that’s fine – and If I’m taking notes
29. I’m not like psychoanalyzing you I’m just making pointers for myself to
30. remember
31. P: that’s fine –um
32. I: I see – I’m just thinking – your sort of understanding seems to be like a
33. physical act that you are referring to?
34. P: yah – cos that’s how I understand it – cos – when I think about sex – I think
35. about two people being together – a male and female – not the other way
36. around - hope you understand – (laughs)
37. I: ok (laugh)
38. P: yah I just think that– you know - I just think that knowing about it – two
39. people being together is scared – what it does – affects your health –you
40. should know about it – you could get diseases or whatever you could be in the
41. position of having a baby when you don’t want one – does any of this help?
42. I: yes this helps - is there anything else you want to add
43. P: I suppose in the case of a female –being sexually informed - you know
44. about your cycles – um birth control or whatever –
45. I: Ok
46. P: I suppose – I’m not a female so– yah - I suppose - but I think even guys
47. should know about such things
48. **I:** ok – and where does that understanding come from?
49. **P:** um – basically from friends – from experience –um – when I was growing
up – I always had like –like when I was about twelve – I remember I always
had like older boys - who were like 5 years older than me - who’d be like 17 –
who’d been with girl and she was pregnant– had they known about it – they
might have not been in that position – and so – um … the second question?
50. **I:** ye –there’s no particular order
51. **P:** oh ok
52. **I:** –it’s really informal – you can ask anything if you like as well
53. **P:** ok
54. **I:** ok – uh - I’m gonna keep checking on this –
55. **P:** it’s still working
56. **I:** still working
57. **P:** oh ok
58. **I:** and you ask what that? – and then they’ld tell or whatever
59. **I:** hmm
60. **P:**: guys and girls can be together and you’d be like what do you mean? And
then they’d say it’s a sexual act –ok – yah and …it was actually very close
friends who actually told me – like neighbours kind of things
61. **I:** ok
62. **P:** family friends – never got it from a family member – never ever got
anything from my family – it was always friends…
63. **I:** can you remember like what sort of situation?
64. **P:**: uh yah – I think one of the older girls - stripped naked for me – when I
was a little kid
65. **I:** ok
66. **P:** very young –um – didn’t know really what to do (laugh)
67. **I:**: ok (laugh) how old was she? Um
68. **P:**: um – she might have been I think three years older
69. **I:**: ok
70. **P:** yah – I think her I remember her name – I think her name was Shireen–
she’s a cousin’s cousin’s cousin…she lived next to us
71. **I:**: ok
72. **P:**: um yah they were troublemakers
73. **I:**: they were
74. **P:** they were like troublemakers –kids who were always getting into trouble
with their mum and dad
75. **I:**: ok – that was your first recollection
76. **P:** yah – and then I think – I think I was eight-ish odd – I remember something
else – I was hanging out with these other kids –they also – they basically – I
think – at that time – cos we’d known about it – you know all kids find out
about it at that age I suppose –and … we’d speak about being with another
with a girl or whatever
77. **I:**: ok
78. **P:**: yah strange –I was eight and I wanted to be with a girl
98. (We laugh)
99. P: um uh um I think I even got into trouble for that once – I said something –
and someone heard it and so my mum heard about it and tchhh (makes
a spanking noise)
100. I: really
101. P: yah – the thing is – it’s like taboo- the way we were raised is – you
don’t mention about such things
102. I: ok
103. P: parents never ever spoke about such things in front of you – that’s
why I’m saying – you always found out from a friend or from one of
the older kids
104. I: you think it’s just taboo like in your upbringing or do you think it’s
taboo in any child’s upbringing?
105. P: well I can’t really say – I think it’s mostly in most kid- children’s
upbringing_ I think may be parents are just uncomfortable speaking to
their kids – I dunno - I dunno why my parents didn’t tell me about it –
106. I: I don’t even know how I would have felt if they did tell me about it
107. P: ok – I mean taboo
108. P: (unclear)
109. I: I mean taboo is quite a strong word?
110. P: the things is they never spoke about it at all so
111. I: ok
112. P: yah - I mean if you did speak about it – you know - you’d have to
explain your self and hope you don’t get whacked
113. I: ok (we laugh)
114. P: um – yah –cos it was always for the older people – that’s how it is
115. I: ok
116. P: um it’s just to protect you from yourself when you’re young – I
think –in my opinion – it was to – you know - you were not allowed to
speak about it
117. I: Ok
118. P: you just took it for granted – cos no one spoke about it – you just
didn’t say it
119. I: I like the way – you said “protect yourself from you”? 
120. P: yah I suppose – if they told you from a younger age – this is what
happens – you’ll feel pleasure – you might just try it out when you’re
young – you know – or when you’re much younger –I suppose than
when you much older – when you can handle yourself in that situation
and you’re more responsible for your actions
121. I: ok
122. P: uh – possibly
123. I: there is this sort of idea- especially – may be amongst Indian parents
that if you tell your children about sex that may be they’ll experiment?
124. P: uh – yah – I think so – the thing is - like I don’t think it’s just Indian
people –I dunno
125. I: ok
126. P: I think may be when you’re kid you’re just curious about everything
so you could actually try – hell knows I tried it when I was young
127. I: ok
128. P: I think I think – every kid – it wasn’t sex or whatever – you ended
up seeing someone older and they were naked or whatever -or you tried kissing

I: so sort of experiences that contributed to your

P: to your

I: to your becoming sexually informed

P: exactly – yah – you knew – obviously – when you’re young – you can’t really have a sexual act – because if you’re a male – it doesn’t work (little laugh)

I: ok

P: I suppose- because like my understanding is like – like only after a guy is twelve/thirteen – he has to become sexually active I suppose – he can actually have sex at that age

I: uhuh

P: but before that – you wouldn’t – you’d know about it – but to actually do it – it would be a different you wouldn’t be able to

I: alright… (.).You were telling me about when you were eight and then

P: yah um – I think after – form – when I was ten I pretty much knew all there was – a woman’s cycle – about a male – ejaculation I suppose (whisper’s I’m using bad words here -laughs)

I: no that’s fine

P: uh yah – yah – what else do you want to know?

I: I dunno – you tell me what you… so at ten you knew – women’s cycle, ejaculation

P: I pretty much knew – that whole – that you know you can have a baby – like through – it pretty much confirmed - like people older than me –or people older than me actually had sex

I: so how did you discover this?

P: um um – when I was just younger than ten – I got a half-brother –

I: ok

P: who’s about four years older than me – and he – he was hanging out with those kids I told you about when I was

I: Ok

P: I think they were from the same family kind of thingy –his mother is – anyway it doesn’t matter - he told me that um women have a cycle

I: ok

P: and that’s what makes them special from from–that separates them from guys in a way

I: Ok

P: and uh gives them the opportunity to bear children – I didn’t understand then – obviously

I: ok

P: I understood when I was a little older – I did know then that woman do go through a cycle

I: Ok

P: and obviously when - some girls would actually freak out when it happens to them – like if they didn’t tell them about it - like if they weren’t told about it

I: ok

P: I suppose – like I said it was mostly from friends or older people
I: ok

P: or you – I think – also like you’d walk into a conversation where older kids were talking – they’d talk about it – or they had a girlfriend – and you’d over hear something

I: ok – and school?

P: school – oh – were we taught about it?

I: yah – were you taught or were there experiences, conversations that contributed to…?

P: not in my primary school - I don’t think - not when I was in primary school – in secondary school – yah – but we older now – we were like thirteen odd - I suppose

I: ok

P: yah – thirteen – that was mostly from the older kids – in my class – there weren’t any guys with girlfriends or whatever – you’d always see – older – two three forms higher than me

I: ok

P: girls and guys. It wasn’t like a new thing

I: hmm

P: now it seeing it for real – you’d see girls and guys sort of kissing

I: ok

P: but I suppose you were always younger – you were afraid to do it – or there wasn’t anyone interested in you because you too young

I: ok

P: um – we learnt a lot through games as well – like most of the older girls and guys would play kiss-catch or whatever

I: ok what’s that?

P: it’s like hide n’ seek and whoever you’d find you’d kiss – most – people used to play with people that they liked – so it would be like an excuse

I: oh ok

P: to kiss your girlfriend or whatever- something like that

I: ok

P: in a more – in a more – less – how can I say - in a more discreet way – not discreet – instead of more blatantly “that’s my girlfriend” – cos you hiding I suppose

I: ok – what happens if you find the wrong person?

P: I suppose you just – you just – don’t do anything (laughs)

I: (laugh)

P: uh sorry – yah um

I: ok - so like you learnt – you said you learnt a lot from…

P: yah - it was basically from just friends – not - it wasn’t from family or whatever – cos we were not allowed to talk about it

I: ok

P: we were never really told don’t speak about it – cos nobody else ever did

I: hmm

P: so you’d yah – cos if you – I said something – when I was about eight – can’t remember what – I suppose in effect that I wanted to be I wanted to kiss someone or whatever – my sister told my mum and I got a big freakin’ lecture and I got spanked (laugh) – uh yah – so then it
was – so even then when I spoke I just figured there was nobody
around then that’s why I said it
I: ok
P: - but If I knew I wasn’t gonna say it
I: hmmm
P: you just took it for granted that you don’t speak about it
I: ok - and now is it still like that or?
P: um – you asking me if I’d be comfortable speaking about sex?
I: your parents – is it allowed to speak about it?
P: I suppose I wouldn’t - I wouldn’t specifically speak –like
specifically speak about - sex or - I suppose would mention about
being with someone – or whatever –
I: ok
P: then now – cos I suppose they know now I’m an adult – jeez I’m 24
– so they not gonna say – ‘oh you being like this’ – but I’d still feel
uncomfortable talking about it – at the end of the day – especially with
before my dad passed away – I, I we were sitting at his work place
and we were talking with one of my friends – he’s a much older friend
– he’s about - like eight years older than me and he used to work for
my dad – we were talking about - he was talking about one of his
experiences with one his friends – with a girl – whatever and he was
explaining a sexual act and my dad was there –I thought I’d be
embarrassed but my dad was laughing so I felt comfortable so
I: ok
P: yah – I suppose and then – I think at that time –when I came to
varsity – my dad started treated me like an adult –so it wasn’t like I felt
I: ok
P: so I suppose he expected that now being at varsity – being away
from home – I can do whatever I want because – I suppose – parents I
suppose are always lenient on a guy –
I: hmmm
P: that’s from where I come from –um – so I, he was like okay – I
was just listening in but the fact that I stood there and listened to a guy
explaining about his sexual act with someone else while my father was
there – I was comfortable but I don’t think I would be as comfortable
speaking about such things with my mum – why I really I don’t know
(I: (laugh) it-s just – mom’s are sacred
I: asexual
P: yah – it’s your mum – jeez
I: ok -um and any other recollections?
P: I suppose I can tell you about the time – my dad acted – the only
time I actually got sexual education from my parents – we were sitting
at the dining table – my dad – I think my parents were talking about a
couple – I don’t remember what – at the time I was like 13/14 or 15 –
you know - um – and something had happened to this couple or
whatever and my dad just turned around and said “look, um Imran
don’t ever touch a woman until you’re sure”
I: ok
P: and I was like ‘ok’ –but that’s the first time ever – like for my
parents- being told anything about sex – or being being – or even being
spoken to about anything to do with sex

I: ok

P: the act or anything associated with it

I: do you remember how old you were then?

P: I think I was thirteen or fourteen

I: ok

P: would’ve have helped much because I always knew that - at that
time – that you if if – I suppose if you had sex without protection
people would get sick- I didn’t really know what it was – what diseases
they were –but you’d know that – or else the fear of getting someone
else pregnant – yah

I: I’m interested in that – because you mentioned it before as well –
that you can get diseases …

P: yah

I: where did that come from?

P: um I suppose –late eighties – people were like – people were just
talking about AIDS and stuff

I: ok

P: – and obviously like um - syphilis and what not –it was – even
amongst older kids –they’d tell you if you had sex with just everybody
you would end up with some really harsh diseases –like lumps on your
body or whatever and I suppose because they told you then it just put
the fear in you

I: ok

P: I dunno – I suppose I’d tell that to a younger – someone I spoke
about it to in a younger – that you’d get bad diseases

I: ok

P: um yah that’s how that’s how it was programmed in our minds –
that if you didn’t watch out you’d end up with some freaked out
diseases

I: who or what?

P: um … again – it’s from the older – I don’t really, I can’t really
recollect being told that – but somehow I just know that when I was
younger I knew if you if you, weren’t careful with sex you’d end up

I: hmm

P: you could – there’s a possibility you’d get diseases and yah

I: ok

P: in a way because – the diseases weren’t like Oh I got a headache
and no one would know about it

I: hmm

P: but people would somehow know –because you’ve got sores on you
and people would know

I: hmm

P: it was sexually related diseases – so in a way it didn’t want to be
known - that you – you know that you’d been doing it or you out
yourself in that position where you weren’t careful or whatever

I: ok

P: yah – so I suppose that’s one of the reason for protecting yourself-
you just - you knew about it and you knew the consequences –it just -
I suppose when you were younger you didn’t fully understand it you
just knew about and you didn’t try it and you sort of knew what the consequences were – but not fully
I: hm
P: and now when you’re older – you know- you know you can handle yourself – I suppose
I: ok
P: yeah
I: I just – I dunno – I’m curious – I keep thinking – and even in other interviews – where I haven’t said anything AIDS but it’s come up – it’s almost like it’s inherent to talking about sex – um
P: yah
I: sexual knowledge – it’s like there – you can’t talk about sex without talking about AIDS
P: I think because um – it’s – like since the whole talk about AIDS right – I first heard about AIDS in the late eighties – very late eighties – um and there was this whole rumour that Sylvester Stallone was HIV positive and he was a carrier
I: ok
P: and because I was into movies and somehow I heard people were saying – he’s got HIV – like what’s that – it’s an STD - you know – you can actually die from
I: ok
P: and as it became more chronic amongst African countries – everyone would talk about it and you’d hear people had died of this and people had died of that and it was always associated with sex – it wasn’t about a transfusion or someone cut themselves on a blade and then they got it – It was always through sex
I: ok
P: that’s how most people see HIV – it’s always transmitted through sex and not through anything else- even though it is
I: ok
P: that’s how I remember it - that’s the first time I ever heard about HIV or talk about it (unclear)
I: (laugh) and relationships – do you think they’ve contributed?
P: um I suppose
I: I mean very generally in terms of experience
P: yah the thing is when I got into my first relationship I sort of I knew what what the consequences of being with a woman were –I knew what sex was –I pretty knew everything there was to know about sex – the act – its consequences and it’s pleasures -I knew– even though I didn’t try it out –I knew so I can’t really say – I suppose – physically may be yah I sort of experienced it yah – but otherwise it didn’t actually add to my knowledge as in anything spectacular that I didn’t know about
I: ok - I’m just thinking about your parents – whether they affected you in terms of their relationship –were they a model for you or – their relationship behaviour
P: um –
I: how did it affect you?
P: well my parents were – how can I say – I saw when I was eight
once my parents fight but other than that I don’t remember anything – I
think – everything – was always nice – I mean like my mum is a
housewife and my dad was always working so he’d come in and
everything was okay - you mean – how did they contribute to my
knowledge of sex?

I: yah – in the sense I know and other people have mentioned it –
parents – and maybe specifically Indian parents they don’t really show
affection and that does impact on you especially when you go into
relationships…
P: jeez – you’re right! I never actually seen never – I never actually
saw my parents be affectionate – hold or like whatever – or even like
hug or whatever – never

I: I’m told this is different to sort of western relationships where even
around campus you won’t see many sort of the Indian people who are
going out they won’t express affection -in public

P: yah – yah – you’re right – um – once I saw my – when I was older –
this is before my dad passed away – the strangest thing –I suppose he
got comfortable – because all of us were much older in the house now
– even my younger sisters – so he went into the house and asked my
mum for a kiss- on the cheek – but even my mum my mum wouldn’t
kiss him on the cheek

I: ok

P: –the strangest thing – I mean they’ve been married for like forty
odd years

I: ok

P: but that – yah you’re right I’ve never actually seen my parents be
affectionate with each other

I: I suppose – I’m thinking about things in a different way – I’m not
only talking about sex as just a physical act but more than that

P: yah

I: the meanings and everything we associate with it – relationships

P: I suppose I did actually go with a more crude like man and woman
- but I see what you’re getting at – sexual act – can be seen as just
holding hands – if they’re a couple and they do – do it – if they’re
intimate with each other in bed then there’s no reason why they can’t
hold hands which is a much subtle way of showing affection I suppose
– yeah but you’re right – even I feel uncomfortable sometimes kissing
my girlfriend bye in front of everyone at Jac. Labs

I: yeah

P: – it’s just one of those things – you do it – there’s always that – split
second – should I do this?

I: I’m not sure whether that differs to like sort of other cultural groups
or whether its specific to…?

P: it could be – because – um – recently I - one of my friends just
started seeing a girl and they came to visit me the other day and they
were like holding hands and kissing on the cheek and whatever and
they would say hello and hold hands in my house – I was just thinking
– they are white – so it’s fine… - because we just take it that white
people are more liberal than all the other cultures – as in more than I
am – yah – cos I don’t – ok I’ll hold hands with my girlfriend –
probably kiss her on the cheek – but the way they were carrying on –
not that I mind - but now that you mention – I actually noticed that
I: ok
P: yah (laugh)
I: I’m interested – because we tend to locate sexual knowledge or
sexuality within the physical act or experiences, but does it encapsulate
more than that? – does it include – um how to go about relationships or
all those kinds of things? Or does sexual just mean “physical”?
P: It’s a fine line I think – it can easily be tread upon – um
I: when we talk about sexuality – your own sexuality – I suppose
you’re not only talking about your physical –
P: yah um - I see what you’re getting at – I suppose a better informed
person on like the act itself and and would probably behave better
around their partner or I dunno – um – but I see what you’re getting at
– the possibility that the way you behave around your partner – if
you’re - I suppose if you’re a nice a guy or a nice girlfriend would
would in a way I suppose be influenced by your background –on on on
sexual knowledge I suppose –um
I: ok
P: because like remember what I said about sex being secular –it’s not
just the act itself – I suppose -like you’re saying now – that it’s the
showing of affection – you know – like – I don’t even know what I’m
saying now
I: I started thinking about – I read something the other day – may be a
better term because when I think of sex ed. It reminds me of like
nowadays they have life skills class - makes me think of formal –
P: yah
I: formal sex education – sexual knowledge – but sexual socialization
is a more encapsulating term of everything
P: of everything – yes- like how people carry on around each other in
public or – is that what you’re trying to say?
I: yah
P: like yah – holding hands – kissing in public kind of thingy
I: just how to communicate in a relationship – that can affect the
physical act as well – all those kind of things
P: yah – I think so –um – but the thing is I suppose how you behave
with someone could affect the act – but I dunno how the act will
actually affect your communication with someone
I: yah – because you generally assume – because like when you talk
about sexual dysfunctions- um - like especially with woman – there’s
this assumption that there’s something wrong psychologically
P: with women
I: in the relationship – that you’re not communicating and this is may
be sort of a layperson way of talking about it
P: okay
I: but um – you’re not communication in the relationship –
something’s wrong and that’s why you can’t sort of be sexually
attracted – or you’re not – what’s the word – you just don’t have a sex
drive anymore –there’s the assumption …
P: that if you don’t talk about it or you not to open about it
I: there’s problems on the relationship – you’re not going to have a
high sex drive or you’re not going to be able to perform sexually – I
dunno if you see what I am trying to say –
P: ok
I: there’s this assumption that communication or relationship stuff
affects …
P: yah I think so – um the thing is like – if you communicate well with
a partner or with someone that potentially you can have sex with um –
then I suppose you’ll be more comfortable – I think it will boil down to
a level of being comfortable – cos then um – if you’re not comfortable
even with someone you know for I dunno awhile – you could actually
not perform – I suppose – if you really nervous – or – you not like –
cos like you saying it’s not just -it’s not just sex- you – you –affection
– you speak to each other and stuff like that
I: hmm
P: I mean if you don’t speak about it – how else I you supposed tell
what you like or what she doesn’t like or whatever –in that human sort
of way – I suppose if you didn’t know then you wouldn’t know how to
react to what they said or or what they wanted
I: yah yah – I’m just drawing the assumption the way people talk about
things – and may be not just only talk about it – your togetherness in a
physical way but also other things –just the whole - communication
about everything in a relationship
P: yah exactly – I think it’s all gonna boil down to the level of – I
suppose in my opinion of how comfortable you are – because if you
can talk such things you can talk about pretty much anything –you can
talk about pretty much everything else there is to talk about –there’s no
reason why you shouldn’t talk about it
I: hmm
P: the sexual act itself – but that probably would actually affect like
the physical act – I suppose but then that – that will be saying that as
Indian –our culture doesn’t really talk much about then they not good
in bed (laugh)
I: (laugh) – I think may be we just misunderstand each other – no no –
you’re saying talking about the sexual act – I mean just talking about
things in general in a relationship –
P: ok
I: whether communication about everything is good in a relationship –
not just sex
P: ok ok
I: then - cos I’m saying the assumption is – that if communication in a
relationship isn’t good- if the husband and wife are fighting
P: in general – communication
I: yep – in general – communication – then um – that affects the
physical act – the way it’s talked about – there’s the assumption that
women then suddenly have sexual dysfunction and they no longer like
feel any attraction for their husband cos –cos there’s problems in the
relationship
P: yah – but that’s probably true – cos women – you see it’s different
for a guy – a guy’s would – no strings attached – go in and just – you
know – sexual act and they’d be all clear minded about it – but women
– need more communication – a woman needs to feel like they’re
wanted, they’re loved and – before they actually commit to sex - so I
suppose if they didn’t- if they didn’t um feel comfortable and speak –
if they didn’t get that amount – that amount of talking to that they
needed- and the sort of affection

I: ok

P: and all the words – basically all – the wholesome – of a good person
– they get spoken to, they get shown affection and everything – they
wouldn’t feel right – they wouldn’t feel like they’re important enough
or whatever

I: ok

P: that’s probably true

I: ok ok (laughs) sorry

P: yah cos I get that ‘do you think I’m pretty?’ – I’m thinking Jesus,
why do you think I’m engaged to? Or like not that it matters- I mean if
you’re with a person – you’re with a person – I mean you chose them

I: yes

P: and somehow you always get that ‘do you think I’m pretty?’ – yah –
does it really matter now? Cos I chose you so it doesn’t really matter
what you look like –I chose you – out of everybody else I chose you –
but somehow there’s always that bit of insecurity with a woman – it’s
the strangest thing

I: but I’m just drawing on assumption – I never really thought about it
before now

P: yah

I: but I’m thinking – the way think about sexual dysfunction in a
woman – is always that there’s a psychological problem – that there’s
– the husband and wife are not getting on and therefore they can’t um –
you know they’re just not interested in each other – or the woman is
not interested in the husband and so on

P: yah but

I: that’s why I think I’m just wondering (unclear) relationship

P: I think you’re right – but for the woman part – it has to be – because
women are somehow just – now I’m generalizing

I: (laugh)

P: but most women are just – they want – they don’t just want the
sexual act – they want to be loved- they want to be held – they want to
be spoken to –

I: ok

P: they want half an hour of just talking – things that don’t make sense
– but they just want to be spoken to

I: male sexuality and female sexuality are different?

P: yah

I: then there needs to be different way of – of educating each other in a
way or something like that – I would think

P: well the basics would have to be the same though – don’t you think?

I: yes the basics would have to be the same –

P: the nitty gritty would have to be the same – um – but – if you’re
gonna talk about a good relationship – cos like – you can talk about
people- you can teach them helping yourself in the situation – when it
comes to the nitty gritty – but you won’t – you really won’t be able to
tell them how to behave or how to be a nice guy or how to be a nice
girlfriend or whatever

I: hmmm

P: cos that will – that will come from how they were brought up as
well –as in – generally

I: that’s what I was wondering – where does that come from? – does it
come from then how you were brought up?

P: Oh – yes – I see what you getting at -um I suppose yah generally
cos like usually like like as you get older –you won’t see your parents
um um – like I was told by my father never ever to raise a hand to a
woman

I: ok

P: so um – because my dad – I never ever saw my dad raise a hand on
my mum

I: hmmm

P: even if my mum was angry the once I saw them – actually when I
saw my mum angry when I was about eight – my mum threw a bottle
at my dad –it was plastic – thank God ( we laugh) – I remember it very
very very clearly – my dad he just like ducked

I: ok

P: that’s all he did –um – yah – so – when we were growing with my
older sister –my sisters would make me angry and I’d get into a fight
with my sisters, but my dad always picked on me for fighting with my
sisters – so I suppose – the way you were raised would actually affect –
how you carry on in a relationship being boy and girl I suppose

I: ok

P: yah I’d say (unclear) – it’s because of how I was raised – they beat
me into this –

I: ok yah

P: now don’t go telling anyone I was abused or anything (we laugh)

I: (laugh) – I’ll tell everyone tomorrow

P: (unclear) –no um yah I think the way you were raised would affect
how you carry on

I: I’m actually surprised I didn’t think of this earlier – it only came up
now –but

P: the thing is – when you asked me the questions I was a bit confused
– but I see what you’re getting at – like how you were raised – how
would that affect your behaviour in a relationship? I see what you’re
saying

I: or yah or does it? I mean I can’t …. 

P: I think it does – the way I carry on around females in general or my
fiancée – it does affect

I: so it does

P: it does affect

I: is there anything else you can think of?

P: mmnn

I: one thing you haven’t mentioned which has really stood out is porn
P: porn
I: yes
P: what do I think about it?
I: whether you can actually drew on those sources as an agency?
P: yah oh - I did see porn when I was a kid but it wasn’t really when I was a kid – it was actually when I was much older – the thing is like – you must remember like when I – from X – things like that were banned in the previous government – if you were caught with porn – a magazine even at the border – you pretty much gonna be jailed
I: ok
P: yah so – you hardly ever found that – I suppose- had it been more readily available – I would have probably seen it when I was much younger
I: ok
P: but I only saw porn when I was about seventeen –I was – and even then it wasn’t like anything new – because I knew what the sexual act was – I just didn’t know that people actually put it on tape – be so explicit about it
I: ok
P: yah – um – I suppose that that – told you people can be really extreme in sex instead of just being – um two people being together
I: ok
P: in porn they really get – you don’t want me to tell you (laughs) – explicit – like OK – yah
I: ok
P: but it – it can’t really say that it taught me anything – adds to my knowledge – because I already knew – friends
I: Ok
P: – that’s what happens
I: I mean did you actually seek porn or did it just happen to come your way – friends are watching or?
P: no ummm –
I: or they looking at a magazine and they say “look”
P: how can I tell you how it exactly happened – I was at my cousin’s house –my older cousin – I was with nephew whose about a year younger than I am –
I: ok
P: and somehow one of his sisters found a tape in his aunty’s cupboard – never mind (laugh)
I: (laugh)
P: but anyways - and they just tried it out and there was porn – and before we know it –”hey guys it’s a movie about sex” – I was actually with my older cousins
I: and with a female present?
P: yah with my cousin
I: ok
P: it was like a big – it was like a joke- we laughed about it
I: ok
P: “oh that guy, oh my goodness gracious, oh my goodness!” – this is what it was – it was a big joke
I: ok

P: obviously it was a bit of an embarrassment but I suppose because there was a girl there but otherwise – we laughed about it – it wasn’t like – actually went out and looked for it

I: ok

P: yah

I: that was your first and last time?

P: now I’m on varsity – it’s on the internet – you get guys sending pictures of women

I: and your relationship to that? Does it make you feel anything? Does it make you think anything about women or?

P: I dunno – I just in a way I think – porn is – it’s just – I think the worst has gotten out of hand – most guys have got porn – I do – I have seen it a few times – but it doesn’t mean that I don’t disagree with it – I just think it’s wrong – I mean – like I said – I think sex is supposed to be sacred but the way it’s being portrayed nowadays is that it’s – its fun- hey Jeex if you can have a girl go out – that that’s how the west is putting it – I mean you see it in the movies – casual sex – or I see this girl you go for it and that’s it

I: hmmm

P: I think the old –the old values of you know like – relationship – don’t just do it anyhow and -that’s gone out the window – it’s become pretty much – it’s become very casual

I: ok

P: yah – it’s become like kids talk about it now – kids know about it know that are so much younger than I was – the age that I knew about it and people know it – it’s just how things have changed

I: desensitized to

P: yeah exactly - it’s not taboo any more –like me- it’s just there-everywhere

I: ok

P: especially the internet – jesus –everywhere you click – even if you’re not looking for it – it just pops up in your eyes- it’s there- it’s everywhere

I: ok

P: I suppose because it sells

I: lucky I don’t go to the lab

P: laughs –jeez it’s there

I: you mentioned sex as sacred – quite a few times

P: yah I just I just I just think that it should- when I say sacred – I mean like it shouldn’t just be anyhow- It shouldn’t be just done with anybody – I mean – you you – it’s it’s it’s a show of a affection so you should –so I suppose if you’re gonna do it – even if it’s multiple partners let them be special multiple partners not just any body –

I: Ok

P: I suppose you know – I just think that the sexual act should be done with someone you care about or not just some stranger you meet

I: and that idea comes from?

P: I dunno (laughs) – it’s just one of those

I: (laughs) – you talk about the old values and mention all that now –
P: yeah
I: old values meaning like – all those values are like no longer
P: yah – I suppose – cos – you see it now – because every guy you
speak to – I mean jesus – It’s cool amongst guys to be with as many
women as you can – as many good looking women as you can
I: hrm
P: and I don’t think that’s how our parents wanted us to be – that’s
why I’m talking about old values
I: ok
P: um cos I was told don’t touch a woman until you’re sure –but very
very
I: hrm
P: yah I mean don’t touch until you’re a hundred percent sure – but at
the end of the day – I just took it for granted that because –it’s
monogamy – I suppose – somehow it was drilled into you without
really being explicit when you were kid – because I suppose you saw
your parents being together all the time
I: ok
P: or you never heard that your father was sleeping around or
something like that
I: ok
P: I mean I suppose may be if I somehow knew or found out that my
dad was – not monogamous – he was he was – it might have affected
me but I don’t know how
I: ok
P: it just somehow – it just didn’t – may be it’s how I’ve been
associated with everybody else that – sex should be done with
someone special
I: ok and religion – has that played any role in your life – affected your
views on sexual knowledge
P: um no – religion tells you that it’s sacred and religion pretty much
just bans it before before before marriage
I: ok
P: yah so I mean besides – when I went to Madressah – nobody
actually told me what – we weren’t told not to have sex – we were just
– those things were never spoken about at all
I: ok
P: um yeah – uh – and no I don’t think it has actually affected how I
feel about it
I: ok
P: it’s just – yah – but religion does tell you not to have sex before
marriage and I don’t think anybody listens to that
I: um – that was one of the reasons why I was actually interested in
doing this project – because I was told that on campus
P: yah
I: I suppose for Muslims – there’s this sort of no pre-marital sex
(unclear) but that’s not really - like you’re saying that it’s not actually
carried out
P: some people actually feel strongly about it
I: ok
P: um but remember you’re speaking to guy now and guys are very
terrible about it – even though I’m telling you now that I feel sex is
sacred but that doesn’t mean that um that I’ve never actually wanted to
go out there and just – you know- go wild
I: ok
P: but obviously because you know that you got limits  and but guys- I
mean obviously more liberal and they just want go out and enjoy
themselves
I: ok
P: yeah but but – you you can see – Like I’ve got female friends who
speak about it – who’ve – they’ve saved themselves
I: so like liberal and sort of women have to be more conservative about
their sexuality in a way
P: yeah I don’t think they have to be but most of them are – most of
the women that I know are usually
I: but do you think they want to be or they have to be (laugh)
P: I think some want to be you know
I: ok
P: because probably they were very – because of how they were raised
I: hmm
P: or some – may be- I can’t really for other families – because like I
know some families feel strongly about it – about relationships – I
know there are people who are not allowed to have girlfriends and
things like that
I: ok
P: yah I know – so possibly because of they were raised and how their
parents wanted – they want to save themselves for marriage
I: ok what would you do differently? In terms of educating your –
should you have children
P: should I have children
I: yeah
P: um think I’ll let them know – I mean it’s it’s –I don’t know how if I
had been more informed as a kid – specifically from my parents – how
I’d be behaving now
I: hmm
P: I just think that – given – you see – this is not because of my
upbringing – it’s gonna be – I’m gonna want my children to be more
aware of sex because of the current situation now – because of the
death rates- and you know what I’m trying to say
I: ok
P: it’s it’s and also like pregnancies and everything - um like my
sisters are – got engaged when they were very young and they got
married – basically by the time they were 19 – they were married
I: ok
P: my sister just got engaged last week Saturday – she’s 19 – I wasn’t
too happy about it – but you know she wants to do it -I suppose I
wanna inform my kids that it’s not the best – ok it’s pleasurable
whatever right
I: hmm
P: but it’s not the only thing in the world – you don’t have to go out
and seek it or whatever – if it does happen- it’s fine but I want my kids

to know – and just not to rush into things like marriage or sex

I: ok

P: I just think there’s a lot more that kids in their teens or when they’re
younger can do than think about that

I: ok

P: um yah – I suppose I just don’t want my daughter to get pregnant or
whatever – because I know – that as you – as most of the kids- this
generation – like kids of today born today –by the time they like – girls
who are about 10 or 9- they’re already on their cycles – which means if
they’re physically like that – then they obviously know about sex and
everything – and by the time they’re 13/14 they’re already doing it –
even today it’s like that

I: hmm

P: I don’t want that same thing to happen I just want them to be more –
I suppose to be more – just to refrain from it until they’re much older
and they can understand it fully – I suppose

I: ok right

P: yah but I would actually – I reckon I would I’ll speak about to my
kids – I suppose me and my wife would speak about it to them

explicitly and make it known that this is what happens – they should
know – they shouldn’t be like – I don’t think it’s right that I actually
found out from friends but then again I wouldn’t know how I would’ve
reacted if my dad said ‘sit down – we’ll talk about the birds and bees’
and I’d be like ‘huh- what’ you know

I: (laugh)

P: cos the thing is I can’t really tell how I would’ve felt – but I’m
gonna try and make it a point to teach my children

I: ok

P: yah

I: anything else to add

P: hmm no

I: think about it

P: I dunno just I suppose if I if I had been taught differently when I
was a kid I would have a little more perspective –I just – like I said
everything I – is mostly from friends – 99% of what I know is from
friends

I: ok

P: not from family

I: and this is more concerning the physical act

P: yah then like I suppose there’s some things like – like the way I
suppose like the people – the way they respon – your family – the way
they carry on around you – that sort of teaches you what’s going on –
like the whole behaviour – like how to behave – you should be a nice
person in your relationship – I think – yah – that comes my family
itself

I: have you ever sort – like actively sort to educate yourself – like may
be reading or um

P: hm no

I: or has it been what ever has come your way – or whatever – sort of
conversations
P: conversations – I suppose – like – things like – I suppose when
you're curious you ask – like I always asked – um older people – like
when I was – before I came to varsity – I was talking – I was hanging
out with a friend – and if I – this is now for the physical act – things
like I know you have to be a nice guy or whatever – but I always
wondered – if I got into the act how would I behave or what do I do?
I: hmm
P: and I asked someone older than me – a friend of mine – who'd just
been around – dog -
I: (we laugh)
P: he really is – yah and and I – if I did seek – like material – but like
from friends
I: ok
P: it's like you ask – what I do in this situation?
I: ok
P: what happens when this happens – you know what I mean – like that
I: alright – these are male friends
P: this is a male friend – yah – yah – (unclear)
I: (laugh) and there isn't this uncomfortableness with asking males
P: I dunno – it's like – cos like – males are cool like that – I dunno I'd
um - I dunno how – I don't have a very close – I got close female
friends but I don't – think you can talk about sex – or whatever – um
but – I wouldn't want to ask them things – of how to do this – I suppose
I'd be more – I'm more comfortable with guys
I: ok
P: yah - just one of those things
I: ok
P: the other day …
I: (laugh)
P: the other day I was – we went out and uh – there was this gay guys
at Pop Art
I: ok
P: and – no actually – forget about it and some guy – some time at the
beginning of the year – some guy stopped me
I: ok
P: and he asked me if I was gay
I: ok
P: and I was offended – the thing is like I was offended – but I didn't
react the way I thought I would react – I thought – the way I think of it
– if someone came and asked me if I'm gay I'd probably hit him – right
I: ok
P: I was walking home when some guy stopped me and he said he was
looking around for a gay club and then he asked me – and I told him –
no I wasn't gay and he went his way – alright
I: ok
P: but then someone else was talking about it and telling one of my
friends – I said I just don't like it – I'm not comfortable with that and
then she said 'why?' – 'I mean like you know it's it's – you know it's
it's why you're not comfortable about being gay as in male/male-
why you more comfortable about females homosexuals?’
I: hm
P: I said I don’t know – I mean women are women – I just – It’s one
thing I really can’t explain to you why guys like females together
I: hrm
P: but she ended up talking about anal sex – and she said ‘isn’t it the
same thing – guys want to have anal sex with their girlfriends?’ I’m
like- here she spoke that to me
I: yeah
P: I felt – being female – it was actually a shocker that she’d actually
speak to me in front of my girlfriend about anal sex – I was like “huh,
what?” (laugh)
I: (laugh)
P: yah
I: ok
P: I dunno just told her – I’d rather be giving it than me getting it –
that’s how I though
I: ok
P: just one of those things – but
I: someone mentioned to me the other day like how especially amongst
Indians –like sort of Indian sexual education –
P: yah
I: it doesn’t encapsulate homosexuality – at all
P: yah
I: it’s something that’s not acceptable (unclear)
P: I suppose I can talk about gays and lesbians the whole day with you
– but it just – I totally disagree with gays (laugh)
I: ok
P: yah um – I don’t what it is – I just feel sick – from the bottom – I
just feel sick in my tummy
I: do you think it’s a male thing or also again particular to - ?
P: generally – the one thing that I know –most of the guys I hang out
with – totally despise gays
I: ok
P: but I don’t think I’d actually go out there make trouble with for gays
– whatever – I just – I don’t feel comfortable –seeing gay people –It
just makes me sick to my balls –it’s just one of those things – yah
I: I guess I won’t be mentioning anal sex
P: (laughs)
I: that was my next question (laughs) – do you engage
P: um … (Laugh) uh no
I: no I’m kidding – Ok well I’m done if there’s nothing else to
P: yah just –
I: have you got any questions or
P: no –
I: if you’d like to ask about this
P: can I ask you – how many people have you spoken to already?
I: Um –
P: I think you can cut it of now…
(End of Interview)
Appendix K: Interview 8

1. I: may be you can start by telling me about yourself
2. P: 18 years old – from X– yah – two older sisters – what else do you want to know?
3. I: (laugh)
4. P: (laugh) – basically that’s it –
5. I: that’s it – ok
6. P: (laugh) nothing much
7. I: then we can go right ahead – then I’ll ask – what’s your understanding of sexual knowledge?
8. P: understanding of it?
9. I: or being sexually informed – what does it mean to you?
10. P: what does it mean to me? – basically – in a way – shows the interaction between two persons I guess
11. I: can you clarify that a bit more or maybe elaborate on it?
12. P: sexual knowledge – how do I explain it?
13. I: I find that interesting – you mention –interaction between two people
14. P: yah well – if you think about it – when you interact- if you think about AIDS and all that jazz
15. I: hmm
16. P: obviously it has to mean – included with two people
17. I: ok
18. P: interact –to actually – not sure how to explain it
19. I: Are you speaking about sexually informed as being knowing about the physical act of sex?
20. P: yah – also I mean – you could say so
21. I: ok
22. P: I don’t know how to explain myself – It’s like I’m thinking about it but I don’t know how to say it words
23. I: cos when you say two people together – it also makes me think of two people in a relationship
24. P: yah yah
25. I: so
26. P: cos if you think about it – if you think about sexually informed relations – actually – only – all the arrows actually link to that – if you think about it – because how el –yah – I have it in my head but I just can’t say it
27. I: ok – well you think about it –
28. P: yah it will come to me
29. I: it will come –ok – and what’s your – your first recollection?
30. P: hmmm – first recollection – ok – I probably have heard about it in younger days but when I actually got to know about it properly – you can say – maybe about – standard three-ish –as such
31. I: that’s how old?
32. P: that is about 11- 10 –11
33. I: ok
34. P: as such – cos I remember when my mother bought a book (laugh) from the library – the one day I was questioning her about something – I can’t remember what though – I always questioned my sisters – but they never ever told me anything
49. **I:** ok
50. **P:** so I think my mother got to a stage where she actually thought – I should just know what I needed to know – cos I was just
51. **I:** (laugh)
52. **P:** I think I was bugging the family
53. **I:** ok
54. **P:** so she got – took out book for me from the library – but I never actually understood – to tell you the truth (Laugh) – I read it but I didn’t understand it
55. **I:** but properly – I would say about say 12
56. **P:** ok
57. **P:** because in school we had like sex ed and stuff like that – standard 4 – standard 5 – so from there – I mean I always knew about it – I knew what it was but I never actually understood it properly
58. **I:** ok
59. **P:** so you can say yah – was more through school wise – my mother attempted but reading the books didn’t help me much
60. **I:** can you remember what the book was about
61. **P:** it was – I think – I think it was called “where babies come from” – I think
62. **I:** ok
63. **P:** and the other one was just um – it was “girlfriends and boyfriends” or something
64. **I:** ok
65. **P:** something like that
66. **I:** ok
67. **P:** I remember reading it but I never actually paid attention to it – I just read it because my mother gave it to me and told me to read it – type of thing – but I never actually got down to understanding it
68. **I:** ok
69. **P:** but I think after a while I went through stage where I didn’t actually care – you know when you bug someone so much that don’t tell you – you just forget about it
70. **I:** ok
71. **P:** so I think I went through that stage
72. **I:** and then you said at 12
73. **P:** you can say
74. **I:** – you had a formal – formal – sex education class
75. **P:** we had like a double period – where like the standard 4’s and 5’s were uh divided into groups – I think about 5 of us
76. **I:** ok
77. **P:** together with our friends – so obviously you more comfortable
78. **I:** hmm
79. **P:** used to be with different teachers
80. **I:** hmm
81. **P:** and that would just uh – talk about in general everything about males, females –everything – basically
82. **I:** do you remember what year was this?
83. **P:** what age?
84. **I:** what year? You were 12
85. **P:** uuuuh – what year was that? Uh – say 94 – 95
99. I: ok – I find that interesting
100. P: but I think also cos I went to a government school – it was all girls school – and it was a white school as well
101. I: alright
102. P: they more – uuh- advanced –in things like that
103. I: ok
104. P: they always having classes like that –
105. I: ok
106. P: if I’m not mistaken – I think the school brings it to standard 3’s now
107. I: ok
108. P: because I think it’s more of uh issue now –
109. I: ok
110. P: than before – so people probably know much more about it now –
111. um yah
112. I: you were saying it’s more through school so then
113. P: I would say more school
114. I: you were 12 and then – after that can you remember
115. P: well from there – I mean – I basically – I understood – knew what I wanted to know – you can say – cos I mean they were quite informative
116. I: ok
117. P: I mean – we used to just talk generally – ask questions to our teacher –cos we were all in our group of friends
118. I: ok
119. P: we with our – I was with our principle I think – and she was a very like open person –so she would talk about her life – about her experiences and whatever else
120. I: ok
121. P: not like in depth or whatever – but just generally – hmm –she used to like talk about like – menstruation – girls and guys – and we used to watch video’s about how bodies work and things like that – so from there it got to every single thing we wanted to know – as such
122. I: ok – and friends – did they play a big role?
123. P: well I guess so – cos I mean – from that stage we were in our group so obviously If we had a question we used to talk about it in our groups – whatever
124. I: hmm
125. P: then when we had that lesson – we would like – we had it once a week or once in two weeks - something
126. I: ok
127. P: we used to ask and from there- we obviously like- like outside the actual period – we used to like just talk about it and – so I guess they do
128. I: cos like conversations – inform a lot of what we know- we talk with our friends about certain things
129. P: yah
130. I: boyfriends, girlfriends, relationships…
131. P: so basically you’re more comfortable talking to them than anyone –
132. as such
133. I: ok
P: I guess family wise – you can talk to them – but there’s like a
boundary wall – to what exactly you can talk to them about
I: ok – why do you say a boundary wall
P: just like some things – you’ll feel comfortable telling your friends –
like if you have a question – you can ask your family members but…
there’s some extent to it
I: ok – like
P: definite questions – like exactly what the question is
I: ok
P: like if it’s something really personal – you just don’t want to tell
your parents or whatever about it –
I: ok
P: then it’s fine – but like with me – I’ll – I’m quite – I’m very close to
my sisters
I: ok
P: so I would ask my sisters any questions that arise from there –
parents I would – but not that topic – cos they might get wrong ideas
(laugh)
I: ok (laugh)
P: so when you ask – the first thing they’ll say – why she looking like
that? Why she asking me this? They obviously won’t think I’m just
thinking generally
I: ok
P: they’ll think there’s something behind the whole thing
I: ok – so you want to know because like
P: if I just want to know just for the sake of knowing – they would
think otherwise
I: Ok (laugh)
P: so things like that I’ll ask my sisters – or I’ll just ask friends
I: ok
P: maybe friends will be the better bet because my sisters might get the
wrong idea even
I: (laugh)
P: so otherwise – I mean – I guess friends do actually play the majority
the – no – majority of it
I: ok – thinking – your parents they never ever brought it up?
P: they never – yah – that’s true – they never actually – I mean – them
days – they were not ever interactive with things like this. You never
spoke about things like that
I: ok
P: at all – nothing – that’s why it’s hard for them to even talk to us
about it
I: and now as you’re getting older – do they broach subjects like this?
P: no (laugh)
I: (laugh)
P: – think about it – actually no – my father would not mention the
word – my mother might – actually I don’t even think so – eh – my
mother’s getting more comfortable with talking to us – but I mean not
exactly on that topic
I: ok
P: to tell you the truth
I: alright
P: I think there’s still that whole ‘don’t talk about the topic to your kids’ – it’s just like something they expect us to know or something – I dunno – or they just don’t want us to know about it (Laugh)
I: yah
P: that’s probably the best bet – they probably think the less they know the better
I: ok
P: I dunno
I: cos then you won’t go out and sort of try?
P: yah yah
I: I find that interesting – it’s come up quite a few times now – asked – few people have said – if parents tell you – they think you’re going to and experiment and try
P: yeah yeah
I: um or you’ll have premarital sex or
P: yeah yeah
I: and yeah
P: but like same with now – um I told my mother I have a boyfriend – right
I: ok
P: and she was talking to my sisters generally – she was telling my sister – hope she doesn’t come back pregnant – now you – they just assume otherwise
I: yes
P: you can’t – they just think the worst - they just think of – I dunno – the – some stupid things
I: and in most cases-most people would say that’s quite liberal that you can tell – I assume – does your mum and dad know or just your mum?
P: both of them
I: both of them
P: after a while (laugh)
I: yah – cos a lot of people – I see a lot of Indian youth that say – they’ve actually had to like hide it from their parents – maybe for that reason
P: I actually – yah – sort of did –actually – the first few months
I: ok
P: – because it’s something they can handle but they can’t handle
I: (laugh)
P: cos like – also I’m the youngest
I: ok
P: so I’m always the baby in their eyes
I: hmm
P: so it’s something – like – they can’t imagine and knowing that my older two sisters don’t have boyfriends at the moment
I: ok
P: and the one never did – so it’s sort of like a new topic – it’s something they probably just don’t want to approach
I: uuhh
P: so I feel comfortable not telling them – because they always think the worst
I: ok (laugh)
P: so – and like this situation – the question my mother asked my sister – I mean – having a boyfriend doesn’t mean you gonna be pregnant or whatever else – it just means – like you’ll be having some- like a guy friend –
I: yes
P: not like – so they think otherwise – so if you ask questions about any sexual relations then it’s like – she’s pregnant or whatever else you know
I: (laugh) ok
P: I think they’re still in the olden day time of frame – I don’t think - I don’t think – not say any but most Indians will ever be comfortable with the topic – actually
I: you don’t think so – that they’d ever be
P: well it depends on the person but I think Indians generally – are not ever comfortable with the topic – of any sort of thing like that
I: if I’m making notes – I’m not like doing
P: no it’s cool
I: I’m just making points for myself to remember
P: no no no it’s fine
I: um it’s quite interesting that you mention that because I was thinking how does your parents relationship then affect your relationship? Cos if they haven’t spoken about sex in front of you – or perhaps they not open about their affection towards one another
P: hm hm
I: how does then that – your – you – when you go into relationships – um
P: my relationship to anyone else?
I: to any- I’m talking about male
P: ok
I: I’m talking about male-female relationships
P: actually to me – it doesn’t affect me at all
I: it doesn’t affect you at all
P: because whether they tell me or not – it’s still – at the end of the day it’s the same thing
I: ok
P: because
I: but you – will you be uncomfortable? - that’s what I’m saying
P: will I be comfortable…?
I: because by saying that that Indians will always be uncomfortable about this sort of topic- now when you go into your relationship – would you be uncomfortable about this topic
P: towards my kids or just generally?
I: generally in your relationships and to your kids when you…?
P: I don’t – uncomfortable – I don’t think I would be uncomfortable – I just think I’d want to keep things myself –
I: ok
P: I think – I’m the type of person – just what’s my business is my
business

I: ok

P: I don’t think I would be uncomfortable but then again as parents

how would they approach the topic

I: ok

P: as well – so I see their point of view in a way

I: hmmm

P: because Indians just – how do you bring up topics like that? How do

you just talk about it? When you know – and they know I’m the type

of person not to just talk openly

I: ok

P: so whether they tell me or not – I’ll just stand there and do nothing

I: ok

P: so in a way – it’s hard to approach the topic like that – I think

I: ok

P: so I see their point of view – but they just – did not mention a single

thing – which is actually wrong

I: ok

P: so I think that’s why they actually like the whole sex ed thing cos

then they know – we know what we need to know

I: ok

P: without them mentioning anything

I: alright

P: so in a way I see their point of view – cos I mean – for me if I had

to be parent – I’d find it really hard to just bring up the topic all of

sudden

I: ok

P: and just talk about it comfortably – because actually at the end of

the day – it’s not a comfortable topic

I: hm

P: so I mean

I: I’m also just wondering now – is it just – sort of with Indians or do

you think that – this is sort of …

P: I guess

I: that most parents – doesn’t matter what cultural group they come

from – they

P: when I think of – if I just compare my friends and me – it depends

on the actual individual but I think majority of the Indians actually

I: ok

P: because if I talk to my friends from school and varsity –

I: ok

P: I mean their parents – not the- their mothers – are comfortable just

talking about it – or bringing the topic up at least once in their life

I: and this is non-Indian friends?

P: non-Indian friends

I: ok

P: and ok got like – I think out of all my Indian friends – I think one of

them – their mum’s actually spoken to them about it

I: ok

P: otherwise I don’t actually many – mostly other colours – other
I: uh hm
P: I think that – their mothers have spoken to them or have mentioned it –
I: ok
P: so I think it is harder for Indians by itself
I: ok
P: to talk about things like this
I: you also mentioned mothers – it’s like interesting – cos like –
mothers are like responsible
P: yeah
I: for
P: well mothers will feel more comfortable with talking about a topic like this
I: ok
P: it’s just – I dunno – it’s just – I dunno – the thing is – just like son feel comfortable with the male – with fathers talking about things like this – they wouldn’t talk to their mother about things like this
I: ok
P: I dunno – it’s just – automatically you it becomes more comfortable
I: hrmn
P: and I guess a mother will be more comfortable talking about a topic like this then an actual father
I: ok
P: I don’t think it’s just my family – I think generally
I: you also just three girls – right?
P: yah
I: ok
P: So I think – just – my father is (unclear) so he would not even mention in at all – I think mothers would be most comfortable talking about it and they obviously thinking what you thinking as such as well
I: ok
P: so yah
I: I was chatting to someone else and I was just like wondering – cos like for most Indian girls it’s a similar sort of experience – that you don’t really get a sex talk or they call it the “birds and the bees” sort of thing
P: yah
I: and you sort of wonder then what would it be like at marriage? If you are – that is – if you – if you do choose to remain a virgin before that – um – does your mother sit down with you and say well this is what’s going to happen –
P: yah
I: um and the anxiety around that – that sort of situation – it’s just quite interesting – that quite a few people I’ve spoken to – you know – what would it be like? I suppose maybe things are changing
P: I don’t think – I don’t think – before marriage or whatever else – I don’t think any Indian parent will still sit down with their child cos by then I’m sure they would know – that they know what they need to know
I: ok
P: I mean after how many years of growing up - I mean you need to at least catch a wake and know what you need to know
I: ok
P: yah
I: so there is this active seeking then - of knowledge?
P: yah – and I think also – mothers especially they want to know exactly what they thinking- the child’s thinking but they don’t want to say it
I: ok
P: so they’ll think it in their mind but they will be toooo uncomfortable approaching the topic
I: ok
P: say like mother’s situation – she tell my sisters or ask my sisters questions – whatever else- but she won’t ask me personally
I: alright
P: so I think she wants to know things but she just doesn’t know how to approach it –
I: ok
P: or just like any topic that just – the boyfriend situation
I: ok
P: she just won’t talk about the boyfriend at all –
I: uhuh
P: it’s like ask someone else – you know – but she wants to know
I: yes
P: but she won’t – but I think it’s taking a while – she’s getting adjusted – I mean – now it’s changed – the initial stages is hard
I: yah – parents want to know but they also happier not knowing – so in some sense they don’t have to deal with…
P: and imagine what’s happening and whatever else
I: imagine what’s happening - it would be like I suppose telling your mum that actually boys and girls kiss today
P: yah
I: whereas before maybe – twenty years ago – it was mainly like holding hands or…
P: yah
I: or something else
P: not even (laugh) – stay far away (laugh)
I: or something like that – I mean they don’t want to have to picture that – their daughter – you know
P: yah yah (laugh) they just can’t - yah they can’t see things like that happening at all
I: um – yah
P: they thinking still in the olden days – which is totally wrong of course – I guess – I would be thinking the same way as well - thinking “my day I didn’t do that” whatever
I: it’s quite interesting cos there’s this sort of contradictory sort of thing going on that – that – you want your parents to sort of tell you
P: yah
I: because you’d rather hear it from them than from somebody else
but at the same time you dunno whether you could do that yourself – um 

P: yah - I would for a topic like this – I would actually feel more comfortable with someone else telling me

I: ok

P: (unclear) in a way I would feel more comfortable because I know for fact that my mother would not feel comfortable – so I’d rather have a stranger and feel a bit uncomfortable than the person being straight – forward with me

I: right

P: I dunno

I: who would you trust more?

P: well if you just want to know – knowledge wise –

I: ok

P: you don’t really need trust –

I: ok

P: I guess – I wouldn’t mind my mother telling me -but it’s just – the whole thought of your mother telling you about info like that – is just

I: ok alright

P: I guess like I ‘d rather talk to friends or watch videos or read books or something like that

I: ok – and have you ever done - sort of like watched – I dunno – found material that you actually – or gone looking for material

P: I’ve actually spoken to more friends than actually -like the beginning stages –maybe yah – (unclear) after that I think I had to go buy book – other than that – I mean – just knowledge wise and talking to friends and things like that

I: cos like with males – sort of the most common recollection is that they start looking at porn – um whatever age they come across porn – that in a way could be one of their first um – interaction with sexual knowledge – or sex

P: yah

I: but for women – you don’t often hear that they come across porn

P: yah yah

I: they might at a later stage in life – but not

P: but not in the initial stages

I: initial stages …

P: yeah – that’s true – I just – I don’t see how that would help my knowledge (laugh)

I: but then there’s this sort of – oh but there’s Cosmo magazines or whatever magazine articles we come across or um

P: magazines actually do play a big role cos I mean if you want to know questions – you’ll have to see it some time in your life – in a magazine – reading an article

I: ok

P: I guess- think about it – if you have a slight question that’s been bugging you – you bound to see it somewhere in a book – or in a magazine

I: ok

P: or - somewhere- else – some kind of reading material
I: ok - also the other thing – are movies – may be women – I’m not sure
P: movies – may be like little bits and pieces – but not actually knowledge knowledge wise
I: ok
P: I guess
I: there’s this whole sort of thing with western movies and Indian movies – and the portrayal of sex or relationships and how that impacts on us because we’ve grown up with that – both western and Indian movies
P: that’s true – yah
I: and and how that affects our perception – is it this of fantasy – sort of running through the garden type of thing?
P: yah yah
I: or um yah
P: that’s true yah
I: so I’m just wondering whether that’s ever played a role?
P: not really
I: ok
P: I guess – not really - I dunno –
I: (laugh)
P: I’ve – I don’t think it actually has – hey - seriously it hasn’t – no – it hasn’t
I: (we laugh)
P: I’m just trying to think now – but I don’t think it has – hey
I: ok
P: uh
I: ok – but y- would you say you’ve been more active in seeking knowledge or whatever – or you’ve been happy with whatever has just come your way?
P: yah - I don’t actually go out and attempt to actually find out – I just wait for one day – may be one day it’ll appear – but I won’t actually –
yah –
I: ok
P: I just – yah – I just whatever I need to know I know
I: hnm
P: if I need to know other things then maybe I might go out and find it but
I: ok
P: I’m the type of person that just lay back - and just wait whatever else to happen
I: ok (we laugh)
P: I’m very lazy so
I: sort of interesting –cos I see like - we seem more passive in comparison to the men and maybe it’s just the way we built in a way or
P: yah (laughs) but also – if I think about it now – if I had to go and- say for instance I wanted to know something about it – and I go to the library and go take out a book – I wouldn’t go take out a book now – I dunno – I just – I feel uncomfortable
I: ok
P: before I used to be fine cos I wanted to know and who cares
I: hm
P: but now I don’t think
I: ok – you feel uncomfortable because…
P: I don’t know why I feel uncomfortable actually
I: are you worried about what other people think or.
P: that would actually – ok – I wasn’t thinking that now but if I think
I: about it – yah (laughs)
I: ok
P: because what would they think if I took a book like that
I: ok
P: they obviously think – oh she wants to know because that’s
I: happening or whatever else
P: you know – they would think otherwise
I: you can think
P: and I’m the type of person – I say I don’t care about other people’s
I: opinions – but at the end of the day when they actually do think
P: otherwise – I get upset
I: ok
P: so obviously other people’s opinions will affect you – at some stage
or another
I: you can just think about me when you want to take out a book –
P: (laughs)
I: I’ve had to take out lots of books for research
P: shame (Laughs) – they’ll understand
I: I dunno – I’ve got asked some strange questions
P: oh no (laughs)
I: uh – so no other recollections – or even experiences? Does
experience count towards educating yourself? Cos I mean I talked
about conversation – we have these conversation – we walk into
conversations where our friends are talking about – and that’s how we
become informed about – may be life generally but also this kind –
these kind of topics – you know (unclear)
P: I guess after a while – it might – I don’t actually know
I: (we laugh)
P: but I guess if you think about it – it should also help at some stage
I: ok
P: honestly – I mean – you must come to level which you talk about
things whatever else and emotions obviously will change – which
means – you will interact more with the whole topic
I: ok
P: I guess relations actually will help – in the actual
I: ok
P: I don’t know actually – you asking the wrong person! (laugh)
I: (laugh)
P: cos when you think about it- it actually would help – I mean it will
actually – it should –
I: (unclear) cos I mean you’re in first year – you went to an all girls
school I assume?
**P:** yeah

**I:** most of your life or did you ever go to a co-ed?

**P:** since standard 2 – so I’m three years in co-ed which actually is nothing because you can’t do – count 6, 7, 8 whatever

**I:** same for me – I come from a family where I have two other sisters – three girls – have been to an all-girl school all my life –

**P:** yeah

**I:** so coming to university – sort of my first – uninhibited interactions with males - because at home – you can but it’s always that sort of boundary wall towards males as such - it’s also – I find – it’s hard to interact with males when you in an all girls school – because where exactly do you meet them - only through friends – and your friends are also in an all-girls school

**I:** yes

**P:** I have every other colour friends - I actually have every colour friends

**I:** ok

**P:** so it’s like – you can’t meet through friends – you know friends friends – whatever else – it’s actually – males it’s basically through family members you can meet them

**I:** hmm

**P:** so coming to varsity – like co-ed – it is a big adjustment

**I:** ok

**P:** but I mean – I guess it’s ok

**I:** (laugh)

**P:** it’s ok – not bad – it is a big adjustment though

**I:** I was just thinking – I was quite interested in sort of experiences – like how that also contributes – I suppose – time will tell (laugh)

**P:** yah thinking – you can’t exactly now

**I:** may be I can interview in another few years time

**P:** you can’t exactly now – cos – this topic – It can’t exactly – question – answer now – cos it’s like in first year and you – the males you know – you basically getting to know

**I:** ok hmm

**P:** because like – sort of – first interaction with proper – countable males – everyday single day interaction – as such

**I:** hmm - again it’s that assumption I’m drawing on – that sexual knowledge is not just about the act – that there’s a whole

**P:** yah

**I:** other sort of repertoire – I suppose you need to know about relationships- you need to know how to deal with interacting with a male

**P:** and emotions and all that jazz

**I:** yah – so I’m not sure whether that also is encapsulated in your understanding

**P:** yah - I guess it does – hey – but I mean (.)

**I:** (laugh)

**P:** I wouldn’t say – no it actually will play a very big part as such but I can’t quest – I answer that now

**I:** (laugh)
P: (laugh) it’s like initial stages – you can’t – I dunno
I: yeah
P: cos when you start like interacting with the guys or something – it’s
not something you just bring up automatically as such
I: yah but I mean – I find that interesting – you also mention that it is a
big adjustment sort of coming from an all girls school and learning to
interact with a male – and that in itself contributes to you –
P: emotion wise
I: yah
P: but actually I must say I adjusted very quickly – because the thing is
– at the end of the day – I’m still coming to an all girls res
I: ok
P: so my interaction with males is through lectures but I’m still - I am
with my girlfriends
I: ok
P: so in a way – and the guy friends that I do know – it’s like – they
sort of like brother – not brotherly types but I mean – they like- they
seem like that
I: ok
P: because some of them are my sister’s friends as well – so they treat
me as a little sister
I: ok
P: so they like little brother buddies type of thing
I: Ok
P: in a way (laugh) – so if I’m being in an all girls res – it’s still sort of
like being in school
I: hm hm
P: as such
I: ok
P: I dunno – that’s what I think – how I see it
I: what I meant – was that you’re learning – you’re learning to interact
with males
P: yeah
I: and that in a way is contributing to how you will interact
P: that’s true
I: in relationships – or how you treat it now as well
P: yah
I: I guess my assumption is that sexual knowledge is more than just
about the physical act
P: yeah – it is
I: it’s also about
P: your emotions and your thoughts and all that jazz
I: uhuh – can you remember anything else – recollections – or – you
talked about books – is there
P: uuuuh –
I: (Little laugh)
P: I don’t think I actually have any other – no – you can high school –
was just like yah – whatever – you know – cos that’s not a topic I even
think about to tell you the truth – it’s just like there in the air – type of
thing
I: ok – tell me more about that
P: I dunno – it’s like – something that just doesn’t bother me
I: but do you think it’s because you went to an all-girls school
P: could possibly be it – cos I mean – think about it – you interact with
males every single day in co-ed school – you would think about it
more frequently
I: ok
P: and I mean – to be in an all-girls school and like not knowing males
as such – not knowing many males other than family – whatever –
friends – it just was – a topic that I just didn’t care about
I: yeah – I suppose it’s interesting cos I also said that – I said it the
other day to somebody – I said – I was just chatting – I said – It’s quite
weird cos I never really thought about like boys until I like was much
older than like most of other girls I’ve met here
P: yeah
I: only like 17 –18 did I really take an interest –
P: yeah
I: but before that – and I – it’s probably because they weren’t there
P: they weren’t there – you never interacted – you went to school –
came back home – ate – slept and the whole process started again
I: -ye
P: the only time you saw males was like may be on a Saturday when
you went to movies – that’s not even an interaction – that’s like
walking past a guy
I: yeah
P: so I guess – I mean if you are in co-ed school – obviously you’ll see
them all the time so that will – at some stage play on your mind
I: yes yah
P: and you’ll get to speak to them and you’ll get to know them – but –
it actually never bothered me – eh
I: ok
P: like since standard 5 – it was just like just there but …
I: ok
P: but it never bothered me
I: um yah – I think that’s about it unless you can think of anything else
P: (Tape stopped – change over – lost a few words)
I: um I dunno just I feel more comfortable cos – like my mother will
tell me from her mouth
I: hmm
P: at least I’ll get her personal point of view and she knows how I
work as such
I: ok
P: so she’ll know what exactly to tell me – what exac- how to
approach to the topic as such – and how my emotions will play with
that
I: ok
P: but then again I don’t think I’ll be comfortable even – because it’s
such a touchy topic
I: hmm
P: I don’t think I’d talk my heart out as such
I: ok
P: because I dunno – I just – I wouldn’t feel comfortable
I: ok
P: I would ask here and there but not feel comfortable
I: hrm
P: and in a way – she would know how I work – but I just – I’m just –
I: ok
P: I don’t want to trigger off a topic that might get her all worried – might
get her
I: ok
P: upset in a way
I: yah
P: so I guess a stranger in that sense would be better – asking a
stranger a questions is a bit uncomfortable as well
I: Ok
P: but yah and plus in front of Indians you just – you don’t talk about
things like this as such
I: ok - would you go as far as calling it taboo? Hm – a word always
associated with Indians- sex is a taboo topic – (Unclear)
P: I don’t think – I don’t think you can actually generalise that –
because it actually depends on the individual and how comfortable
they are – and how the actual child is towards the topic and how she is
generally or how he is generally
I: Ok
P: everyone assumes that – you just don’t talk about it
I: ok
P: so I think – it’s just like
I: because like their parents never told them
P: yah
I: it’s not something – you just like
P: expected to talk about comfortably - they don’t understand that
time does change
I: yah
P: when you think about it – like us – even though we’re still young –
when we think about kids – they are still small – and they going out
with guys – I mean I know this girl – standard 6
I: hrm
P: she went out with two guys already – something we never did
I: yeah
P: so we assume it doesn’t happen
I: yeah
P: and something we can’t handle but we have to accept
I: yes
P: and I think the same with our parents – they never expected us to
know about things like this
I: yah
P: so I mean – it does – not because they old – it happens every year – it happens all the time
I: yah – what I’m wondering is like – if there’s this common assumption or I dunno – it’s sort out there – people will say – oh no majority of the Indians are sexually active on this campus – um – which is probably something our parents would never want to hear
P: exactly
I: um – whether that’s true I don’t know but um if it is – you know how they are becoming informed – or how are they able to deal with sort of situations – like premarital sex and whether women then negotiate their sexuality differently – cos women there’s this emphasis on being a virgin – supposedly for men as well – but men – there’s also the idea – a few guys have said themselves they get away with more than girls
P: that’s true
I: um in that sense
P: uh – take men at varsity – for them it’s just a whole experimentation thing
I: Ok
P: girls – I dunno – eh (laugh) – I dunno – maybe also – in varsity it’s like sort of like a common thing to do – I dunno
I: common thing? We’re talking about?
P: just relations with guys
I: ok
P: generally - it’s like everyone does it type of thing
I: going out with a guy or like pre-marital sex?
P: both
I: ok
P: both wise
I: ok
P: and I guess it’s like in varsity – it’s sort of a common issue
I: ok
P: it’s a common thing – so maybe some people just do it because everyone else is doing it as such – because if they even – pre-marital sex for instance
I: hmm
P: if you say you don’t do it – and everyone around you – is like ‘Oh my God! What’s wrong with you?’ type of thing
I: uh hm
P: there is this peer pressure – at the end of the day – you don’t do it because of that but just that many people pressurise- maybe the boyfriend pressurises you as well and you just feel bad
I: ok
P: he’ll break up with you – I dunno
I: there’s also this sort of thing – I dunno how common it is now but it has been said that like Indian guys will go out with other girls because they know they can have sexual relations – whereas with Indian girls they don’t know how easy that – or if that’s possible
P: yah – yeah – my sister’s friend even told her – that he goes out with any other culture because he knows if he goes out with an Indian chick
– she doesn’t want to just play around
I: ok
P: she wants an actual – serious relationship –
I: uuh
P: which he just wants to fool around with chicks – that’s why he’ll
never ever go for an Indian chick
I: uh hm
P: at varsity
I: uh hm
P: because the whole experimentation period – and he doesn’t want a
long term as well
I: Ok
P: and he knows he can do it here at varsity because he’s from away
I: ok
P: and his parents will never find out
I: uh hmm
P: so it’s just like a whole playing around game
I: ok – and for women – now – like how would you respond to that – as
an Indian female?
P: say it’s Dis - gusting (laughs)
I: (laugh)
P: I mean – it’s a whole using thing – I mean cos he knows – I think –
um – but I think he could have been – ye I think he’s organised with a
chick – I think they have – what’s the word – arranged marriage –
that’s the word
I: ok
P: I think he already has a girl waiting at home
I: ok
P: so it’s like – uuh – I dunno – it’s just – he knows he has the perfect
woman at home waiting for him –
I: ok
P: so while he is away he can do whatever he wants – which is
disgusting
I: right
P: it’s just aagh
I: I just realised now thinking about the word “pre-marital sex” – um
maybe it’s the wrong word to use because it also comes from an
assumption that - that it’s wrong and I think – I dunno whether you’ve
grown up with that idea or not - cos I’m just assuming that Indians
have
P: I think generally
I: may be I’m wrong
P: I think generally Indians have – but personally – I just – if a person
wants to do it they can do it – seriously
I: ok
P: I mean – to – ok – I would prefer pre-marital sex – I mean not pre-
marital sex
I: ok
P: but I mean if a person feels so strongly against – for someone – I
mean – they can do whatever they want – seriously
I: and your upbringing – your parents – have they ever said anything
P: they actually haven’t –
I: ok
P: they haven’t – but I just assume
I: ok
P: that they – they prefer it – but I mean -they actually – actually I
don’t think they have ever spoken about that -it’s just – I dunno – it’s
an assumption
I: ok
P: but I personally just think – I mean – it depends – if the person
wants to – it’s their life – it’s their choice
I: ok
P: it’s not like – if you feel so strongly about it and you want to then –
go for it
I: there’s this whole – women have to virgins – and men – well men
don’t really have to
P: yah
I: so women experience guilt of they do go in –
P: it depends on the individual at the end of the day I guess
I: (unclear) pre-marital sex
P: yah I mean – we’re sort of brought up that way – that you should –
because it’s just totally wrong
I: but how do you know that –cos if your parents have said that
P: I dunno – it’s just how Indians generally talk about – oh like – if
you just talk about generally about if you’re just having everyday
conversation – oh like you know – she slept with him “oh my God” –
type of thing –
I: ok
P: it’s the assumption that it’s just wrong - to do it – type of thing “oh
my God she stayed over there – obviously they’re having sex” which is
the wrong assumption to make
I: ok
P: and like the way people say things or talk about it – they actually
assume it’s totally wrong
I: Ok
P: so I mean from there - you can see
I: (laugh) ok
P: but I mean – yah I think you just automatically assume that it is
wrong
I: alright
P: but I just – people can do what they want
I: I assume things are changing and – like now
P: firstly I don’t think – many people – wait for marriage – I mean
varsity wise – I’m thinking
I: hrm
P: I dunno
I: ok
P: cos I think also – when you’re at varsity you interact with a whole
different atmosphere
I: ok
P: so – I dunno – if you’re at home (unclear) – so you more thinking about what everyone wants to hear
I: ok
P: than what you want to do – type of thing
I: ok -no no it makes sense
P: in home you – what’s the right word - but you’re sort of brainwashed
I: ok
P: to what everyone else wants than what you want – and you not exactly open to the whole world out there
I: ok
P: maybe it’s just varsity or just out of your home city – I dunno
I: ok
P: but that’s what I think
I: ok
P: from just relating to my friends at home – in varsity there and me
I: hnm
P: and my friends out of home –
I: ok
P: we like have a broader perspective about things and they just think – no but that’s wrong – no but – parents think this –but what will other people think – you must just follow what you think and you want and not worry about everyone else’s opinion
I: ok
P: and things like that – I dunno
I: it must be difficult when you go back
P: yah
I: because you go back into that – and then you
P: cos when I think about it – like in the vac – my friends and I all got together – and now three of us are out of town and two of them are staying at home
I: ok
P: and we’ll just talk broadly about topics – just openly –
I: hnm
P: and they’ll be like – why you talking about that – just don’t talk about things like that
I: Ok
P: and we’re thinking – if we want to talk about – we want to talk about – it’s comfortable
I: ok
P: but not you shouldn’t talk about things like that – like - even just – we were about a topic about drugs or something
I: hnm
P: guys don’t talk so loudly about the topic- people might think you know – that you guys take drugs and we were just talking openly about just drugs
I: hnm
P: and we can’t even do that -it’s like – they just want to live in their little cacoon – of the perfect world
I: hnm
P: and not talk about wrong issues – sort of wrong issues
I: ok
P: yah
I: and do you think that’s also – coming back – because I don’t want to
P: put words into your mouth – is that an Indian thing or do you think it’s
across cultural groups? Would that happen?
I: I think it’s both – both – but mainly – majority Indians
P: ok
I: because also the whole topic- if you talk about issues – like sex or
drugs or pregnancy or whatever else
P: ok
I: and another Indian hears
P: hmm
I: ok
P: then it’s a whole big story – type of thing – in the community – so I
guess – if you talk about things like and people overhear – with Indians
– then it’s like finished – you’ve got a name – type of thing
I: so in a way – and may be more so – I dunno – you tell me whether
you agree with this – in a way family and community within the Indian
sort of culture they mediate – control is too harsh a word – but mediate
your sexuality – they decide like what’s ok and what’s not ok
P: I guess so if you think about it – I mean – we’re so brainwashed into
what other people are thinking and what to feel
I: at the end of the day it’s your choice – but they
P: but they – they do reflect – they do actually – because community is
always – plays a big part – at the end of the day
I: ok
P: and – yah – when it comes to issues like this – it’s always like the
Indian community spreads – and the community will know type of
thing
I: ok – so you have to also like keep your family honour
P: like keep hush hush – type of think – which is very uncomfortable
I: at the end of the day I know the Indian
1030. as well – maybe that’s also another reason – Indian parents don’t about
1031. things
I: ok
P: because it might go – out – and the whole community will hear
I: ok
P: and like it’ll bring down as such the family – maybe – I don’t know
I: ok yah
P: so if you think about it – Indians are like that – I know the Indian
community spreads news like you can’t believe
I: ok – I’m just thinking where I come from – small town as well and
generally yah – things spread like wild fire I guess
P: even though community- meaning friends and neighbours
I: ok
P: things spread like fast – Like I think – it was one weekend – one of
my friends came with me home – you know she’s from Botswana –
she’s black
I: ok
P: and she just came for one day – and then next week – the whole
neighbourhood – and part of the community knew – that I had this
black girl staying at my house – and they asked my parents what was a
black girl staying at your house for?

I: ok
P: like just one day – it just spreads- and like it’s a whole bad
assumption – type of thing
I: ok
P: I dunno – Indians they always think the negative point of view – I
dunno if I’m just generalising or what but – I dunno
I: Yah I can see where you sort of coming from – I’m also just
thinking – sort of like with women and with the community – the way
we dress – everything is
P: negatively implied
I: but just – again I don’t like using the word controlled but in a way it
is – if you’re going somewhere you have to dress this way
P: yah you feel yah you should
I: um and to the point
P: to impress other people
I: you get told
P: not because of what you want to do
I: if you’re going to a wedding you can’t like where something with
such a big slit because someone might
P: exactly – might say something about it and goes around – and like
the one day – my sister and I – it was a very, very cold day and we
wanted to go temple and – we didn’t feel like wearing Indian outfits –
because they were short sleeve – whatever else- so we wore a nice
formal pants and top – suit outfit – it was whole big thing – cos we
went to the temple – we were in pants – it wasn’t an Indian outfit –
things like that you have to worry about – to impress the community
I: hm
P: and not because you want to do it
I: ok
P: it’s like you’re brainwashed to impress everyone else – and to think
what everyone else thinks of you – and
I: the sense of duty to community all the time
P: exactly – yah - so everything does actually fall back to the
community –
I: and the same with your sexuality – because there’s family honour –
the community – because for example –like we assume that there isn’t
much – I’m using the word AIDS – I’m not trying talk about that – but
um for example – it was well known that AIDS – South African
Indians had a high prevalence AIDS – what would that look like to
other cultures? Supposed to be the culture that has the least rate of
alcoholism –all that – sort of those assumptions
P: yah
I: that are there –um – yah – so in a way
P: so it does always relate to the community
I: you mentioned sort of temple – I’m thinking about religion now
P: yah
I: has that sort of affected your – your ideas about sexual knowledge-
we’re talking about pre-marital sex- in some ways – I know for myself
P: that does relate
I: that does relate – to my religion
P: yah
I: but for you – I don’t know (unclear)
P: we not – our family is not the most religious, religious ever –
I: ok
P: we follow religion and everything - we believe
I: hm
P: but we not like strict people that just go by the book type of thing
I: ok
P: so for us – we more open-minded
I: ok
P: and when it comes to religion wise – I don’t actually – it doesn’t relate to me
I: ok
P: it doesn’t at all – because – yah we don’t go by the book – we don’t say because the book says this we have to do it
I: ok
P: we just do whatever we – we were brought up – that whatever we want to do we can do type of thing
I: ok
P: whatever you comfortable doing then it’s fine
I: ok
P: so it doesn’t actually relate to me at all
I: I’m assuming you are Hindu – I’m just wondering – cos I don’t know about the sort of teaching and that – whether that – has that ever –
I: so do they have sort of teaching around sexuality and what’s allowed
I: and what’s not allowed?
P: actually like groups and stuff –like youth groups?
I: Yah sort of – I’m just thinking – not not youth groups –but in like teachings – I suppose you have spiritual teachings like books – or religious texts
P: if I’m not mistaken I don’t think they actually do mention much – but I think they do mention that you shouldn’t have premarital sex – I think I’m not 100% sure on the topic
I: I was just wondering
P: but I don’t think they actually really talk about it at all
I: ok
P: maybe like one sentence or something – but as far as I know I don’t think you are supposed to have pre-marital sex
I: ok – so for yourself religion hasn’t really played a big role
P: cos I mean – yah – we’re not exactly the most religious –and my parents have always taught us that we must do what we want to do type of thing
I: ok
P: even like with stupid topics like – you not supposed to go to temple when you’re menstruating and things like that
I: ok
P: my mother says you can do what you want
I: ok
P: because I mean if you’re feel comfortable and God did give you that
I: yes
P: then why are you restricted to go to temple to pray to him
I: ok
P: but like like – she says it’s up to you what you want to do – if you
feel that’s right – so we actually more like – open as such
I: ok
P: so
I: so then would you say that your culture – and I’m not sure you
define your culture – has that played a bigger role then in how you’ve
expressed your sexuality?
P: than religion – yah I would say so
I: maybe you can tell me more about that – how you define your
culture – or would you – how would you define it? – (knock on the
door – you’re in demand)
I: ok – I was asking how would you define yourself?
P: meaning culture to religion wise –
I: no - would you use culture to define yourself – as in your identity?
P: uh - I guess to a small extent
I: Ok
P: but I am – and I think the way we were brought up
I: ok
P: not – to follow things from our heart and not because culture says so
– type of thing
I: ok alright
P: but like personally I would make culture play a part but not majority
wise
I: ok -I was just wondering if someone asked you whether you were of
Indian- descent – how would you respond to that?
P: yeah um
I: would you say – no I’m South African
P: I would say I’m South African Indian I guess
I: ok –it’s quite interesting – cos- it’s quite controversial – cos reading
this book – about how –quite a recent book – last year – a study was
done about South African Indian identity
P: ok
I: the whole history and like how South African Indians today define
themselves – it’s still so controversial – because people will still say
No I’m Indian —or no we’re of Indian-descent — no we’re South
African
P: ok
I: We’re South African Indians —or Indian South African
P: yeah
I: so it’s quite – I’m just interested to see like how
P: because the thing is also because I went to a white school and I’ve
had different culture friends
I: ok
P: the thing is if I had to have only Indian friends as such –
I: ok
P: growing up – then maybe I would say I’m Indian
1199. I: ok
1200. P: but because I’m more diverse and more openminded – that I will
1201. say I’m South African Indian
1202. I: ok
1203. P: because I have been brought up in a different environment
1204. I: ok
1205. P: cos I mean – majority of Indians – all stick together and I’m not –
1206. the type of person – because they Indian I must hang out with them – I
1207. hang out with who I want to – type of thing
1208. I: ok
1209. P: because of that and because of the way I’m brought up
1210. I: ok
1211. P: I won’t call myself just Indian
1212. I: ok
1213. P: like my day is from India, so he was brought up that way – he will
1214. say he’s Indian
1215. I: Indian
1216. P: my sisters and I have – my sister -my other sister is also more of
1217. the Indian – but I mean – because we were brought up with different
1218. culture friends and all that jazz
1219. I: Ok
1220. P: we think – we just we do what we believe more than my other sister
1221. – that we’ll say we’re South African Indian
1222. I: you’ve assimilated then sort of –a mixed identity
1223. P: you could say so – something like that
1224. I: I don’t think I have more any questions – yah – is there anything
1225. else you want to add- can you think of anything – that’s relevant
1226. P: I wouldn’t know – no – I think – I don’t have anything else to say
1227. I: then - thank you very much

(End of interview)
Appendix L: Narrative (9)

1. I think that as I have gotten older, my beliefs on what sexual knowledge actually is, has changed.
2. When I was a very young and inquisitive child, sexual knowledge to me, was what exactly was sex? I never directly addressed this to anyone because when in junior primary school you tend to learn most things from your friends and tv. However, I do remember that another very reliable source of information in my life was my older brother. He was only two years older than me but he seemed to know so much more than I did about everything in life. Also, I was and am, very relaxed with my brother because we have a very comfortable relationship. Therefore I felt that I could ask him about most things in life. As I stated before, he didn’t explain the intricacies of sex because I was too embarrassed to ask ANYONE about that! Most of that information didn’t come until later in life.
3. Maybe I have a very selective memory or I blocked it out because it was too horrendous to recall, but I don’t think that I ever got that sex talk from my parents when I was a young child but I think that’s because I didn’t ask them any questions. When I was about 10 though, my mum called me into her room. She shut the door and we sat on the bed for a ‘girl chat’ like we often did. Then she told me about becoming a woman and menstrual cycles and stuff like that. She also told me why it had to happen: that when we met someone we loved and wanted to have children with them, then we would have sex with them. She also told me that it was very important thing and that you don’t just do it with anyone. You have to be very sure and also know what you are getting yourself into.
4. At this stage that was adequate information for me. I also had one of those ‘Every girl’s guide to growing up’ – those books that tell you what it’s like to be an adolescent and deals with hormones, puberty, sex and other related stuff.
5. So I think that I was very well-informed and my mum always told me that if I had any questions about anything I could go to her because she’d rather have me talking to her, than anyone else about important things. I think I felt quite comfortable with this arrangement and when I had any queries, I’d ask my
32. mum ….. but my friends were usually the first people I discussed sexual stuff with. I don’t think that this is a reflection of my relationship with my mother but more a case of girls just being girls.
33. However, my perception of sexual knowledge has changed now because now it refers to how much people know about sex, in the sense of how smart am I being with regard to sexual activity? For me, it’s knowing about the precautionary methods, the different types of contraceptives, the emotional attachments involved and much more important issues than the act of sex. This knowledge, I can honestly say, was acquired mostly from school. I went to a very liberal ex-Model C school where open discussion among all races on most topics was encouraged. We had various talks during Guidance lessons focusing specifically on sex and issues surrounding it. We also had many talks addressing topical issues such as AIDS, and other sexually transmitted diseases, plus teenage pregnancies and rape.
34. So I think that most of my sexual knowledge was acquired at school but I am still learning a lot about sex. I find that these days sexual knowledge is readily available via the media since there are many AIDS campaigns and equality of sexual rights issues being addressed.
35. The idea is that we talk about sex then we are better off because there will be less uncertainty about it. But a lot of the information is not completely true because young people get the wrong impression of sex on tv. Movies don’t deal with the whole responsibility issue of sex. That’s why I try and get my younger sister to watch those informative programmes like ‘Loveline’ and ‘Yizo Yizo’ because they are more realistic and more responsible too.
36. But I do think that these days it is easier to be sexually informed and gain sexual knowledge because there are more resources available, such as tv and internet, very easily.
37. I also think that I have learnt a lot about sex from my friends because we all get together and pool our information. This has always happened from a young age and sometimes we do get it wrong. But it is more comfortable talking to someone out of your age group (like parents) about issues that we feel are relevant to us now.
Appendix M: Narrative (10)

1. My understanding of sexual knowledge: I think this includes everything you know about sex and sexuality, from factual information (or myths) to the connotations or associations held about sex and sexuality (and, I think, to some extent, it also includes knowledge on what sexiness is).
2. My first recollection of being sexually informed was when I was quite young. My dad one day decided that I was old enough to know about sex, and so he explained it all to me. Most of my friends had no idea about it at the time (we were about 9 years olds) and I don’t recall ever having heard the gory details before, although my mom did explain how she fell pregnant when she was having my brother.
3. My dad thought it was important that I should know about sex from him before I heard about it from friends and he also thought it was important I should know about my body and what it would be capable of before I actually hit puberty.
4. When my friends started talking about sex at school, it was as if sex was taboo and embarrassing. It was something naughty that was only talked about when there were no teachers around. Also, most of my friends had only vague ideas about it. My dad had told me exactly what happened.
5. In high school, my friends were much more informed about sex and some of them had actually done it (yes, we were only 13 and 14 but...). I found out here what oral sex was, this being the only aspect my dad had not mentioned (he had, interestingly, mentioned masturbation and when questioned about oral sex, confirmed that people did do it).
6. Even in high school, although by now people were doing it, most of them still saw it as something to hide or be ashamed of (although there was a group of boys who boasted about their alleged sexual prowess). Because my dad viewed sex as intimate, special and nice, I didn’t adopt the negative connotations, my friends had. Because I learned about it at home, I didn’t feel ashamed about knowing about it, but most of my friends didn’t want their parents to know that they knew about sex.
7. Through the late primary school years and early high school years, we did
32. have sexual education from school psychologists and guidance counselors, but
33. I already knew the stuff they told us because of my strangely open father
34. (toward the end of primary school, he bought me a book on the female body,
35. sex and sexuality, in case I had any questions I didn’t feel comfortable asking
36. him). Most other people in my class didn’t take the sex ed classes seriously
37. because they found them embarrassing.
38. One other thing that I find mentionable: although my dad was always very
39. open about sex and very approachable about sex, he always stressed the moral
40. aspects of sex. He wanted to answer all the questions we (my brother and I)
41. had, but he never encouraged us to have sex outside marriage. In fact, he
42. discouraged it. But because I learned about it from him, the connotations I
43. learned were positive and I find sex inseparable from a moral aspect.