

Appendix I: Early Interview Schedule

02/11/01

Introduction:

This interview should last around 1 to 1 1/2 hours, though we can talk longer if you like. As we will be talking about issues surrounding your relationship with your partner and sexual orientation, you may consider some of the questions to be rather personal. I want to make sure that you feel comfortable. If there are any questions that you do not wish to answer or any topics you do not wish to discuss, I will respect your wishes. I would also like to ask your permission to tape record this interview. Only myself and possibly a professional transcriber will hear the tape. After that, transcripts from the interviews will be anonymised. You can choose your own pseudonym if you want to. After I have finished a research project, I will provide you with a summary of the results. Does that seem reasonable? Do you have any questions?

If they ask about my own sexual orientation identity or relationship status, I will tell them that I am happy to talk about that at the end of the interview. I expect that information might affect the way the interview goes.

BACKGROUND -- I'm going to start off with a few short questions about your background and your life now.

What do you do?

Do you own your home?

Where are you from originally?

Urban or rural?

How long have you lived here?

Do you consider yourself religious?

Were you brought up with a religion?

When you were growing up, was your family comfortable about sex?

What sort of ideas did they have about how boys and girls should act?

SEXUAL ORIENTATION -- Now I'd like to move on to sexual orientation.

Do you think of yourself as having a sexual orientation?

Are there any labels you like to use?

What does that mean to you?

Where do you think your sexual orientation comes from?

Do you think it has ever changed?

Do you think it ever could?

Why or why not?
How do think you might feel if it did?

How important do you think your sexual orientation is to your identity?
Has this changed over time?
Do you think there are other things about yourself that are more important?

Do you think there are any advantages to being [label]?
What about disadvantages?

YOUR RELATIONSHIP -- Can we talk about your relationship now?

How long have you and your partner been together?
Do you live together? How long have you been living together?

How did you meet?

When you met, did you know your partner's sexual identity?
If so, how did you feel about that at the time?
Do you think this might have been a factor in your attraction towards them?
If not, when did you find out?
How did you feel when you did find out?
Have those feelings changed over time?

Does it seem it seems you like you are in a "mixed" relationship?
If so, how? If not, why not?
Thinking back, do you think this has changed over time?

[If 'straight'] Before you met your partner, had you had relationships or friendships with people who had a different sexual orientation identity from yourself?
Do you think this had an affect on your thoughts and feelings about sexual orientation?

Do you feel you have benefited from having a partner with a different sexual orientation identity?
Has your relationship made you think about your own identity differently?

Do you think your thoughts and attitudes about sexual orientation have changed over the course of your relationship?

(If mixed sex) are you married or engaged?
Would you consider getting married?
Does this [cause tension with/get approval from] queer identified friends?
What about straight friends and family?

Has sexual orientation ever been an issue as part of your conflicts with your partner?
Do you want to tell me what happened?
Serious or joking -- how did make you feel?

Have you ever experienced pressures as a mixed identity couple that made you consider

splitting up?

If so, what have the pressures been?

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

Do people make assumptions about your sexuality or politics because of your relationship?

(For example that you are both straight or gay, sexually open, a traitor, liberal)

Do people assume make other assumptions about your relationship?

How to feel about this?

How do you deal with this?

Do your friends and family know about your identities?

How do they feel about this?

Do you receive support?

Do they raise concerns?

Have you experienced harassment, prejudice or discrimination as an individual or couple?

This might include physical attacks, sexual innuendo that made you uncomfortable, name calling, job discrimination, threats, sexual violence, nasty comments, etc.

If so, what has happened?

How have you responded?

Have you dealt with these issues with your partner?

Do you and your partner talk about other people you find attractive?

If not, why do you think you don't?

If so, is this comfortable?

Does it make a difference whether the other person is of the same or other sex?

Have you and your partner discussed monogamy?

Can I ask what you have decided for your relationship?

Do you stick to this agreement?

Do you think your partner does?

Who are the people you feel closest to?

Who are the people you spend the most of your time with?

Are you involved in any (sexual orientation category) specific groups?

Place -- now I want to ask you some questions about where you spend your time

How much time to spend at work?

What is it like there? How do people talk about sexuality there?

Do you feel comfortable there?

Where else do you spend your time?

What is it like in those places? How do people talk about sexuality in those places?

Do you feel comfortable in those places?

Where do you spend your leisure time?

What is it like there? How do people talk about sexuality there?
Do you feel comfortable there?

How do you feel about events like Pride Scotland?
Have you ever been to Pride Scotland?
Alone or as a couple?
How did you feel?

Do you go to other gay events or venues?
Do you consider yourself as part of a gay or queer community? Does your partner?

Are there any other places where you feel either particularly comfortable or particularly uncomfortable?

Conclusion -- just two more things

Have you had conversations with your partner about this upcoming interview? What did you talk about? You don't need to tell me what it was, but I'm interested in knowing whether there was anything you decided you didn't want to talk about.

The report I will write for people who agreed to be interviewed will discuss what I think the interviews can tell us about how the concept of sexual orientation affects people. Although I cannot guarantee I will cover every issue which everyone is interested in, I would like to know if there is anything else you would be interested in knowing about the other people I interviewed.

Is there anything else you want to say or anything you want to ask me about?

I just want to say again that the information you have provided me will be kept anonymous. Would you like to choose your own pseudonym or should I choose one for you?

Appendix II: Overambitious Interview Schedule

01/02/02

Introduction:

This interview should last around 1 to 1 1/2 hours, though we can talk longer if you like. As we will be talking about issues surrounding your relationship with your partner and sexual orientation, you may consider some of the questions to be rather personal. I want to make sure that you feel comfortable. If there are any questions that you do not wish to answer or any topics you do not wish to discuss, I will respect your wishes. I would also like to ask your permission to tape record this interview. Only myself and possibly a professional transcriber will hear the tape. After that, transcripts from the interviews will be anonymised. You can choose your own pseudonym if you want to. After I have finished a research project, I will provide you with a summary of the results. Are you happy with all of that? Do you have any questions?

If they ask about my own sexual orientation identity or relationship status, I will tell them that I am happy to talk about that at the end of the interview. I expect that information might affect the way the interview goes.

A. BACKGROUND-- First of all, do you mind telling me a little bit about yourself?

How old are you?

Have you always lived here?

No-- How long have you lived here? Where did you live previously?

Are you currently employed?

Yes-- What do you do? Did you require qualifications?

Have you had different jobs before your current one?

No -- Have you previously been employed?

Yes-- What did you do? Did you require qualifications?

Do you have any hobbies?

Do you donate money to, or get involved with, any charity or voluntary work?

Do you own your home?

Do you consider yourself religious?

Were you brought up with a religion?

Can you tell me a little bit about the family you grew up in?

When you were growing up, was your family comfortable about sex?

What sort of ideas did they have about how boys and girls should act?

How would you identify yourself in terms of class?

And in terms of nationality? How about ethnicity? And gender?

B. SEXUAL ORIENTATION-- Now I'd like to move on to sexual orientation.

Do you think of yourself as having a sexual orientation?

How do you feel about sexual orientation labels?

Are there any labels you like to use?

Yes -- How well do you feel that [identity] is a good label for you?

No -- Why not?

How long have you thought of yourself as [identity]?

Have the labels that you use to describe your sexual orientation changed over time?

Yes -- why?

Do you think your sexual orientation has changed over time?

Yes -- What happened? How did you feel?

No -- Do you think it ever could?

Why or why not?

How do think you might feel if it did?

Would matter how it changed?

Have you ever felt like you were "coming out of the closet" about your sexual orientation?

Do you think it is important for lesbian, gay and bisexual people to "come out"?

Why or why not?

Do you think coming out is important politically?

Do you think it is important for heterosexual people to talk about their sexualities?

Why or why not?

Do you think this is different from "coming out"?

[If monosexual identified] Have you ever been attracted to someone who was [other sex category]?

Yes -- Can you tell me what happened?

No-- Do you think you ever could be?

[If monosexual identified] Have you ever had a sexual fantasy or dream about someone who was [other sex category]?

Yes -- How did that make you feel?

No-- Do you think you ever might?

What do you think are in the main things that you find attractive about other people?

How important do you think that gender is in your attraction to other people?

Is your [sexual orientation identity] very important to how you think about yourself?

Has this changed over time?

Do you think there are other things about yourself that are more important?

Do you think there are any advantages to being [label]?

What about disadvantages?

What do you think about the phrase "straight acting"?

Do you read any of the gay, lesbian or bisexual press?

Why or why not?

What do you think of it?

Have you ever then involved in any more gay, lesbian or bisexual groups?

Why or why not?

What was it like?

Have you ever you supported any gay, lesbian or bisexual political organisations?

No -- Why not?

Yes -- Why?

Which ones?

How?

Do you think any issues are specifically gay, lesbian or bisexual issues?

Yes -- Can you give me some examples?

Do you think that straight identified people are affected by these issues?

No -- why not?

C. YOUR RELATIONSHIP-- Can we talk about relationships now?

Have you had any other committed romantic relationships besides your current partner?

For each one: how long did it last?

Did you live together?

Did your partner have the same sexual orientation identity as you?

Briefly, could you describe your relationship and how it ended?

Have you had sexual experiences with others besides committed romantic partners?

How long have you and your partner been together?

Do you live together? How long have you been living together?

How did you meet?

Were you attracted to them the first time you met?

What was it about your partner that you first found attractive about them?

When you met, did you know your partner's sexual identity? Did they know yours?

If so, how did you feel about that at the time?

Do you think this might have been a factor in your attraction towards them?

If not, when did you find out?

How did you feel when you did find out?

Have those feelings changed over time?

How would you say your relationship compares to the ideal of a traditional or conventional one?

How equal do you think your relationship is?

Does it seem you like you are in a "mixed" relationship?

If so, how? If not, why not?

Thinking back, do you think this has changed over time?

[If 'straight'] Before you met your partner, had you had relationships or friendships with people who had a different sexual orientation identity from yourself?

Do you think this had an affect on your thoughts and feelings about sexual orientation?

Do you feel you have benefited from having a partner with a different sexual orientation identity?

Has your relationship made you think about your own identity differently?

Do you think your thoughts and attitudes about sexual orientation have changed over the course of your relationship?

(If mixed sex) are you married or engaged?

Would you consider getting married?

Do you think of this gets approval from any your friends or family?

Do you think any of your friends or family (would) disapprove of marriage?

Have you ever had or considered having a commitment ceremony?

Do you think of this gets approval from any your friends or family?

Do you think any of your friends or family (would) disapprove?

How important do you think is sex to your relationship?

Do you think that your sexual attraction for your partner or your sex life together is affected by your sexual orientations?

Do you think your sex life would be different if you both had the same sexual orientation?

Has sexual orientation ever been an issue as part of your conflicts with your partner?

Do you want to tell me what happened?

Serious or joking -- how did it make you feel?

Have you ever experienced pressures as a mixed identity couple that made you consider splitting up?

If so, what have the pressures been?

D. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

Do you think people make assumptions about your sexuality because of your relationship?

How to feel about this?

How do you deal with this?

Do your friends and family know about you and your partners' identities?

How do they feel about this?

Do you receive support?

Do they raise concerns?

Have you ever been called a derogatory name having to do with sexual orientation, like poof, dyke, queer or breeder?

If so, what has happened?

How have you responded?

Have you dealt with these issues with your partner?

Have you ever experienced any other forms of abuse?

What about physical attacks?

Sexual harassment or sexual violence?

If so, what has happened?

How have you responded?

Have you dealt with these issues with your partner?

Have you ever felt that you have suffered discrimination because of others perceptions of your identity or relationship?

If so, what has happened?

How have you responded?

Have you dealt with these issues with your partner?

Have you ever felt excluded from a gay venue or event because you were perceived as being straight or not queer enough?

If so, what has happened?

How have you responded?

Have you dealt with these issues with your partner?

Has anyone ever assumed that it would be acceptable to make homophobic, biphobic or anti-straight jokes or comments in front of you?

If so, what has happened?

How have you responded?

Have you dealt with these issues with your partner?

Do you and your partner talk about other people you find attractive?

If not, why do you think you don't?

If so, is this comfortable?

Does it make a difference whether the other person is of the same or other sex?

Have you and your partner discussed monogamy?

Have you agreed on an arrangement?

How do feel about that?

Who are the people you feel closest to?

How do you know each of these people?

How would you describe your relationships with each of these people?

Are there any issues which you can talk about more easily with some of these people than others?

What about issues around sex and sexuality?

What do you think it is about [these people] that makes it easier for you to talk about [these issues]?

Does it have to do with (prompt as appropriate) gender, sexuality, politics, age?

Who are the people you spend the most of your time with?

How would you describe their sexual identities and politics?

Are you involved in any (sexual orientation category) specific groups?

E. Place -- now I want to ask you some questions about where you spend your time

How much time to spend at work?

What is it like there? How do people talk about sexuality there?

Do you feel comfortable there?

Where else do you spend your time?

What is it like in those places? How do people talk about sexuality in those places?

Do you feel comfortable in those places?

Where do you spend your leisure time?

What is it like there? How do people talk about sexuality there?

Do you feel comfortable there?

How do feel about Pride events?

Have you ever been to a Pride event?

Alone or as a couple?

How did you feel?

Do you go to other gay events or venues?

Do you consider yourself as part of a gay or queer community? Does your partner?

Are there are other places where you feel either particularly comfortable or particularly uncomfortable?

Conclusion -- just a couple more things

Have you had conversations with your partner about this upcoming interview? What did you talk about? You don't need to tell me what it was, but I'm interested in knowing whether there was anything you decided you didn't want to talk about.

Can I ask why you agreed to participate in this interview?

The report I will write for people who agreed to be interviewed will discuss what I think the interviews can tell us about how the concept of sexual orientation affects people. Although I cannot guarantee I will cover every issue which everyone is interested in, I would like to know if there is anything else you would be interested in knowing about the other people I interview.

Is there anything else you want to say or anything you want to ask me about?

I just want to say again that the information you have provided me will be kept anonymous. Would you like to choose your own pseudonym or should I choose one for you?

Appendix III: Focussed Interview Schedule

09/10/02

Introduction:

This interview should last around 2 hours, though we can talk longer if you like. As we will be talking about issues surrounding your relationship with your partner and sexual orientation, you may consider some of the questions to be rather personal. I want to make sure that you feel comfortable. If there are any questions that you do not wish to answer or any topics you do not wish to discuss, I will respect your wishes. I would also like to ask your permission to tape record this interview. Only myself and possibly a professional transcriber will hear the tape. After that, transcripts from the interviews will be anonymised. You can choose your own pseudonym if you want to. After I have finished the research project, I will provide you with a summary of the results. Are you happy with all of that? Do you have any questions?

A. BACKGROUND -- First of all, do you mind telling me a little bit about yourself?

How old are you?

Have you always lived in [this city/area]?

No -- How long have you lived here? Where did you live previously?

Are you currently employed?

Yes -- What do you do? Did you require qualifications?

How would you identify yourself in terms of class?

And in terms of nationality? How about ethnicity? And gender?

B. SEXUAL ORIENTATION IDENTITY

Do you think of yourself as having a sexual orientation?

Yes – How would you describe it?

What does that label mean to you?

Why do you use that label?

How accurate do you feel that label is?

No – what does that mean to you?

How long have you thought of yourself as [label]?

Why did you choose that label originally?

Are there are other labels that you have used or sometimes use now?

Why have you changed labels?

In what contexts do you use different labels?

Have you ever questioned or been confused about your sexual identity?

Can I ask you about how you feel about other labels being applied to you?

‘straight’ or ‘straight-acting’?
‘gay’ or ‘camp’?
‘lesbian’ or ‘dykey’?
‘queer’?
‘bisexual’?
‘masculine’ or ‘butch’?
‘feminine’ or ‘femme’?

Do you think your feelings about any of those labels have changed over time?

[If monosexual identified]Have you known someone of the same/other sex to be attracted to you?

Were there any particular incidents?
How did/does that makes you feel?
Do you think you would feel differently about that now than you did then?

Has anyone ever tried to label you [bisexual or straight or gay]?

Were there any particular incidents?
How did/does that make you feel?
Do you think you would feel differently about that now than you did then?

B. FEELINGS ABOUT SEXUALITY

Can you think of any examples where you have felt embarrassed, guilty or ashamed about something to do with sex?

Have you ever felt like there was something wrong with you because of your sexuality?

Can you think of any examples where are you have felt comfortable or happy about your sexuality?

Do you think your feelings about sexuality have changed as you have grown older?

How?
What do you think has lead to these changes?

Do you talk with other people about your emotions surrounding sexuality?

How do you feel talking about sexuality with me now?

C. SEXUAL ATTRACTIONS, BEHAVIOURS, DESIRES & FANTASIES

If you were writing a personal advertisement for a sexual partner, what characteristics would you say you were looking for?

Do you think you have a type or types of person you are attracted to?

How would you describe them?

Do you think that the types of people you find sexually attractive has changed over time?

Yes – how?
Why do you think that is?

What was it about your partner that you first found attractive about them?

What do you find sexy or attractive about your partner now?

Do you think your partner's sexual orientation identity has ever affected your attraction towards them?

Have you ever felt any sort of attraction for someone who you didn't expect to?

Yes -- Can you tell me what happened?

No -- Do you think you ever could be?

Do you have sexual fantasies?

What do you fantasise about?

Who are of the people in your fantasies?

Have you ever had a sexual fantasy or dream about someone who was you didn't expect to?

Yes -- How did that make you feel?

No -- Do you think you ever might?

Do you think you could be, or have you ever been, attracted to a “chick with a dick,” a man with a vulva, or a person with ambiguous genitals?

How do you feel about erotic stories, photographs and films?

What sorts of stories or images do you find sexy?

Do you and your partner enjoy erotic material together?

Do you and [partner name] talk about other people you find sexually attractive?

No -- Why do you think you don't?

Yes -- Is this comfortable?

Does it make a difference whether the other person is of the same or other sex?

Have you and [partner name] discussed monogamy?

Have you agreed on an arrangement?

How do feel about that?

Do you ever feel jealousy with your partner?

What sorts of things make you feel jealous?

Does the gender of the other person matter?

How do you deal with jealousy?

On a more practical level of learning about sex, can you tell me a bit about your sexual history?

First experiences?

Sexual activities?

Partners?

How would you describe your sex life with your partner?

What are your favourite sexual activities?

[if non-monogamous] And your sex life outside your relationship?

Are there any sexual activities that you would not like to try because the idea makes you uncomfortable?

Do you think that your sex life with [partner name] is affected by your sexual orientations?

Do you think your sex life would be different if you both thought of yourselves as [participant's label]?

What about if you both thought of yourselves as [partner's label]?

Conclusion -- just a couple more things

Have you had conversations with [partner name] about this upcoming interview? What did you talk about? You don't need to tell me what it was, but I'm interested in knowing whether there was anything you decided you didn't want to talk about.

Can I ask why you agreed to participate in this interview?

The report I will write for people who agreed to be interviewed will discuss what I think the interviews can tell us about how the concept of sexual orientation affects people. Although I cannot guarantee I will cover every issue which everyone is interested in, I would like to know if there is anything else you would be interested in knowing about the other people I interview.

Is there anything else you want to say or anything you want to ask me about?

Did you give any answers where you changed your mind after you said it?

Do you feel comfortable with everything you have said? Is there anything that you want me to be extra cautious about making extra anonymous? (Like if there is something you would feel uncomfortable your partner knowing that you said to me). If you later decided that there is something you want made extra anonymous or that you don't want on the record, let me know and we can work something out.

Appendix IV: Participant List

Alasdair was in his late sixties and had been with his wife for over 25 years. He identified as bisexual, though earlier in life had thought of himself as gay and was surprised to be attracted to his wife when they first met. In addition to his marriage, he also had casual sexual relationships with men.

Anne was in her late twenties. She had been in a partnership with a man for several years, in which they had agreed not have sexual experiences with others. Anne had identified as bisexual for much of her life, but after an unpleasant same-sex experience stopped being attracted to women and came to identify as heterosexual.

Anita identified as poly/dyke/switch, meaning she was interested in maintaining ongoing multiple romantic and/or sexual relationships, was only sexual attracted to men, enjoyed giving and receiving pain in S/M play and was also happy to switch butch/femme gender roles. She was in her early thirties. She had multiple play partners, most of whom identified as bisexual, and was actively seeking more.

Beth identified either as queer or bisexual and considered herself non-gendered. She was married to a man who did not label himself. They had agreed not have sexual relationships outside of the marriage. Beth was in her late twenties.

Diane had identified as lesbian until she found it too restrictive and came to call herself queer and 'a bit sort of fluid on gender'. She was involved in two significant erotic relationships: one with a male friend and another with a genderqueer ex-girlfriend. Diane was in her early thirties.

Douglas was in his late fifties and married. They had always agreed that he would have relationships with men as well. Although he found the idea of a sexual identity label appealing, none of them fit. This had advantages as well, he thought.

Erica long struggled with finding a sexual identity and felt much better when she gave up. She was in a long-term relationship with a gay-identified man. Both of them were free to engage in outside sexual relationships, though neither had the energy for multiple committed romances. She was in her early thirties and liked the word queer.

Eva was in her mid-twenties and identified as either bisexual or queer. She was in a relationship with a man where they had agreed not to have sex with other people, but actively discussed the possibility that it might happen. Her partner had only ever desired women but kept an open mind.

Kev was willing to use the label bisexual, but did not consider it an identity. He was in his early thirties and in a non-monogamous relationship with a man who had tried most sexual orientation labels and had given up on them.

Laurence was in his mid-twenties. He had only ever been sexual attracted to women, though was open to entertaining other possibilities and did not identify himself in terms of sexual orientation. He was in a monogamous relationship with a woman who identified herself as queer/bisexual.

Mark was in his early forties. His identity has shifted from homophobic, macho straight man to a rejection of sexual orientation. His relationships included a long-term loving sexual relationship with a gay identified man and a recent girlfriend who identified as straight.

Meg used various labels, including queer bisexual, always with the understanding among her friends that they did not denote a fixed identity. She was in an open relationship with a gay identified man. Meg was disappointed that all of her sexual encounters over the past three years had been with men and was looking for the opportunity to demonstrate that her bisexuality was not just theoretical. She was in her mid-thirties.

Melissa was in her mid twenties and did not use any labels. She was in a monogamous relationship with a man, though the boundaries in this regard were under discussion and had changed since the interview.

Pete was married to a woman who identified as bisexual. He had never been sexually attracted to another man nor did he expect to ever be, though could imagine falling in love with one. He was in his late twenties and preferred not to label himself.

Phyllis was in her late thirties. She had had long-term relationships with both women and men and considered herself either queer, but sometimes used bisexual. She was in a monogamous relationship with a straight-identified man.

Sandra was married to a straight identified man with whom she had a monogamous relationship. She was in her early forties and identified as bisexual and dykey.