Relationship status and identity construction in heterosexual women: A discourse analytic and personal construct study.

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This thesis reports the findings of three studies examining relationship status and identity construction in the talk of heterosexual women, from a feminist and social constructionist perspective. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 women in study 1 and 13 women for study 2, between the ages of twenty and eighty-seven, discussing their experiences of relationships. All interviews were transcribed and analysed using discourse analysis, by hand and using the Nudist 6 program. The resulting themes create distinct age-related marital status expectations. Unmarried women were aware they had to marry by a 'certain age' or face a 'lonely spinsterhood'. Through marriage women gained a socially accepted position associated with responsibility for others, self-sacrifice, a home-focused lifestyle and relational identification. Divorce was constructed as the consequence of personal faults and poor relationship care, reassuring the married of their own control over their status. Older unmarried women were constructed as deviant and pitiable, occupying social purgatory as a result of transgressing these valued conventions.

Study 3 used repertory grid tasks, with 33 women, analysing transcripts and notes alongside numerical data using Web Grid II internet analysis tool, to produce principle components maps demonstrating the relationships between relationship terms and statuses. This study illuminated the consistency with which women of different ages and status saw marriage as their ideal living situation and outlined the domestic responsibilities associated. Spinsters and single-again women were defined primarily by their lack of marriage and by loneliness. This highlighted the devalued position of older unmarried women. The results of these studies indicated a consistent set of age-related expectations of relationship status, acknowledged by women and reinforced by their families and friends, which render many unmarried women deviant and fail to acknowledge the potential variety of women's ways of living.

Keywords: spinster, single, marriage, relationships, feminism.

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Contents

Chapter 1. Introduction: Unmarried women in Western historical context

This study set out to explore the social meaning of the term 'spinster', and the ways in which unmarried women are constructed in contemporary society. Whether or not they personally accept the labels of 'spinster' or 'unmarried', all women in a patriarchal society that privileges heterosexual unions are positioned with respect to the married/unmarried dimension. Therefore the role played by relationship status in women's accounts of self and identity, and their constructions of 'unmarried' status in particular, are worthy of examination.

The investigation took a discursive approach, wherein identity was approached as a social achievement and an ongoing process of active construction. Socially available discourses were understood to both enable and constrain the process of identity construction. In the case of unmarried women these resources have been particularly constrained, both historically and in the contemporary context.

The literature review that follows traces the historical roots of the term 'spinster' and the material and social status of unmarried women in the past and in the contemporary period. Psychological theory and research on women's relationship status is reviewed, and can be seen to constitute an important 'expert' discourse through which women's relationship status is constructed as 'normal – abnormal', 'healthy – unhealthy'.

It is argued that discourses centralising and validating marriage have constructed the unmarried woman as deviant and Other (de Beauvoir, 1984). Despite recent demographic changes with respect to marriage and divorce, and the increasing prevalence of cohabitation as an alternative to marriage, it is argued that 'unmarried' is still constructed as a problematic status for women. Popular representations of the 'singleton' woman, together with expert pronouncements regarding the advantageous position of the married (e.g. Horowitz et al 1996), are argued to contribute to continued marginalisation of woman living outside permanent heterosexual unions.

1.1 Defining spinsterhood

The language used to define spinsterhood constitutes the discursive resources from which the unmarried woman has, throughout history, been constructed, named and evoked. The term

'spinster' was first recorded in 1362 and was used to refer to women who undertook the work of spinning. The word was attached to women's names indicating this occupation (Broom, 1986). In keeping with financial and class issues to be discussed, many of these working women did not marry and from the seventeenth century onwards 'spinster' became the legal descriptor for an unmarried woman (Hufton, 1984, Broom, 1986). Olwen Hufton (1984) proposes that 'spinster' did not come to be equated with 'old maid' till the eighteenth century when it is suggested the word acquired negative associations.

Although 'spinster' still refers to '1. An unmarried woman…' (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1990) its meaning varies depending upon the social position of unmarried women. Definitions have evolved to include value judgements regarding a woman's age, likelihood of marrying and character that attach negative connotations to the female unmarried state. Spinsters, by contemporary definition, are women 'who [remain] single after the usual age for marrying' (p. 1233, Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 1989) or beyond 'the conventional (or common) age for marrying' (American Heritage Dictionary, 1996, Merriam-Webster, 2000). These descriptions infer the existence of an age-boundary denoting female marriageability and suggest that to remain unmarried beyond this age is to defy convention. There are no corresponding age-related conditions attached to the equivalent male term, 'bachelor'.

Definitions of 'spinster' also include reference to the idea that they are 'thought unlikely to marry' (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1990, Merriam-Webster, 2000). This further suggests that when unmarried women are known as 'spinster' they are considered ineligible for marriage, an institution that occupies a valued (and central) status position (within this society) (Maushart, 2001). These definitions communicate some of the historically accrued negativity surrounding spinsterhood. Webster's Dictionary (1996) singularly suggests that a spinster may also be a 'woman of evil character; - so called from being forced to spin in a house of correction' associating remaining unmarried with the possession of undesirable personal characteristics. These definitions construct the spinster as an 'unconventional', unmarriageable woman of advanced years, possibly of 'evil character'. It is suggested that the connotations attached to the term 'spinster' reflect the history of disfavour demonstrated towards unmarried women (Franzen, 1996).

Definitions of the parallel term describing the unmarried male 'bachelor' have resoundingly different associations. A bachelor is defined as 'an unmarried man' (American Heritage Dictionary, 1996, Merriam-Webster, 2000) without any additional age-related norms or

inferences regarding the character of the individual. This suggests that it is not breaking any kind of convention for a man to remain unmarried at any age. On the contrary, Erdman B. Palmore (1997) suggests that men may enjoy increased romantic success with age as a result of increased money, status and power. In comparison to their description of a spinster's potentially 'evil character', Webster's Dictionary (1996) employ a quotation to illustrate the term 'bachelor' referring to a 'merry and mellow' bachelor (W. Irving, cited in Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary, 1996). These definitions demonstrate that historically bachelors have been a far less maligned group than spinsters.

Though still employed in select contexts, such as government statistics and Anglican marriage ceremonies, it would be possible to argue that the terms 'spinster' and 'bachelor' are not often used today. However, the subgroups defined by these terms still exist and, it is suggested, the stereotypical representation of unmarried people, particularly women, and the employment of associated imagery continues. It is proposed that the availability of the option for women to remain unmarried and live independently of heterosexual relationships is important for feminism. Although this legally possible, it is suggested that lifestyle choices are endowed with differing approval by society, as indicated by definitions and uses of these terms, and that unmarried women remain particularly marginalised group (Gordon, 1994).

1.2 Spinsterhood in Western history

The history of spinsterhood is to be outlined in order to demonstrate the development of society's approach towards women wishing to remain unmarried, throughout past centuries. This narrative is seen to demonstrate the closeness of ties between the social situation of unmarried women and the political position of women. Specifically it is proposed that approaches to female independence and employment have been intimately connected to the lot of the spinster.

The life course of both men and women, between 1500 and 1800, was modelled around marriage and work (Hufton, 1995). Olwen Hufton (1995) describes medieval marriage as based around the need for financial resources and practical help in running businesses and farms, rather than idea of a religious or romantic commitment. Profiles for marriage were not dissimilar to contemporary figures, the average age of marriage between 1750-1800 being between 23 and 26 with the husband on average 2 years older. Though there were laws around suitability for marriage, stating partners should be 'fitting' in age, religion and wealth, these could be waived if people were over twenty-five and unmarried. This demonstrates the

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infrequency of such occurrences, the seriousness with which they were considered and idea that life choices excluding marriage were not countenanced.

An integral part of the marriage system, without which marriage was unacceptable, was the dowry payment, made to the groom by the bride's parents or, otherwise, by herself. Dowry payments ranged from several times the yearly income of the head of the brides' household to a minimum of livestock and a bed. If families could not afford dowries girls were expected, in their early teens, to find domestic or industrial work and labour until they saved enough to finance their own marriages. Numbers of spinsters in the population tended to increase following formalised dowry increases or wage decreases (Hufton, 1995).

In the 1500s and 1600s the female labour market was structured only around the young working class woman who would work until marriage. Lace work offered these younger spinsters a degree of 'precarious independence' (Sharpe, 1999) though wages would not support a woman living alone. Middle and upper class spinsters were sometimes given modest houses on family estates and 'employed' to tend the young and old of a family. It was impossible for women of these classes to gain paid work so they were at the mercy of their male relatives if they remained unmarried facing loss of home, status and social role if their supporting father died or brother married (Gittins, 1985, Jalland, 1986).

Spinsters in Catholic countries had the additional option of entering convents, for example, in 1650 in Milan one third of women became nuns. Older daughters were likely to be sent to convents to postpone dowry payment till the youngest child required it. Additionally the ill or disabled were also likely to be sent. Becoming a nun may have been a positive decision for many women who wished to work and not to marry. Nuns were involved in much caring community work and also provided with a network of support, subsistence and a respected social role (Hufton, 1984). Entry to a convent was, however, only available to those who could make the required payment, which was high enough to exclude working-class women. However, the church also provided spinsters with a social outlet and the opportunity to undertake charity work. The church were determined to minimise payments made as Poor Relief and therefore were unmarried women to have children they were instrumental in forcing marriage (Gittins, 1985).

In the eighteenth century unmarried women started to be accepted into the world of work (Hufton, 1984). They began to undertake long-term domestic service and teaching in schools

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or as governesses, often living-in, receiving payment for the tasks they had always undertaken within families. Teaching, which had been an exclusively male profession, became female-identified in the mid-1800s and was dominated by spinsters for nearly 100 years (Blount, 2000). Though teaching was expected to cease upon marriage many women refrained from marrying at all and were among the first to have the opportunity to chose to live independent lives. Spinster teachers were preferred for having no personal commitments and became an accepted part of their communities (Blount, 2000). These opportunities enabled unmarried women to live independently of their families, frequently in groups termed 'spinster clusters' sharing living costs. Nevertheless spinsters were a vulnerable group with life expectancies significantly shorter than the married (Hufton, 1995).

Spinsters were able to work and retain independence in youth and middle age but later faced poverty as a result of low wages prohibiting saving and the death of supportive male kin (Anderson, 1984). One daughter in larger families remained a spinster suggesting that this was likely to be a consequence of pressure for her to care for her elderly parents (Jalland, 1986). Michael Anderson (1984) suggests that relatives supported one fifth of spinsters over 55, many of the others living at the mercy of state and charity contributions. Criminal records and reports of prostitution demonstrate the difficulties of surviving as an unmarried older woman without family support, many also taking Poor Relief or being put into workhouses or asylums (Anderson, 1984). Older spinsters were far more likely to experience poverty than bachelors as a result of their relatively poor wages and the unskilled occupations in which they were employed. The family remained the central economic unit and the negative spinster stereotype began to emerge in literature (Hufton, 1984).

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries unmarried women were actively ostracised and defined as a social 'problem' (Chesser, 1952, Jeffreys, 1997, Holmes, 1998). Census figures from 1850 confirmed that the number of unmarried women in the population was greater than the proportion of men. Spinsters were labelled by commentators 'surplus' women, implying that women not involved in marital relationships with men were extra to society's (i.e. men's) requirements. It was frequently suggested that they should emigrate or be deported to colonies in order to find husbands (Fink & Holden, 1999). The target of criticism from social theorists, novelists and doctors spinsters were ridiculed as deviant (Jalland, 1986). In 1838 Carlile (cited in Jalland, 1986) proposed that spinsters 'belonged to a 'sort of sub-animal class' because deprivation of the passion of love produced 'a sad mental defect'' (p. 256, here presuming that 'the passion of love' could only be encountered within marriage).

It is possible to interpret the persecution of spinsters as a result of the potential threat they posed, as women living independently of men, to the status quo (the majority of women were married and dependent) (Fink & Holden, 1999). By the early 1900s there was great concern about the number of unmarried women choosing to work, a trend identified by Theodore Roosevelt as 'race suicide' (cited in Blount, 2000). This led to increased interest from the church, doctors and psychologists, condemning spinsterhood, in promoting marriage.

Spinsters, many involved in social work and political organisations, constituted a challenge to the inevitability of these choices by providing an example to other women of a different, independent way of life (Freeman & Klaus, 1984). Many had chosen to remain unmarried (Jeffreys, 1997) and were able to take advantage of new opportunities, in education and employment. The turn of the century saw more accommodation become available to young unmarried women offering greater lifestyle choice. An increasing number of women left their parents homes to live together, in all-female organisations like schools and apartment buildings (Freeman & Klaus, 1984). In rare cases, where women achieved independent success and economic fortune, spinsters could cohabit forming what are sometimes known as 'Boston marriages' (Kennedy, 2001). Based on friendship or Lesbian relationships some famous female writers and poets occupied the then exceptional position of being able to comfortably survive independently of male relations (Kennedy, 2001).

Spinsters undertook much pioneering feminist work and made up the majority of suffrage group members (Freeman & Klaus, 1984). Free of the duties and restrictions imposed upon wives, spinsters were able to become actively involved in public social concerns, amongst which was the critique of male sexuality. Conceptions of the male sexual drive and the female responsibility to be subject to men's 'needs' were disputed, as was the routine employment of prostitutes on these grounds. Both men and women opposed this campaign and spinsters were portrayed in literature as having interests removed from those of the wife and mother.

This argument was employed by critics against granting women the vote, suggesting that the 'Privileges which the spinster most desire[d] the wife [was] indifferent to,' (Heape, p. 4. 1913. cited in Jeffreys, 1997). This encouraged the majority of women (married mothers) to reject an opportunity to gain basic political rights on the grounds that votes would be utilised by spinsters to their detriment. Critics used this tactic to marginalise spinsters and minimise the impact of their campaigns, rendering their personal situations more visible than their

arguments. This division is recreated by present-day antifeminists, and reflected in lay perceptions of feminism (Percy, 1999), who commonly claim that feminism has failed to identify with women's real concerns, implying that feminists themselves are different to women (e.g. Crittenden, 1999).

At the dawn of sexology in the early twentieth century a new importance was attached to sexual activity. Heterosexual intercourse within marriage was promoted as necessary for health and an ideology of compulsory heterosexuality and compulsory intercourse was popularised. This was detrimental to the position of spinsters: 'Until nature evolves a neuter sex, celibacy will ever be a mark of imperfection,' (Besant, p. 6, 1901, cited in Jeffreys, 1997). Some women took on these ideas and formed a movement calling itself 'New Feminism' celebrating marriage, heterosex and motherhood. This placed spinsters in opposition to 'New Feminists', popular sexological literature and commentators. The presumed absence of sexual activity and mothering from the lives of spinsters was used as a way of discrediting their arguments.

Stella Browne, a birth control and abortion campaigner who supported sexological prescriptions, suggested 'It will be an unspeakable catastrophe if our richly complex Feminist movement with its possibilities of power and joy falls under the domination of sexually deficient and disappointed women,' (1912, cited in Jeffreys, 1997). Spinsterhood became associated with lesbianism, which was seen as a deviant pathology. At this time spinster teachers came to be viewed with suspicion, as unfit to be working with children, and the recruitment of married teachers was encouraged (Blount, 2000). Negative images of spinsterhood served as a warning to other women who might be tempted to live their lives outside marriage and motherhood (Fink & Holden, 1999).

During the First World War women were widely employed in munitions and making tanks and aircraft giving them a taste of emotional and financial independence. However after the war ended in 1918, though women gained the vote and the first female admissions of women to Oxford university, women lost their jobs on a large scale and were replaced by returned men (Beddoe 1993). Though the 1920s have been labelled a time of 'sexual liberation' the freedom promoted was only the specific freedom to have marital heterosexual intercourse. Consequently, it ostracised those who had no wish to involve themselves in this (Jeffreys, 1997).

It was assumed that spinsters suffered both psychologically and physically from abstinence as, if they were not married and having intercourse with men, women were presumed to be sexually inactive. Multiple connected, derogatory explanations for the existence of spinsters as a group were proposed. It was suggested that spinsters were scared of heterosexual intercourse and transforming this fear into feminist politics and professional ambitions, thereby discrediting their campaigns and occupational credibility. Spinsters were seen to be Lesbian 'inverts' repressing their true desires, binding them into a position where asserting their independence was interpreted as masking a true desire for dependence (Jeffreys, 1997, Blount, 2000). Repressed maternal and sexual instincts among spinsters were seen to constitute a destructive force within society, located as a threat to marriage and linked to increasing divorce rates (Fink & Holden, 1999).

Sexologist Havelock Ellis (1913) developed an 'inverted' masculine Lesbian stereotype which was applied to spinsters, formally pathologising female homosexuality and creating another way to pressurise women into conforming to marriage and heterosexuality (Franzen, 1996). The concept of 'frigidity' was also employed to label women who did not, in accordance with sexological prescriptions, positively embrace the idea of heterosexual intercourse. 'Frigidity' was seen as an internal, personal pathology and a potential 'cause' of spinster feminism. Sexual 'coldness' was connected to spinsterhood and feminism, tying up these positions with 'man-hating' and 'bitterness' (Jeffreys, 1997). These ideas functioned to pressure women into dependent marriages and discourage solidarity and intimate relations among these women. Whereas spinsters might, before, have been able to engage in Lesbian relationships if they wished, now all were suspected of sexual deviance and to be Lesbian was seen to indicate psychological abnormality.

Jeffreys (1997) describes how usage of the term 'spinster' changed in the 1920s and 30s to mean not only an unmarried woman, but an unmarried woman who were sexually inexperienced with men. In this way some unmarried women escaped persecution as 'frigid' 'man-haters', supporting 'New Feminist' ideas and 'doing' intercourse. This appears to be the first identifiable fragmentation of the class of unmarried women, on the basis of experiencing and endorsing heterosexual intercourse, and can be seen to have evolved into stereotypes of contemporary 'singles'. In 1939 the Second World War broke out and women were once again needed to work outside the home, however after this women experienced even greater social pressure to return to the home (Beddoe, 1993).

After World War Two there was a surge in levels of both marriage and divorce (Coleman, 2000). Marriage rates doubled for both men and women in their twenties and whereas pre-war 15 percent of women and 8 percent of men remained single for life, post-war only 5 percent of women and 7 percent of men did so (Coleman, 2000). Many women had adjusted to independent working lives during the conflict and soldiers returned home to different family lives. Women were encouraged to return to former positions as housewives but this did not, as intended, lead to the re-establishment of the family as was. The Married Women's Act passed in 1923 and amendments made in 1937 allowed women to obtain a divorce on the grounds of adultery (an option available to men from 1857) and there followed a sharp increase in divorce. In order to counteract this, the government set up the Marriage Guidance Council (MGC), with the intention of stabilising marriage.

Divorce increases at this time can be attributed to post-war trauma and the new opportunity for women to divorce men on grounds of adultery. Consequently state investment in preventing divorce could be interpreted as potentially oppressive. It was suggested that women's 'equality' (being employed outside the home) was bad for the 'family' and the MGC campaigned for the restoration of the traditional family, with wives in a subservient role. Secretary of the MGC Joseph Brayshaw suggested that 'Whenever you get the equality of women emerging in law or in custom, there you get increased breakdown of marriage,' (p. 85, 1952, in Jeffreys, 1990). The 1950s can be seen as the years of the last big promotion of the traditional family.

The 1960s were heralded as another time of 'sexual revolution'. The decade is known as a time of 'free love' and retains a reputation as celebrating promiscuity as a result of widely available contraceptive advances. Contrary to this impression marriage increased in popularity at this time (Jeffreys, 1990) while divorce rates rose dramatically (Scott, 1997). By the early 1970s marriage rates for men in their twenties doubled and those of women trebled (Coleman, 2000). Many social changes took place and all women were, by this time, likely to experience a time between being under the care of their parents and marriage when they were 'single' (Jeffreys, 1990). The creation of this stage of life had been facilitated by the influx of women into higher education enabling them to gain access to employment and financial independence.

However, it would be possible to view this as a not wholly positive development. Jeffreys (1990) looks at the sexualisation of the single woman as a further extension of compulsory

heterosexuality. The social acceptance of sexual activity among the unmarried could be seen as increased freedom or rather as the extension of a society-wide pressure for all women to be involved in heterosexual intercourse. Shulamith Firestone (1970) suggests that the 'sexual revolution' made available a new segment of the population, unmarried women, for exploitation. Jessie Bernard (1972) reinforces this view, quoting a gynaecologist Barbara Bross who wrote in an article titled 'How to Love Like a Real Woman' published in Cosmopolitan in 1969, 'Sexual abstinence in a normally constituted person is always pathogenic, we have been given sex organs to use them. If we don't use them they decay and cause irreparable damage to body and mind. This is blunt, firm, indisputable and true.' (p.228). Jeffreys (1990) sees this period as the end of the 'spinster' and unmarried women being able to live independently of men.

Today most unmarried women have the opportunity to, and often the necessity to, work and live independently of marriage and family. They are ideologically free to engage in sexual relationships and cohabit with partners, of either sex. However it is suggested that the stigma attached to spinsterhood has not completely faded but rather become part of modern discourses of 'sad singlehood'. It will be demonstrated that images of the unmarried woman are still constructed as both lacking and deviant and that spinsters experience their situation as both difficult to occupy and deviant.

Chapter 2. Unmarried women in the Contemporary period.

2.1   Demographic trends

Much political and media attention has been paid, in recent years, to changes in rates of marriage and divorce and to cohabitation and household size. The proportions of population that constitute different groups and recent figures regarding relationship status are to be described and analysed.

Between 1984 and 1996 (the last year for which statistics are available) the number of marriages in England and Wales declined and the proportion of divorces increased (Government Statistical Service, 1999). Marriage rates have fallen to an all-time low, with age at first marriage increasing and proportion of individuals getting married decreasing for a quarter of a century (Coleman, 2000). The number of divorces sought each year now exceeds half of the number of marriages occurring. As a consequence, many adults are now experiencing unmarried life for a second time, increasing total numbers of 'single' adults (Haskey and Shaw, 1999). Unmarried groups, the never-married (28%), divorced (8%) and widowed (9%) currently make up 45% of the adult population. The number of never-married adults is increasing, perhaps artificially due to the extent to which people are postponing marriage or the increasing popularity of cohabitation (Haskey and Shaw 1999). Charles Waehler (1997) suggests an interaction of these trends, proposing that when people delay marriage they are less likely to marry.

Cohabitation, prior to marriage, first provoked statistical interest in the 1970s becoming increasingly acceptable and popular in the 1980s (Coleman, 2000). Numbers cohabiting increased a second time in 1993 among the never-married and by the late 1990s 60 percent of marriages and 75 percent of remarriages we preceded by cohabitation (Coleman, 2000). Levels have risen most notably among never-married men and women aged between 35 and 44 (Haskey and Shaw, 1999). The General Household Survey (GHS) of 1996 suggested that over 25% of all non-married women aged 16-24 were cohabiting. John Haskey and Chris Shaw (1999) predict that the number of couples cohabiting will double over the next 25 years, the biggest rise occurring again among the over 35s. The number of marriages is predicted to decline, but by less than the increase in cohabitation, suggesting an overall increase in couples. However, the number of people in the population is predicted to rise at a greater rate meaning that couples will make up a lesser proportion of the population in all age groups.

It is interesting to consider where those in same-sex cohabiting relationships fall in these statistics. Gay and Lesbian couples cannot legally marry and join this group and they are excluded from cohabiting figures from the Office of National Statistics (ONS). Haskey and Shaw (1999) detail how GHS responses from same-sex couples have been excluded from analyses on the grounds that 'sample numbers are very small' and 'the absence of a specific question on same-sex couples' (p. 8). This implies that depictions of Gay and Lesbian cohabitation are not vital to portraying the population and that Gay and Lesbian couples are essentially 'different' requiring 'specific' measures. Consequently, these statistics construct an inaccurate and hetero-centred impression of the composition of society. It is suggested that including these relationships might enrich research findings and give a more valid portrayal of experiences (Patterson, Ciabttari & Schwartz, 1999, Wood & Duck, 1995).

It is estimated that there will be an increase in the number of adults choosing to live alone, acknowledging that any number of this group may be engaged in same-sex cohabiting relationships. Trends in household size, between 1971 and 1996, confirm that the most marked increase has been in single-person households (GHS, 1996). It is proposed that this growth has resulted from an increase in both young people and the elderly living alone. Coleman (2000) suggests that by 1991 almost as many adults were living alone (27%) as were living in marriages with dependent children (30%). The increase in individuals living alone may be a result of personal choice or the numbers divorcing, however, the pattern could be an artefact of the trend in delayed marriage. It is still rare for people to remain unmarried (Gordon, 1994) over 90% of adults marrying at least once (Campbell, 1981, Dryden, 1999) and the majority of divorced persons remarrying within five years (Fitzpatrick, 1987).

The phenomenon of cohabitation before, or as an alternative to, marriage has received a lot of attention, as the herald of social change. When it first became popular, in the 1980s, it was seen as a precursor to marriage however, it may increasingly be accepted as an alternative (Haskey & Shaw, 1999). A choice less frequently considered, as a social phenomenon with the potential to change society, is that made by the increasing number of adults living alone (Haskey & Shaw, 1999). This group makes up a larger proportion of the population than cohabiting couples (only 8% of the adult population) (Haskey & Shaw, 1999). Though many of the presently unmarried will most likely marry eventually they are finding alternative ways to live and many will have actively chosen to be single. They form a sizeable group which, it is suggested, is underrepresented in the media and largely invisible.

2.2   Material correlates of marital status

2.2.1   Money & marital status

As is evident from the history of spinsterhood, the opportunity for women to remain unmarried has always been contingent upon the economic resources available to them, in the form of familial support or earnings. Whereas in earlier centuries marriage was approached as a labour transaction modern discourses of marriage emphasise romantic attraction as the basis of marital relationships and other motivations as unacceptable (Gittins, 1985). Marriage is constructed as the free choice of people romantically attracted to each other, women no longer depending upon marriage for financial support (Turner & Helms, 1995). However, it is suggested that such discourse downplays the financial advantages of marriage, particularly for the majority of women who raise children (Maushart, 2001), overlooking the situation of unmarried women who have been disadvantaged by taxation and gendered pay inequality.

Whereas men gain status, financial wealth and power as they age, unmarried women do not (Palmore, 1997) Women are more likely to experience poverty, given lower income rates in comparison to men, and where career opportunities for women are restricted they marry when much younger (Gittins, 1985). Gittins (1985) suggests that money provides the most powerful encouragement to marry. Whereas men are more likely to seek fulfilment or services through marriage Gittins (1985) proposes that women get married because they can't support themselves on their earnings alone and because they don't wish to live with their parents. Women are portrayed as dependent upon the economies of marriage and employment whereas men only depend on employment. Gittins constructs marriage as an institution based upon exploiting the inequalities of patriarchal society, a political feminist, rather than romantic individualist, interpretation. From this perspective unmarried women face relative poverty and social forces pressuring them towards marriage.

Robert Cherry (1998) looks at marriage as a rational cost-benefit choice through which men receive domestic services in return for providing women with financial security. However, he sees female economic independence as changing the terms of this exchange, potentially discouraging men from marriage as they are obliged to offer more in return for women's increased advantages. Susan Sprecher and Sandra Metts (1999) confirm that courtship functions to allow women to assess potential marital partners on pragmatic criteria such as economic resources, whereas men are seen to be able to afford to make choices on the basis of romantic inclination.

Turner and Helms (1995) reinforce the importance of finance once married. They suggest that only 20% of American marriages can be classified as 'companionate', based on love and companionship, the other 80% being 'institutional marriages' – 'utilitarian living arrangements' held together by 'material concerns' (p.322). Challenging traditional conceptions of men as breadwinners women now provide a much larger proportion of household income than they have in any other cohort (Rogers & Amato, 2000). However Rogers and Amato (2000) suggest that this subversion of gender roles contributes to an increase in marital discord as it alters power relations within relationships. Though it suggests that financial relationships within marriage are changing this only underlines the importance of financial and power inequality within marriage.

It is suggested that gender inequality in income and employment positions and the discontinuous career histories of mothers conspire to render it financially more difficult for women to remain unmarried. Despite modern discourses of romantic attraction marriage offers, in addition to social advantages, underlying economic securities unavailable to the single woman. Divorced women face particular difficulties as a resulted of commonly interrupted work histories often without the pension advantages accrued by the unmarried (Newtson & Keith, 1997). Susan Maushart (2001) suggests that divorce lowers a woman's standard of living by 73% whereas a man's rises by 42%, predicting great problems for single-again women with dependants and without career advantages.

2.2.2 Housing & marital status

Diana Gittins (1985) identifies the housing difficulties experienced by unmarried adults, outlining the common expectation of all adults that they will marry and automatically establish a household. She locates many unmarried adults as living in parents' homes, which might be both 'constraining and boring' or living in bedsits or flats 'yearn[ing] for greater space and more company and comfort.' (p.86). Marriage, she suggests, still provides an important opportunity for women to escape parental homes. The relative poverty of many single women means that they will not be able to finance their own homes but may rent or likely cohabit with friends, if not partners.

However, society provides little support or validation for these non-marital living situations, as Pagan Kennedy (2001) describes. She outlines her 'struggle at the namelessness of [her] situation' (p.1) cohabiting with a platonic female friend, suggesting that 'Words offer shelter. They help love to stay.' (p.1) the absence of language to fittingly describe her relationship

seemingly denoting the lack of social value accorded to such an arrangement. Kennedy (2001) sees this as part of a cultural imperative for women to channel their energy into seeking and maintaining marriages at the cost of all other relationships. Earlier work by Carol Adams and Rae Laurikietis (1977) implies that this has long been the case, an interviewee suggesting that for unmarried women living with female friends is 'second-best' (p.99) as women are socialised into the belief that only a marital partner will fulfil her 'deepest needs'.

Kennedy (2001) recounts an encounter with an adult single woman who despite professed loneliness proclaimed that she would be too old and set in her ways to live with a flatmate, however were she to marry that would be 'different'. This demonstrates the cultural unacceptability of adult women to living outside marriage and forming their own alternative committed living relationships. It is suggested that the social drive towards marriage at the exclusion of other relationships can only result in 'loneliness' among the unmarried and additional difficulties for those who cannot afford to live alone.

2.2.3 Age & marital status: the position of older women

For the unmarried woman ageing can be connected to poverty and social restriction. Historically old age has been the ruin of spinsters who could not work and were likely to experience the death of supportive relatives (Anderson, 1984). Ageing for the modern single woman has been shown to be socially, sexually and financially limiting (Erdman, 1997). While men experience increased romantic status with increased wealth and power in age women step over an age barrier and become 'old maids' peculiar, left on the shelf and beyond marriageable age. Newtson and Keith (1997) document the reduction in social opportunities and increased discontent among single women around age thirty suggesting that as the peers of these women get married and have children they experience isolation and begin to doubt their own sexual appeal and worth.

Deborah Carr et al (2000) suggest that the situation of elderly unmarried women, single and widowed, is relatively perilous as, in comparison to their male counterparts, they have access to fewer available economic resources. Karen Seccombe and Masako Ishii-Kuntz (1994) suggest that the single, childless elderly are at greater risk of institutionalisation. However this is not necessarily less desirable than being dependent upon family carers or home help. Seccombe and Ishii-Kuntz also suggest that older never-married persons have more active social lives and the greatest degree of satisfaction, compared to the married, widowed or divorced (1994). In this light it would be possible to see a more active independent

'institutionalisation' as preferable to alternatives. However, Carr et al (2000) predict more positive experiences of old age for future generations of women who have higher education levels, more work experience and have been involved in more egalitarian relationships. These factors are seen to symbolise the greater independence and skill in living than today's elderly, likely resulting in increased wellbeing for all relationship status groups.

Psychological models of ageing, regularly outlined in adult development texts, perpetuate views on the essentialness of marriage (Perlmutter & Hall, 1992, Turner & Helms, 1992). Erikson's (1980) stages of adult development suggest that after the development self-identity the next task facing the individual is to develop 'intimacy' involving merging their identity with that of another, committing themselves to that relationship and developing interdependence (ideas central to marital discourse). This is seen as a conflict of intimacy versus isolation and the 'successful' resolution of this is seen to be 'love', the establishment of a committed relationship and merged identity, Turner and Helms (1995) suggest that this 'need' is gratified through marriage. They go on to suggest that some don't engage in such relationships have failed to developed their own identity and become isolated as a result. Allport's (1961) Dimensions of Maturity also locate personal relationships as an essential part of adult development, in the form of 'Extension of the self'. Development of meaningful personal relationships with the opposite sex is seen as part of fulfilling a need to share feelings and experiences.

In a discussion of what they view as legitimate reasons to marry Turner and Helms (1995) include love, companionship and 'conformity'. They suggest that marriage is the 'natural' thing to do as part of the 'mate selection process'. They also detail what they consider 'questionable' reasons for marriage including sex, financial security and escape from solitary existence and loneliness. These conditions reinforce the romantic attraction ideology of marriage, determining this as essential and 'natural' and discouraging pragmatic choices. Perlmutter and Hall (1992) construct marriage as a 'natural' consequence of love, fulfilling a 'universal human need' (p.314-315). They go on to suggest that around age thirty women reappraise their lives and those who have focused on family turn to their careers whereas those who had developed their careers became concerned with marriage and family. Nowhere in this equation, or the psychological models described, is there room for *not* getting married or having children.

2.3 Social correlates of marital status

2.3.1 Titles & status

One of the ways through which power and status in our society are conferred is through title. On a surface level this is communicated through extraordinary titles awarded to honoured members of society, such as 'Dames' and 'Knights'. Letters listed after surnames indicate qualifications, which can also convey raised status, through acquired knowledge or expertise. However, on a day-to-day basis individuals are required to identify themselves through titles that, in the case of women, communicate their 'marital status'. Such information is routinely required when filling in forms, purchasing goods and in correspondence. It is confirmed continually through these requests, addressed post, when introducing oneself and being addressed by others. Through these activities a woman is consistently reminded of her relationship status. Research suggests that women are then treated differently as a consequence of their chosen title (Etaugh & Malstrom, 1981, Etaugh & Petroski, 1985).

Gordon (1994) suggests that married women receive positive reinforcement of their identities as part of their daily routines, from society at large and through "constant conversation" with their husbands (Richardson, 1988, p.124, cited in Gordon, 1994). In contrast it is suggested that single women receive 'reminders' from others of their 'marital status' as 'difference'. Single women are more likely to be asked to explain their status than married women are and thereby, it is suggested that they more frequently have to engage in discursive identity-work to construct their identities (Waehler, 1997, Gordon, 1994, Anderson & Stewart, 1995).

The use of titles when addressing women does not simply imply formality, it communicates something about the status of the individual that it does not about a man. By asking women for a title companies, and individuals, are suggesting that (in the case of women only) it does make a difference whether or not they are married. If those designing everyday forms that request such information were interested in marriage then it would follow that both genders would be asked to clarify their marital status. As it is, asking women to choose between titles 'Miss', 'Mrs' and (the often omitted) 'Ms' is effectively asking them to make a statement about their identity that communicates a particular value within our society.

Paula Caplan suggested, in 1985, that whereas people used to routinely respond to requests for providing their 'marital status', the validity of this category was, at the time, in question. She justifiably questions the implications of calling a category with multiple answers 'marital' status, suggesting that this implies being married is the most desirable response. Caplan also

suggests that marriage has been seen as a badge of 'normality', attractiveness, femininity and nurturance (1985). The ascription of positive physical and personality characteristics exclusively to married women confirms that marriage is seen as a desirable state (Etaugh & Malstrom, 1981, Etaugh & Petroski, 1985). This implies that those who can claim the option of attaching 'Mrs' to their names may experience initial and routine interactions on more positive terms as they might be perceived as in possession of more pleasing characteristics. Caplan goes on to support this idea, explaining how married women have experienced differential treatment when they have taken off their wedding rings (which provide physical indication of membership of the preferred marital status group).

It is suggested that Caplan spoke prematurely in suggesting that 'marital status' is, and was in 1985, a questioned concept. The terms 'marital status' are still used frequently and where such a question may not appear on a form it is likely that it will be replaced by boxes allowing women to choose between 'Miss', 'Mrs' and 'Ms'. The term 'status' pertains to an individual's 'standing relative to that of others' (American Heritage Dictionary, 1996), suggesting that requesting confirmation of 'marital status' is a way of establishing an individual's 'standing'. However, when men are able to unconditionally use the title 'Mr', defined as a 'courtesy title before the surname or full name of *a man*' (American Heritage Dictionary, 1996, italics added) it is clearly the 'standing' of women (who must chose from titles signifying different 'status') that is in question. For example, 'Mrs' is defined as 'a courtesy title for *a married or widowed woman before the surname of her husband*' (American Heritage Dictionary, 1996, italics added). Here additional conditions are attached to the selection of titles available to women.

Unmarried women can choose between the titles 'Miss' or 'Ms'. 'Miss' has age-related connotations, referring not only to a 'courtesy title' but 'A *young* unmarried woman' (The American Heritage Dictionary, 1996), which may render it inappropriate for adult women. The alternative, 'Ms', has been controversial and has conditions attached rendering it far less accessible than the male status-neutral term 'Mr'. The American Heritage Dictionary (1996) suggests that 'many women prefer it [Ms] to Miss or Mrs. because they feel that information about their marital status properly belongs to the realm of private life.' This may be the case, but it suggests that their marital status is something women wish to conceal as a result of their beliefs about what is 'proper', a proposition that involves a value judgement and inferences about the character of the woman. It is suggested that, as marriage is accepted as the most socially desirable state, women are likely assumed to be concealing *un*married status by using

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Ms (Etaugh & Malstrom, 1981, Etaugh & Petroski, 1985). This definition further explains that Ms is also the appropriate title 'if a women keeps her own name after marriage'. In this instance it seems that etiquette withholds the more respected title 'Mrs.' from women who are failing to fulfil the conditions (replacing their own with their husband's surname) associated with this transition of 'marital status'.

The practice of women adopting the surname of their husbands at marriage is another way in which female identity is 'relational' i.e. established through, and mediated by, their relations with others. David R. Johnson and Laurie K. Schebule (1995) suggest that this is a left-over patriarchal practice which symbolically reinforces the idea that at marriage women relinquish their own identities to become wives. Until the nineteenth century wives were legally the same person as their husbands and any property they owned became his (Gittins, 1985). The sharing of the man's name symbolised that the woman's identity, as with many of her rights, had been relinquished at marriage (Grossman, 2000).

Today men, as a matter of course, adopt the title 'Mr' as soon as a title is requested of them and maintain this 'marital status' whether they marry or not, and then divorce or not, along with their own surname. Women's names and titles conventionally change, in the course of the same life events, though this is no longer a legal necessity, prompting engagement in discursive work to re-negotiate their identities according to their 'marital status'. It is suggested that by regularly requesting (so frequently it is unremarkable) declaration of 'marital status' society reinforces the extent to which women's identity is contingent on her relationships with men. This process, being reminded that they are part of groups with a lower 'standing' than the married, marginalises unmarried women.

Joanna Grossman (2000) makes evident widespread compliance to name-changing conventions among women, suggesting that over ninety percent of American women have adopted and use exclusively their husbands' surnames. Though the convention of adopting a husband's name might potentially cause practical inconveniences for a woman, such as the replacement of identification documents, and the symbolic losses of connection with family and independent identity, an overwhelming majority of women choose to follow tradition and change their surnames. Grossman suggests that 'cultural expectations are now the obstacle the law once was.' She describes how the political statement inherent in making this change - 'that, in some real way, men still run the show' - is ignored and that political motivations are instead ascribed to those who choose to retain their own names (p. 3). The socialisation of

girls is identified as romanticising name changing at marriage rendering it an accepted sentimental practice and depoliticising this choice.

In a study which looked prospectively at women's plans regarding name changes upon marriage Jean M. Twenge (1997) reports that women who make non-traditional naming choices are likely to be feminist and high in measures of instrumentality and personal agency. She also proposes that women born outside of the country they resided in (the United States) were more likely to favour non-traditional choices, as were 'women of colour'. It is suggested that these conclusions highlight the close connection between names and identity. Women who wish to retain strong links with, or identify themselves through, particular aspects of their self-identity (such as feminism or ethnic origin) are more likely to keep their own surnames if they get married.

Susan L. Kline, Laura Stafford & Jill C. Miklosovic (1996) looked at the name choices made and reasoning employed by married women. Those who changed their surnames focused on the tradition of unification of marriage and saw it as the beginning of a new life, desiring social recognition of this (Foss & Edson, 1989). Women who kept their surnames after marriage reported a concern to maintain their sense of self and their professional identities and additionally maintain equality with their partners. This reasoning illustrates the importance of both identity and social relationships (such as wishing marriage to be recognised socially through name change or wishing to maintain a name for continuity at work) to women making these choices.

Kline et al (1996) also reported a number of women originally retaining their surnames but adopting their husband's surnames later when they became 'tired of fighting' convention (p. 611). This is seen as a testament to the difficulties encountered by women who make unconventional naming choices and their location in opposition to the majority and to tradition (Foss & Edson, 1989). The political significance of surname adoption can be seen in Joanna Grossman's account of a legal case disallowing a lesbian couple from sharing a name to prevent 'giving the mistaken impression that she and her partner were married.' (p.1). This demonstrates the importance of naming in reinforcing the institution of heterosexual marriage exclusively.

Research comparing perceptions of the married and unmarried proposes the existence of a hierarchical divide in the standing of married and unmarried women, grounded in name and

title choices. Clare Etaugh, with Joann Malstrom (1981) and also with Barbara Petroski (1985), looked at the way that changing personal descriptors (including marital status) in written passages changed the way individuals rated a fictional character's characteristics and professional competence. Etaugh and Malstrom (1981) suggested that marital status had a greater effect on estimated personality characteristics and professional competence than gender. Never married individuals were rated as less sociable, less attractive and less stable than married persons, who were seen as happier, more secure and more reliable. They suggest that 'The perceived shortcomings of the never-married were primarily in the personal arena,' (p.804) reinforcing the idea that singles are likely to be flawed and lack emotional fulfilment. Etaugh and Petroski (1985) looked at the same phenomena specifically in relation to women. They proposed that married women were thought to be not only more secure and attractive than unmarried women but also more influential and comfortable with others. Widows and married women were rated as better adjusted than divorced and never married women and seen generally more favourably. It is suggested that this is because widows would be part of 'the high status married group were it not for circumstances beyond their control' (p.337).

These studies suggest that, what Nadelson and Notman (1981) refer to as, the 'undesirable' stereotype of the unmarried woman is active in effecting the way women are perceived. However, a study by Clare Etaugh, Judith S. Bridges, Myra Cummings-Hill and Joseph Cohen (1999) went on to further complicate this picture by looking in more detail about how women's surname and title choices at marriage effected perceptions. Women who chose to use 'Ms' or made non-traditional naming choices (retained maiden names or hyphenated names) were viewed as more agentic and less communal than those who made traditional choices. This corresponds with the conclusions drawn by Dion (1987) who suggests that stimulus persons using the title 'Ms' were perceived as more socially assertive, dynamic and achievement-oriented but less interpersonally warm and likely to achieve interpersonal goals.

Dion (1987) goes on to describe how those making non-traditional naming choices and using 'Ms' were perceived to be higher in traits viewed as 'masculine' and lower in those perceived to be 'feminine'. This implies that to desire self -determination and -identity (through naming) is not characteristic of women and accompanies impaired interpersonal skills (usually characteristic of women). Etaugh et al (1999) go on to suggest that women in business or other male-dominated fields could use these perceptions to their advantage, adopting 'Ms' in order to project agency and traits associated with success (Dion, 1987). The portrayal of women who make non-traditional naming choices as work-orientated and successful

corresponds to the picture outlined by Schebule and Johnson (1993). They suggest that women who marry later and have distinct work roles are more likely to retain their surnames after marriage and that the same women are likely to be highly educated, affluent, professional and feminist (Kline, Stafford & Miklosovic, 1996, Twenge, 1997, Etaugh. et al, 1999, Foss & Edson, 1989).

It is difficult to see how the results of these studies would manifest in life. For example, although distinctions can be easily delineated in experimental conditions on paper, it is not always clear when meeting a woman or on hearing her name whether she is married or using her maiden name after marriage, meaning that some of the described associations would not be activated. Additionally, wedding rings provide symbols that might change the way a woman was perceived by indicating her status without her adoption of a traditional title and name. Varying levels of contextual information about a woman's relationship status are available which might result in inferences being made about her character. If the conclusions of these studies are related to everyday social situations it is clear that the custom of requesting that women adopt a title indicating their marital status could work to the particular disadvantage of the unmarried (Etaugh & Petroski, 1985). In important situations, such as applying for employment, it is possible that information regarding a woman's marital status will go before her and, if the above studies are even partially accurate, this may effect their prospects (Waehler, 1997, Braito & Anderson, 1981).

2.3.2 Marital status & social control

As the unmarried population grows it is suggested that social opportunities and social validation for single lifestyles will increase. However, research has demonstrated that unmarried women have experienced marginalisation and been obligated to construct their identities from a socially peripheral standpoint. Amy Chasteen (1994) studied the experiences of single women interacting with their environments and discovered that being unmarried affected both their behaviour and their perceived social locations. She describes all women as disadvantaged economically and socially and unmarried women as additionally disadvantaged by living as single people in a couple-orientated society. The participants in her study found that their environments (physical and social) were built around the needs of women in heterosexual partnerships and were conscious of being deviant transgressors of social norms when present alone in public spaces. Chasteen identified a 'fear' expressed by single women, of being alone in public. They suggested that socialising with male acquaintances reduced this. Their fear was not of physical danger but rather symbolic, of seeming 'out of place' to

others. Chasteen interpreted this as a manifestation of social control that is socialised into women encouraging them to adopt traditional lifestyles.

Leonard Pearlin and Joyce Johnson (1981) describe the social experience of becoming single as defined by ambiguity and 'assault' on the self-concept. They suggest that for the previously married becoming single involves changing established behaviours and reduced social contacts. It is additionally suggested that the divorced may experience a loss of direction and meaning in their lives as well as 'severe sexual problems' as a resulting of having been 'accustomed to sexual gratification' (p.165). Pearlin and Johnson suggest that becoming single can be difficult as it necessitates reorganisation of social role and location. However they make some assumptions about the nature of single and married life, for example that single people have comparatively fewer social contacts, a suggestion not supported by other's research, and that the single-again won't make new and potentially wider social contacts (Seccombe & Ishii-Kuntz, 1994, Anderson & Stewart, 1995). They also imply that being single necessitates the absence of sexual activity, portraying the lifestyles of single people as inferior to the married. It is appreciated that people changing relationship status will experience upheaval but it is suggested that not all changes may be negative as is suggested.

Peter Stein (1981) reports that singles experience intense environmental pressure from their late twenties onwards. Gittins (1985) confirms that social forces make it difficult to remain unmarried. Diener, Gohm, Suh and Oishe (2000) suggest that when the majority of any society is married, remaining single or being divorced carries social stigma as the unmarried are seen as deviant from social role expectations. Stein reports that by 34 only 15% of men and 10% of women remains unmarried (1981). However he also suggests that living as a single adult in this environment renders people highly adaptive and contributes to a highly developed personality. Without visible role models and the support of partners or society Stein suggests that single people are 'pioneers of an emergent cultural lifestyle' (p.18). It is agreed that the growing number of single adults within the population may result in increased environmental support for this lifestyle. However, single people may not feel like pioneers on an individual level and their perceptions of pressure to marry and the social restrictions described by Chasteen (1994) are profoundly negative. Jessie Bernard (1972), identified the negative forces experienced by the unmarried as 'the strains accompanying nonconformity' (p.49) supporting the idea that the unmarried experience problems (including decreased wellbeing) as a result of social exclusion rather than personal deficiencies.

Davis G. Patterson, Teresa Ciabattari and Pepper Schwartz (1999) highlight the importance of environmental support for personal relationships. They suggest that marriage is instrumental in extending family support and social networks. Additionally, Maushart (2001) suggests that marriage constitutes a socially acknowledged way of achieving adult identity. Patterson et al (1999) propose that couples gain institutional validation and recognised legitimate status, barriers to dissolution, grounds for joint investment and guidelines for interaction upon marriage that are unavailable to cohabiting partners or single people. It is suggested that marriage is seen as the core unit for defining families and intimate relationships and that the accompanying legal and social benefits reinforce relationship commitments. The focus of their study is the difficulty faced by Gay and Lesbian couples constructing relationships. It is suggested that by being denied access to legal marriage, these couples are denied the institutional support and barriers to dissolution that help maintain heterosexual marriages, contributing to higher rates of relationship termination. This picture of institutional validation and support is something that unmarried couples and those without partners are excluded from.

Alexander, Rubenstein, Goodman and Luborsky (1992) examined the narrative life stories of older unmarried women and found that they 'felt marginal' like 'social outsiders' (p.624). They recounted experience of being defined as 'different and peripheral' and an awareness of their lives having diverged from the 'natural' course. It is suggested that in the case of these women the regrets expressed are identified with being socially ostracised as unmarried and childless. They recognised being culturally defined as deviant. Women aged over sixty, more than men, report in a study by Bulcroft and O'Conner (1986, cited in Scott, 1997) an increase in prestige and sense of identity as a result of dating. This demonstrates the value attached to intimate relationships and the implications for identity at all stages in adult life. An unmarried woman interviewed by Adams & Laurikietis (1977), used popular discourse to illustrate this suggesting that as long as you haven't got married 'you are only half a person' (p.99).

Both Stein (1981) and Pearlin and Johnson (1981) view the social role of single people as ambiguous and lacking direction. They imply that people who are, or who become, single are lack clear goals or a social location. The implication of this is that people's goals are necessarily constructed around marriage and that only through marriage are social locations secured. It is suggested that, in contrast with the suggestion of Pearlin and Johnson (1981), marriage does not provide a meaning to life (that is lost by becoming single) for all. The privileging of marriage impacts negatively on those who choose not to enter it or are denied

access to this institution. It is suggested that single people, Gay and Lesbian couples and heterosexual cohabiters are obligated to justify their deviant status and construct identities from a marginal social position (Waehler, 1997, Gordon, 1994, Anderson & Stewart, 1995).

Chapter 3. Constructing unmarried life: Representations of unmarried women in expert discourse

3.1 Remaining single as deviation from the normal life course

Today, as in the past, women are expected to form heterosexual unions leading to marriage, establishment of a household and family. This pattern constitutes the accepted female life course rendering women who remain single deviant. Unmarried women are frequently defined by this transgression of norms that they commit by avoiding an expected and esteemed status position. As Gordon explains, the popular image of the 'single' woman portrays her as '*rejecting* marriage and children' and '*not wanting* a man' (1994, italics added). In this way, single women are defined by what they are not, what differentiates them from married women, rather than what they are. This is seen to reinforce the divide that renders married women 'normal' and central and marginalises the single woman as rejecting society's goals. The single woman is also portrayed, through both research and media imagery, as having failed to find a man but remaining desirous of heterosexual relations. As shown by criticisms of the old maid typed woman in Gordon's (1994) study, single women should be seen to be (hetero)sexually active or expect anti-spinster criticism.

At closer inspection there are categories, extra to sexuality, which effect access to the 'status' of marriage or cohabitation. Gordon (1994) looked at women's likelihood of remaining single on various demographic factors, including education, ethnicity, dis/ability and physical stature. She suggests that well-educated professional women are more likely to remain single than other groups, suggesting that while these women are postponing marriage for career purposes the selection of available men narrows. This proposal is supported by Frazier et al (1996) who suggest that women who are college educated are likely to postpone marriage and that those who are career-orientated are also more likely to marry later. This could result in class or un/employment differences arising between single and married women.

Jessie Bernard (1972) made a connection between career-orientation and personality, suggesting that in order to achieve career success women need to be competitive, aggressive and possess a drive to succeed, traits she suggests men do not want in their wives. The idea that marital status is related to characteristics is supported by Marks (1996) who proposes unmarried women are more intelligent, open to experience and lower in neuroticism. This

implying that likelihood of entering marriage could be reduced by the possession of these characteristics or is increased by the possession of others.

Gordon (1994) also suggests that Black American and British women are likely to be single due to a higher proportion of women than men among this group. In addition it is proposed that the more severely women are disabled they are less likely they are to get married and the more likely they are to remain single. Gordon found that women who were 'different' in some other way, such as being very tall, were more likely to be single. From these findings we can conclude that factors operate to affect women's likelihood of joining the 'high status married group' (Etaugh and Petroski, 1985), extra to her desire to do so.

The idea that women selectively enter marriage, on the basis of personal attributes, (lack of) achievements, or personality characteristics, corresponds to research looking at characteristics sought in marriage partners. What seems to be the most established tendency in marital partner selection is that women look to marry 'up' whereas men look to marry 'down' (Prochaska, 1977, Greenglass, 1985, West & Zimmerman, 1991, Gordon, 1994). Prochaska (1977) suggested that two thirds of females surveyed reported that they only felt able to marry a man who was more intelligent, better paid and better educated, only 3% suggesting they would 'date' somebody shorter in height. The males surveyed supported all of these ideas, being equally particular about preferring potential partners to be shorter in height.

Though this collective prejudice surrounding partner choice may have relaxed between the time of the study and today, it is suggested that the same up/down rhetoric is still in operation (Maushart, 2001, Gordon, 1994, West & Zimmerman, 1991, Jeffreys, 1990). Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman (1991) suggest that this functions to create and maintain gender differences, ensuring that "Should situations emerge in which greater size, strength or experience is called for, boys and men will be ever ready to display it and girls and women to appreciate its display." (p.25).

Gordon (1994) suggests that this principle is implicated in the number of professional, educated women remaining single, reasoning that these women are 'down' from only a small selection of men they may wish to marry, or who may wish to marry them. Jeffreys (1990) looks at this pattern as a manifestation of the power differentials encouraged by patriarchal society. She suggests that when selecting partners individuals are encouraged to emphasise the 'difference' that she sees heterosexuality and marriage as based upon, ensuring that

women are smaller, younger, less educated and less wealthy than their husbands. Maushart (2001) also views this trend as ensuring that women are disadvantaged in 'the game of marital power politics' and remain so (p.77). It is possible to conclude from the way which personal characteristics, education and profession effect women's likelihood of marrying, that women are not all equally likely to marry. Consequently, it might also be the case that the increasing number of independent professional woman may result in an increase in never-married women because there are fewer men of higher status for them to choose from as well as, importantly, from reduced economic necessity.

3.2 Remaining single as unhealthy: Psychological research on the 'wellbeing' of unmarried women

Marital status has largely drawn the attention of psychologists in its relationship with well being. Married and unmarried groups have been connected with different levels of psychological health and this connection has been much pursued over the last forty years. This research demonstrates how psychologists have approached the unmarried as a group and considered their well being. A selection of research findings and an analysis of these is to be presented in order to illuminate both the findings of research and their implications.

3.2.1 Researching wellbeing

In 1972 Walter Gove described the gendered psychological consequences of marital status, research which has since become a classic and consistent set of findings. Gove proposed a link between 'mental illness' and marriage, suggesting women's marital role caused higher rates of 'illness' among the female population. He suggested that married women have higher rates of mental illness than married men whereas single, divorced and widowed women are all as likely to experience mental illness as men in corresponding situations. This inequality remains and could be linked to women's inferior access to financial and power within their relationships (Byrne & Carr, 2000). Gove proposed that when married women work they are disadvantaged experiencing 'greater strain' than their husbands. This corresponds to contemporary studies demonstrating that though working wives experience better health than 'housewives' they also undertake increased total working hours and greater stress (see Greenglass, 1985) which could contribute to poor health outcomes.

Additionally Toni Antonnucci (1994) proposes that, in marriage, women undertake responsibility for the maintenance of familial ties and the fulfilment of social obligations, which can lead to increased stress. This coincides with Jean Baker Miller's (1988) suggestion

that women are characterised by 'connectedness', through their relationships with others. Antonnucci proposes that women undertake greater responsibility for the welfare of friends and family that renders them more emotionally vulnerable. Maushart (2001) confirms that wives become 'Relationship managers' responsible for the maintenance of relationships with their husbands and all related others. Lee (1978, cited by Scott, 1997) suggests that the quality of the marital relationship has much greater effect on wives' wellbeing than on husbands' supporting the idea that women are more emotionally invested in their marital relationships. It has been repeatedly confirmed that women are negatively affected by their marital relationships and that this can be related to reduced psychological wellbeing (Antonnucci et al, 2001, Gutierrez-Lobos et al, 2000).

Listing a hierarchy of psychological 'wellness' Gove reported that 'being married is considerably more advantageous to men than it is for women, while being single is, if anything, slightly more disadvantageous to men,' (p.43). This pattern remains but with the addition of the previously married: married men scoring highest on wellbeing, then single women, married women, single men followed by the previously married (Diener et al, 2000, Gutierrez-Lobos et al., 2000, Greer, 1999). Yet, as Greer suggests (1999), marriage continues to be seen as a sign of success for women. Gove (1972) illustrates this, disregarding his conclusions about psychological health, commenting that 'single men and women tend to lack close personal ties... [that] appear to be a major source of wellbeing and that married persons... are much happier than single persons,' (p.35). It is difficult to see how, taking into account what he reports as their experiences of strain and impaired psychological health, Gove can suggest that married women are 'much happier' than single women. It would be possible to conclude, thereby, that these happily 'married persons' are men.

Marriage is still viewed as more advantageous for men psychologically (Carr et al, 2000, Gottman & Notarius, 2000, Gutierrez-Lobos et al, 2000, Frazier et al, 1996, Pearlin & Johnson, 1981) Duck (1983) suggests that married men not only have 'superior' psychological health but also lower suicide rates and increased life expectancy. Unmarried people maintain a doubled risk of institutionalisation (Guiterrez-Lobos et al 2000). The majority of persons diagnosed with depression or other 'affective psychoses' are still women and the likelihood of these increases upon marriage (Gater et al, 1989). However, these conclusions have since been extended by other findings.

Gutierrez-Lobos et al (2000) suggest that the effect of marital status on incidence of depression among women is mediated by employment status, employed women having lower rates of psychiatric admission across all marital status groups. They also propose that lower psychiatric diagnosis and admission rates among married persons could reflect their increased access to social resources rather than different rates of incidence. This is supported by Cochrane and Stopes-Roe (1981) who suggest that marital status and sex do not effect the incidence of depression in surveys of the community, only the likelihood of hospitalisation (the depressed being less likely to seek diagnosis or be admitted if married). It is additionally possible that social conventions discourage married people from approaching health professionals with psychiatric problems.

3.2.2 Therapy & wellbeing

Therapeutic and counselling psychologists have also been involved in constructing connections between relationship status and psychological wellbeing. Karen Lewis and Sidney Moon's (1997) study of single women portrays them as depressed and desperate to find a male partner. They comment on the 'striking' incidence of women who held 'both themselves and men accountable for their singleness' yet 'did not seem aware that they held both views' (p.125) and suggest interviewees were 'seemingly unaware that they switched between internalising and externalising *the blame*' (italics added, p.124). They create the impression that single women are a confused and conflicted group peculiar to the therapist (presumably married or a single male). Lewis and Moon (1997) imply that something is 'wrong', with being single, for there to be blame to allocate. They explain that women found 'giving up self-blame difficult because… it meant giving up control to make the situation better-to find a man,' (p.124) and became depressed because of their 'sense of failure at an important job (finding a man),' (p.128). These statements imply that women's lives are unquestionably improved by 'finding' a man and otherwise they have 'failed'. That it may be preferable for some women to remain single or find a female partner is not considered.

Nadelson and Notman (1981) also approach the single female client as requiring special consideration. They suggest that 'The absence of desire for children, homosexuality, and childhood experience with parental unhappiness or divorce contribute to this decision [to be single]' (pp. 1353). They proceed to propose that 'There are also important unconscious and neurotic reasons for not marrying… for example an unresolved oedipal attachment can interfere with finding a partner who compares with an idealised parent.' (p. 1353). By suggesting that singleness is likely to have a 'cause' to be explained, through 'unconscious

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and neurotic reasons', Nadelson and Notman imply that singleness is symptom of pathology, thereby ostracising those who choose to be single rather than acknowledging unmarried status as a potential choice. They perpetuate the trend in research to question why people are single. implying that without a barrier before them everyone would be married.

Therapists Seymour Hoffman and Leah Rosman report a case of what they label 'marital phobia' in a male client (1990). They describe how he underwent brief but intensive therapy at the bequest of his partner to extinguish this phobia. As Hoffman and Rosman (1990) report that the client 'ended up' happily married (the classic narrative ending) it would be possible to conclude that he must *really* have wanted to marry and therefore the therapists were acting in his best interests. By inventing the condition Hoffman and Rosman suggest that they were providing the client with something to 'hold onto' 'reducing this resistance' to the process (p. 161). An alternative interpretation of this would be that the provision of a label describing those who resist marriage as suffering from a condition (obligating the individual to then seek a cure) pathologises those who wish to remain unmarried. It implies that people would not 'resist' the presumed pull of marriage without some kind of psychological abnormality. Nowhere in this article is it discussed that the client might not benefit from marriage and that his objections to marrying might be other than pathological.

These studies demonstrate the application of pervasive assumptions evident in research and regular discourse to therapeutic practise: that marriage is always preferable and that those who wish to remain unmarried are deficient in some way. It is suggested that therapists and counselling psychologists are in a position that affords them the power to directly assist individuals in evaluating their lifestyles and identities. These published studies suggest that therapists are likely to reinforce socially prevalent assumptions about the superiority of marriage over unmarried lifestyles and the potential pathologies of those who remain single.

3.3 Constructing the origins of the unmarried
Two hypotheses have been advanced that account for the enhanced wellbeing that the married have consistently demonstrated in studies: the social selection hypothesis and the social causation hypothesis. The social selection hypothesis suggests that married individuals display improved wellbeing because those who are psychologically 'well' are selectively drawn into marriage (implying that the unmarried are less well). This was favoured by earlier research, to be described below.

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Verbrugge (1979), cited in Stein (1981), suggested that 'People with serious congenital or childhood health problems are not attractive for marriage. The most seriously ill enter institutions when quite young; those who remain outside are often limited in their social involvement.' (p.149). Jessie Bernard (1972) contributed to this portrayal of the unmarried as psychologically 'different' in less extreme terms. She proposed that there are people without 'diagnosable defect or deficit' (p.159) who lack the 'discipline' marriage requires and also do not possess the values or willingness to assume the responsibility of marriage. These charges, though not suggesting the unmarried are psychologically abnormal, have contributed to impressions of unmarried people as deficient in moral character. Spreitzer and Reily (1974, cited by Ward, 1981) make further accusations about the personalities of single people. They suggested that single people are the product of 'pathological families' characterised by low-quality relationships and instability.

A similar charge was more recently proposed by (in Cunnigham and Antill, 1995) who suggest that couples who remain unmarried are more likely to have poor familial relationships and divorced parents. Duck (1983), writing about the psychology of close relationships, suggests that 'Many of us make the mistake of believing that people that cannot form relationships must have something wrong with them.' This is a 'mistake' perpetuated by research claims like those above and inadvertently by Duck in this statement. It is implied that those who aren't involved in close relationships are in that situation because they *cannot* rather than they *choose* not to be involved.

Such research conclusions reinforce the idea that the unmarried people are likely to be personally deficient, potentially as a result of inferior familial relationships. An alternative variation on this hypothesis, it is suggested, is supported by Gordon's (1999) proposal that people with unusual characteristics, employment positions or disabilities are less likely to get married. It could be interpreted as suggesting that those who marry constitute a specific majority group through whom wellbeing is defined thereby inevitably leading to conclusions of the comparative deviation of the unmarried.

Social causation hypothesis suggests that marriage itself functions to maintain wellbeing. Reporting contemporary longitudinal studies Nadine Marks (1996) and Horowtiz, White and Howell-White (1996) discuss associations between psychological wellbeing and marriage. Though outcome measures have become more complex conclusions reached have not deviated greatly from Gove's (1972) pronouncement that the married have improved mental

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health. With the advantages of a longitudinal sample it is possible to test the relevance of the selection hypothesis. Horowitz et al (1996) suggest that marriage has a positive effect on mental health when premarital health is controlled for. This conclusion is supported by Marks (1996) who suggests that marital advantages in wellbeing cannot be accounted for by selection effects.

Russell A. Ward (1981) suggests a more environmentally focused version of the social causation hypothesis. He proposes that the reported, comparatively low, levels of affective wellbeing amongst the unmarried might be linked to the lack of marital advantages or alternatively with the difficulties of living in a marriage-centred culture. Ward suggests that marriage provides a primary and privileged source of identity and personal validation. He goes on to propose that 'The lack of institutional definition and support for single lifestyles undercuts the personal and social identity of the never-married.' (p. 344) and that single individuals, as a result, experience 'Psychological weariness from initiating and sustaining a life style which lacks a supportive ideology in the larger culture.' (p.344). This implies that marriage may have positive effects on wellbeing as it provides a form of socially approved identity-validation but also because it protects individuals from the negative effects of living without social validation. This interpretation is in a way more optimistic as it implies that, were single lifestyles more widely accepted and supported ideologically, the unmarried would not necessarily experience lower wellbeing than married people.

It is generally accepted that marriage results in improved psychological wellbeing, a social causation effect. This is commonly deduced from the results self-report checklists, often concerning reported frequency of depressive symptoms. In Marks (1996) longitudinal study, never-married women were found not to be significantly more distressed than married women, in contrast to traditional conclusions (Gove, 1972, Horowitz et al, 1996). However, married participants came out as having superior *positive* psychological wellbeing. This is positive in not viewing the unmarried as deficient, rather suggesting that, in our social climate which may be described as 'couple orientated' (Chasteen, 1994), the married are advantaged.

3.4 Constructing wellbeing
Though the utilised scales of 'positive psychological wellness' differentiated between married and unmarried individuals (the married scoring higher) in Mark's study it doesn't necessarily follow that unmarried individuals experience a corresponding absence of positive feelings. Establishing levels of wellbeing is achieved through a 'measuring' process in which

psychologists are looking for answers to questions they perceive to indicate internal levels of an abstract quality titled 'wellbeing'. The use and development of such measures pre-supposes that there exists a common experience of wellbeing and that some level of wellbeing is constantly perceived by each individual, fluctuating in response to factors (like marital status) to a degree enabling discrimination between groups. To some extent, it is suggested, psychologists construct and create psychological wellness through designing and implementing measures. It is suggested that the process of designing and implementing wellbeing measures may perpetuate the negative interpretation of the life experiences of minority groups, like the unmarried.

The classification of individuals on the basis of legal relationship status occurs frequently in studies of wellbeing and is also viewed as limiting research results. Among the unmarried heterosexual population are individuals newly divorced, widowed after long marriages and people who have been cohabiting with a partner for years, in a manner similar to marriage. It is suggested that it is unlikely such people would feel equal levels of relationship-related 'positive psychological wellness' (in such a way as to differentiate them from married individuals). It is proposed that differentiating only between married and unmarried groups provides an oversimplified depiction and understanding of the psychology of the unmarried.

It is necessary to consider that when individuals are filling in self-report checklists they are located within a social situation with the researcher, attending specifically to the subject they are being questioned about and the type of response they perceive to be required. In surveys of wellbeing participants will be aware that they are providing information about their feelings of 'wellness' in their daily lives (if they are not aware of the focus on marriage). Married individuals taking part in such research may be less likely to declare publicly that, as part of the 'high status married group', that they are less than 'well' (just as they are less likely to seek help when depressed, Cochrane & Stopes-Roe, 1981). It would be possible to argue that there is, conversely, no reason for single individuals to want to report feeling 'unwell'. However, there is considerably less pressure surrounding the social role of the unmarried person to be happy with their lot. If anything, single individuals are encouraged to be unhappy with their lack of partner and desire union (Greer, 1999).

Gigy's (1980) results, mirroring a common assertion and common-sense belief, suggest that 'married women are more likely [than unmarried women] to report themselves as being "very happy"' (p. 329). This does not, however, mean that participants *feel* or *are* very happy, but

that they are reporting this experience in the form of a rating, perhaps as a consequence of not wanting to lose face (Adams & Jones, 1999). Greer (1999, p. 260) suggests that 'The wife who admits to outsiders that she is unhappy is throwing in the towel.' It is suggested that married women have made, materially and emotionally, great investments in their 'status' and therefore much to gain by being 'very happy' and maintaining it.

Sandra L. Murray et al (2000) introduce the idea that it is necessary for partners to feel secure in their investment in marriage and that in order to do so they maintain positively distorted interpretations of their partner's behaviour and overestimate their virtues. The inevitable result of such cognitive distortion, they suggest, being perceived 'happiness', enhanced self-esteem and sense of self-worth. This could be viewed as a protective, wellbeing-enhancing facet of marriage. However Murray et al (2000) fail to look into whether this kind of reciprocal exaggerated perception occurs in other relationships. It is possible that cohabiting or unmarried friends, family members or Gay and Lesbian couples partake in the same boosting of perceptions and therefore this mechanism might be just as prevalent among the unmarried.

Frazier et al (1996) suggest that because of the high value society places on marriage their '[single] respondents may have exaggerated the extent to which they desire marriage,' (p.237). It is suggested that the same pressures act upon the married to encourage them to communicate an 'exaggerated' view of the advantages of marriage and their satisfaction. Linda Wood (1986) also suggests that there exist social obligations surrounding relationships that oblige individuals to report the experience of loneliness and dissatisfaction when they are not part of an expected set of interrelationships. She proposes that it is seen as 'wrong' not to be lonely when expected to be. It is possible that, in a research context, unmarried individuals experience such moral pressure to express discontent.

Caroline Dryden (1999) suggests that where today equality in marriage has become a given expectation, the reality of inequality has become for many wives a 'guilty secret' (p. 152). This implies that wives could be responding to social expectations and protecting their emotional investments in marriage by suggesting that they are 'very happy'. Kersten (1988) suggests that those committed to the institution of marriage rather than to their relationship are less likely to voice problems within their marriages. It is possible that the majority of wives who suggest that they are 'very happy' are responding to pressures to demonstrate a

commitment to the institution of marriage, and their investment therein, rather than specifically to their relationships.

Marks (1996) suggests that the association of marriage with improved 'mental health' may predict a proliferation of problems in the ageing population as a result of declining marriage rates. However, this fails to allow for the possibility that people may increasingly remain unmarried because they have found a living situation or relationship preferable for them and advantageous to their wellbeing in a social climate that may be becoming increasingly accepting of alternative lifestyles. Were it the case that, as Marks (1996) implies, equivalent psychological health to that of the married cannot be achieved outside marriage, it would predict yet-undetected mental health difficulties for Lesbian, Gay and celibate individuals.

Similar assumptions are made by Anne Sommers (1981) who quotes Lynch (1977) suggesting that 'We must learn to live together or face the possibility of prematurely dying alone... Nature uses many weapons to shorten the lives of lonely people.' (p. 189). Through this pessimistic proposal Lynch and Sommers are locating single people as ignorant of their potential premature deaths (yet to 'learn' this), unwilling to learn or co-operate and also as opposing 'Nature' who might inflict such punishment (situating marriage as natural). Sommers, through this quotation, is also suggesting that if not involved in personal relationships individuals are 'lonely people', a conclusion not supported by Anderson and Stewart (1995) or Seccombe and Ishii-Kuntz (1994).

Though unmarried individuals may, as Marks suggests (1996, p.930) 'fare more poorly on a wide array of measures of psychological wellbeing' they are not necessarily *experiencing* deficient wellbeing. Anderson and Stewart (1995) and Gordon (1996) both suggest unmarried people construct their identities and lifestyles through relating to their marginal positions within society, positions Marks (1994) associates with 'a fair degree of mental health risk' (p.930). However, the former qualitative studies report the life experiences of unmarried individuals as positively different rather than 'risky' or lacking the wellbeing-enhancing gifts of marriage. As the single population increases it is possible that reduced associated stigma (Diener et al, 2000), improved social position and access to wider social resources (Stein, 1981) may result in improved psychological wellbeing.

Horowitz et al (1996) suggest that depression measures, commonly used as measures of wellbeing, are particularly sensitive to the detection of distress in females. They selected

alcoholism as an equivalent male-prevalent symptom of distress and used checklists to study longitudinal wellbeing in married and unmarried individuals. It was suggested that, controlling for selection effects, married people had fewer alcohol and depression-related problems. The conclusion of this study was that women and men benefit equally from marriage in different ways, men from lower incidence of depression and women from less 'problematic' alcohol consumption. Horowitz et al make the point that assertions about how marriage is connected to mental health depend on the outcome variable selected by the researcher as much as upon the impact of marriage.

That married men in Horowitz et als (1996) study were less depressed corresponds to theories suggesting that the social support provided within marriage is of particular benefit to males who don't commonly experience this level of support from friends (Greenglass, 1985, Frazier et al, 1996). That women do not consume problematic amounts of alcohol, however, does not suggest that they are experiencing a positive psychological benefit of marriage, rather that marriage has changed their alcohol consumption, a physical behaviour, in a way it has not changed their husband's. It is not necessarily the case that because married women are not experiencing negative consequences from drinking they are positively more psychologically 'well'. Though such results allow the researchers to draw conclusions about the equal value of marriage to all, it is debatable whether they are useful in estimating wellbeing. It is suggested that these results have a narrow focus which thereby fail to provide a valid portrayal of the psychology of participants. Endeavouring to understand the ways in which they negotiate their lives and relationships, behaviourally and psychologically, and how this effects their experience of 'wellbeing' might enhance this.

Wellbeing research not only divides individuals on the basis of their marital 'status' but some studies additionally implicate the characteristics and expectations of women as the 'cause' of their remaining unmarried. For example, Gigy (1980) reports that the unmarried women in her study were high on 'assertion' adjectives. She proposes that 'Such a sense of independence may easily be seen as incompatible with the role demands inherent in a traditional marriage and thus may well account for non marriage in many women' (p.335). This implies that single women are in possession of characteristics that differentiate them from married women. Marks (1996) supports this, proposing that unmarried women were lower on extroversion and 'agreeableness'. Austrom and Hanel (1985), suggest that 'As a result of current societal phenomena such as the feminist movement women in contemporary society may be seeking more in and from a marriage partner than they did in previous eras.' They imply that women's

expectations have been raised to an unrealistic level resulting in an increased single population. These suggestions implicate the single woman as having something constitutionally wrong with her, as flawed.

Wellbeing research commonly excludes relationships outside heterosexual marriage and cohabitation from public and psychological focus (Frazier, Arikian, Benson, Losoff & Maurer, 1996, Anderson & Stewart, 1995, Cunningham & Antill, 1995). Frazier et al (1996) suggest that data collected from Gay, Lesbian and bisexual participants was excluded from their analysis 'because of ambiguity in the meaning of 'marriage' for same sex partners' (p.230). They fail to make clear whether participants or researchers experienced this 'ambiguity' and neglect to provide any justification of why an altered 'meaning' should result in the exclusion of data from analysis. This practise prohibits the possibility of validating Lesbian, Gay, bisexual and platonic living arrangements. It is suggested that if studies were done showing increased wellbeing among Gay and Lesbian cohabiters over marriage this would be extremely controversial. However, it is routine and seemingly acceptable to repeatedly confirm the advantage of marrying over remaining unmarried (Marks, 1996, Horowitz et al, 1996).

It is suggested that research examining psychology and wellbeing interested in experiences of wellbeing might expand its focus beyond the standard divisions of married and unmarried, examining the variety of situations within each category. Much of the research reviewed seems to repeatedly examine the same question (are married people less depressed than the unmarried?) failing to reflect upon the usefulness of this question and potential answers. It might be more illuminating, for example, to consider whether those living within platonic relationships might be more psychologically healthy than the married or those living in intimate non-marital relationships. Such research would have the potential to direct attention away from the search for a relationship between wellbeing and a (hetero)sexual relationships.

Researchers have demonstrated that it is possible to reach alternative conclusions and build a more comprehensive picture of the unmarried and their wellbeing by looking at a broader range of indicators. Seccombe and Ishii-Kuntz (1994) suggest that never-married women tend to be highly educated and have high earnings, are more likely to be professionals and also, contradicting suggestions that their lives lack emotional content (Gordon, 1996), spend more time interacting with friends and relatives than married women. Additionally they report that never-married people have more active social lives and report greater satisfaction in later life.

This could be connected to the unmarried woman's lack of trauma associated with the death of a spouse or the continuation of a more varied social life in earlier years. Newtson and Keith (1997) suggest that aged never-married women are at least as happy as the married and that they are not dissatisfied with their lives or isolated. Such research illuminates a further aspect for study and provides a positive perspective on the longer-term life experiences of single people.

Studies examining marital status and psychological well being have a tendency to focus on differentiating between married and unmarried persons through measures of negative affect. Frazier et al (1996) reviewed ten studies comparing married and never-married samples on measures of mental health and satisfaction and found that five reported that married people were better adjusted, three favoured the unmarried and two found no conclusive result. Instead of examining how people's relationships effect their experiences it is suggested that such findings serve to construct ways of differentiating between the married and unmarried in large samples. This reinforces divisions between hypothetical groups and confirms the valued social position of marriage by relating it to improved psychological well being. It is possible to interpret the results of wellbeing research as functioning to shore-up marriage and encourage the belief that it is most desirable to be married, failing to acknowledge the emotional and physical trauma that occurs within marital relationships (Maynard & Winn, 1997). Such research contributes to the idea that the psychologically 'well' and 'normal' person is married (Marks, 1996, Horowitz et al, 1996), by causation or selection, and that unmarried individuals are a homogeneously disadvantaged minority.

Chapter 4. Constructing unmarried life: Representations of unmarried women in popular discourse

4.1 Old maid vs. (hetero)sexy single

Today though there may be few women who identify themselves as spinsters, there are 10 million unmarried women in the population (24%), 8.34 million of these women living alone (20.2%) and 5.2 million of these never-married, 13% of the population (Haskey & Shaw, 1999). Dominant images of spinsterhood have been derived from its critics and, though the term may not be in common usage, women today remain actively aware of the spectre of the 'old maid' (Gordon, 1994, Anderson & Stewart, 1995). It is suggested that part of the negotiation of approved female identity has been, and remains contingent upon, establishing distance from the 'spinster' archetype.

Katie Holmes (1998) examined the critique of spinster feminists, in literature and press from the 1930s, which emphasised the 'naturalness' of marriage portraying it as positive and inevitable in contrast to spinsterhood, seen as deviant and malign. Holmes suggests the marginalisation of spinsterhood was necessary to securing the central identity of married people. Janine Liladhar and Evelyn Kerslake (1999) discuss the portrayal of women in 1950s career novels concluding that spinsters were constructed as 'Other' to both married and 'single' women on the grounds that, unlike 'heterosexy' singles, they lacked two key constructs; heterosexual attractiveness and marriageability.

Perceived likelihood of involvement in future (hetero)sexual relations has repeatedly been seen as a disqualifier for spinsterhood (Jeffreys, 1997, Liladhar & Kerslake, 1999). In Tuula Gordon's (1994) study of contemporary unmarried women interviewees identified 'old maids' as *other* single women with undesirable personal characteristics: 'bitterness' and 'sexual frustration' or 'asexuality'. That Gordon's participants distanced themselves from asexuality by condemning it in others (establishing their status as sexually active) suggests the importance of active sexuality to establishing self and group identity.

Adrienne Rich (1980) described women as subject to pervasive social forces prescribing and enforcing heterosexuality as natural and normal, terming this phenomena 'compulsory heterosexuality'. This pressure could also be seen to underlie the attributions of Gordon's participants. They imply that spinsters must be 'bitter' or abnormal ('asexual') because they

cannot 'get a man' and are thereby presumed not only to be abstaining from heterosexual intercourse but to be sexually inactive. Women might, through preference, engage in Lesbian or onanistic sexual practices rather than being 'asexual', negating arguments of bitter sexual frustration. This example confirms the existence of divisions among unmarried women as a group.

It is suggested that what Jeffreys described as the 'sexualisation' of single life in the 1960s has developed to the extent that now, as Gordon's (1994) participants demonstrated, for an unmarried woman not to be sexually active is abnormal. Germaine Greer (1999) suggests that spinsterhood retained a 'grim respectability' through its association with virginity and that 'among the consequences of loosening sexual mores is that the single state is now less respectable than ever,' (p.244). She goes on to suggest that, in an age where people can cohabit informally, 'singleness signifies not only a lack of opportunity to pair up but a failure to pair up,' (p.245). Greer (1999) points out that in today's society the option that a woman would *choose* not to be in a relationship with a man is not considered.

4.2 Career woman

The most dominant modern image of the unmarried woman, in opposition to that of the spinster or 'old maid' is the 'modern city single' (Gordon, 1994). Carol Anderson and Susan Stewart (1995) view the media as dividing single women into 'Pathetic leftovers from the marriage market' or 'Power-obsessed barracudas' interested only in material wealth and success (p.14). The first type described relates to the deficiency society has presumed to reside in unmarried individuals, that they must be lacking in personal characteristics or else would have married. The 'power-obsessed' woman described represents the modern unmarried female stereotype. Adams and Laurikietis (1977) suggest that others assume that unmarried women, if not physically unattractive ('pathetic leftovers'), have prioritised their careers rather than not wishing to marry. Joni Seager (2000) confirms that globally single women's rate of employment is much greater than that of married women. She continues to detail that single females are the preferred workers in assembly production lines of all kinds. This illuminates the erroneous assumption inherent in the 'career woman' image that unmarried women are affluent professionals.

Gordon (1994) suggests that portraying the unmarried woman as 'urban, highly educated, relatively young, ambitious, single-minded, determined and a career woman', appears positive, associating independence and success with unmarried women, but is in effect as

damaging as it's precursor, the 'old maid'. She proposes that this categorisation serves to marginalise unmarried women by underlining their 'difference' from married women, as the 'old maid' once did. Both Gordon (1994) and Greer (1999) suggest that this construct has created further problems for single women in engendering the persecution of the New Right for being work-obsessed, narcissistic and personally 'unable to commit'. Successful single women are portrayed as egoistically neglecting their social responsibility to 'the family', confirming research findings that women are expected to take managing roles in interpersonal relationships (Duck, 1983) and ground their sense of self in these relationships (Gilligan, 1982). The 'career woman' has also become the target of similar criticism from popular self-help literature berating her ambition and lack of feminine passivity (Darby, 2000, Fein & Schneider, 2001).

This view can be connected with Jean Baker Miller's (1988) defining quality of women: 'connectedness'. She proposes that women are defined by and gain their self-worth through inter-relationships and how much they 'give' to others, rather than through activity as men are seen to. Gilligan (1982) supports this suggesting that the ability to maintain interpersonal relationships is one of the criteria on which women judge themselves. Where women seek to achieve publicly and independently, through 'doing' action rather than 'giving' to those involved in action (family, men and children), Baker Miller suggests they experience strong opposition and are labelled 'selfish'. Importantly, she suggests that where women occupy active independent public roles they experience conflict with their self-perceptions and have difficulty integrating individualistic narratives. Single women who base their self-perceptions, and ground their self-worth, on achievements external to relationships are accordingly going against conceptions of womanhood and may experience this conflict, within themselves and through the evaluations of others. Maushart (2001) proposes that society conflates women's involvement in 'Relationship Management' with what women *are* rather than acknowledging that this is something women *do*. This would correspondingly result in independent women being ostracised as different in themselves rather than undertaking different activities.

The image of the unmarried 'career woman' has been socially available for some time. In 1939 Ida Tarbell (cited in Freeman & Klaus, 1984) warned young women of the 'essential barrenness of the career woman's triumph.' implying that pursuit of a career resulted in an otherwise desolate life, lacking personal fulfilment (p.409). Amabel Williams-Ellis, in 1951, described the dilemma of women faced considering the pursuit of a career: 'Either you can work hard and have a career or you can have a normal emotional life. If you are a man you

can have both; but if you are a woman, no.' (p.14). Though women today are not confronted with such simplistic or limited choices, the contemporary stereotype of the 'city single' woman perpetuates this division, suggesting that even though married women may work 'career women' are *different*.

It could be argued that the expansion of opportunity for women to pursue professional careers has been crucial in creating the single woman. Women now have access to training, obligating them to study for extended periods and work long hours once trained, to establish themselves professionally. This independent career-focused path became widely accessible to women in the 1960s. They were able to be self-sufficient, live and work independently towards their own goals without having closed-off the opportunity to marry if they wished, to be 'single' (Jeffreys, 1990). There is a strong correlation between education and training and remaining single, reflecting the amount of effort that women invest in working to achieve their positions (Gordon, 1994, Gigy, 1980) or potentially the increased availability of alternatives to marriage allowed by financial independence. Coleman (2000) and Newtson and Keith (1997) confirm that unmarried women have always been more highly educated and more likely to have professional careers than women of other marital status groups.

The unmarried women interviewed by both Anderson and Stewart (1995) and Gordon (1994) support the idea that work and career are of vital importance to single women. It is seen as central to the structuring of their lives and identities. Newtson and Keith (1997) suggest that unmarried women have a stronger work ethic than other status groups, gain greater fulfilment from work and enjoy better financial security and access to pension income than the previously married. On the less positive side, they also report that single women are likely to experience 'career fatigues' similar to those men have experienced as a result of their continuous work histories and that they are also likely to experience negative affect at retirement as men have. Anderson and Stewart (1995) and Gordon (1994) also catalogue how women's treatment at work and personal management of their lives around their careers can be problematic. Though some of these women chose to pursue their careers exclusively, they do not conform to the 'power-hungry' stereotype that overemphasises their 'difference'. Most *were* interested in friendships and sexual relationships. However they were conscious that their unmarried status changed their lives and the way they were treated by others.

Images of single career women present the path of the professional unmarried woman as perhaps difficult and emotionally lacking but defined by power and success. However, though

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single status may in some ways be advantageous to those seeking career progression in terms of increased time available to commit to work, it is also necessary to consider that single people may be disadvantaged in other ways. Research looking at the role of single people within organisations (Waehler, 1997, Stein, 1976, Braito & Anderson, 1981), supported by work on the perceptions associated with relationship status-related titles (Etaugh & Malstrom, 1981, Etaugh & Petroski, 1985), has suggested that executives responsible for recruiting within organisations share general stereotypes regarding the kind of (undesirable) qualities possessed by single people. For example, single employees are, it is suggested, more likely to be emotionally unstable and to make snap judgements and careless decisions, as they don't have family responsibilities that it is presumed would curb these tendencies.

Additionally Rita Braito and Donna Anderson (1981) suggest that singles are often excluded for informal networks within work organisations and decision-making accomplished within these groups. Braito and Anderson cite Kanter (1977) who suggests that women are excluded from management positions because managers are usually male and prefer to recruit people who are like themselves. It is suggested that this also applies to other minority groups such as single women, Black people, Gay and Lesbian employees. It is likely that members of these groups are less likely to be promoted to management level because they are less likely to be currently present at this level or involved in the recruitment process. Additionally Russell A. Ward (1981) suggests that career-orientated women, in comparison to career-orientated men, have to confront greater obstacles in terms of financial, psychological and social constraints, facing related social stigma impacting on their social inter-relationships. This is not to say that unmarried women are not to be found in management positions or that they do not experience career success but to illustrate that organisational culture may not be easily infiltrated by single 'career women'.

4.3 Romantic failure

Lucia Gilbert and Sarah Walker (1999) describe how what they term the 'accepted female life plot', the narrative of a heterosexual woman's inter-relationships which moves from a defined courtship and engagement to marriage phase, obscures her agency and selfhood beyond the realm of romantic relationships. They suggest that the woman's 'story' ends when she becomes married and after this time her 'voice' subsumed in her status and the identity of her husband. These ideas, through which women's lives are narrated, cast marriage as ultimate 'success'—the end of a romantic quest, begun in girlhood, to find 'the one' who they will then marry. At the opposite end of the spectrum from successful married women are images

of the unmarried women as 'Pathetic leftovers from the marriage market' (p.14, Anderson & Stewart, 1995). Robert Cherry (1998) suggests that there exists such a 'reserve army' of unmarried women willing to marry 'at any price' in response to social pressure and their own limited economic opportunities. It has been suggested that the idea of women's emotional lives being directed towards the search for one male, pre-destined partner is an important fiction that stands as an obstacle to single women's acceptance of their life styles as valid (Anderson & Stewart, 1995).

By the standards of what Anderson and Stewart call 'The Dream' (of romance, marriage and 'happiness ever after') women who remain unmarried have failed to achieve the prize of being 'chosen' by the fairytale 'handsome prince' of their lives (Lewis & Moon, 1997). The absent handsome prince motif has been employed from as early as 1900 in order to highlight the inadequacy of spinsterhood (Freeman & Klaus, 1984). Laura Doyle (2002), alongside other contemporary writers, perpetuates this mythology, proposing that '[Women] don't have to find the man [they] want to marry, because he will find [them]. In fact he's already looking.' (p. 58) and assuring women that 'Being loved by a man is your birthright as a woman.' (p. 39) constructing marriage and heterosexual love as magical and inevitable. As Greer suggests (1999) society values and promotes this romantic narrative and those who have failed to acquire a mate or do not desire one are viewed as deviant, and in the case of unmarried women, romantic 'failures' to be pitied.

Charles Waehler (1997) echoes this point suggesting that others are often suspicious regarding why single women are 'not good enough' to 'catch' husbands on the basis that 'A woman who *cannot* "get" a man must be loser,' [italics added] (p.5). Carol Nadelson and Malkah Notman (1981) see this as part of a 'marketplace analogy' where a partner can be acquired with 'assets' of equal value to those of the individual. Single women, by this reasoning, are seen as deviant and worthy of pity because they have insufficient resources to attract a marriage partner.

Greer's (1999) chapter titled 'single', proposes that 'the cult of coupledom would not be so destructive if so many women were not part of a couple and had no realistic hope of ever being so,' (p.250). Thornton and Freedman (1982) support this, suggesting that though marriage and re-marriage rates have decreased the proportion of young people expecting to marry has remained above 90% since 1960. Diana Gittins (1985) confirms that 'everyone'

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now expects to marry, as Doyle's incarnation of love as a 'birthright' suggests, and is expected to by others and that the marital relationship anticipated is idealised unrealistically.

Waehler (1997) suggests that an improbably high proportion of the bachelors involved in his study expected to marry, detailing that they 'Were not currently involved in relationships nor did they have any real prospects,' (p.52) which he found 'astonishing'. As well as reinforcing the intended point that society encourages statistically unrealistic aspirations towards marriage this also demonstrates the Othering approach adopted by much research undertaken concerning the unmarried. Waehler distances himself from his participants by marvelling at their naiveté in expecting to get married and goes on to suggest that this is evidence of what he views as 'unclear thinking' characteristic of bachelors (p.59).

The power of the idea that there exists one man destined to partner every woman can be seen in the way it is written about even by those feminists seeking to warn us against it. Greer can be seen to encourage what she labelled earlier as 'destructive' thoughts by concluding that 'the things you want don't tend to turn up until you have given over looking for them.' (p.251). Anderson and Stewart (1995) talk of the importance of single women learning to 'let go of The Dream', which they describe as an 'oppressive myth'. They also explain that all their participants 'like to be 'in love'... [and] are aware that nothing quite compares to that particular state of grace, that sense that all is more than right with the world,' (p.189) implying that the authors also share this awareness. The implication of these statements is that, even though both the writers and participants may recognise the fallacy involved in 'dreaming' of 'Mr Right', they have not relinquished, and do not advise women to relinquish this romantic fantasy.

It would be possible to argue that there is no harm in affirming these traditional 'romantic' ideas and encouraging women to yearn for and expect future romance but it is suggested that this ideology results in the marginalisation of alternative narratives. Those whose lives are not directed towards heterosexual romance, marriage and family are rendered deviant and deficient. Douglas Austrom and Kim Hanel (1985) suggest that individuals who actively look for a marriage partner are least satisfied with their lives and experience 'relational deficiencies' with friends and community. Allen (1989, cited by Newtson & Keith, 1997) describes how older unmarried women narrate their lives as comparatively 'uneventful' and lacking 'fullness', constructing their lives as deficient when compared to cultural ideals of parenting and marital life. These ideals can be seen as encouraging the devaluation of all other

relationships, determining that people's needs can only be met by one other, 'right' person in a heterosexual marriage (Adams & Laurikietis, 1977). By encouraging individuals to believe they are 'destined' to get married or, at least, that they would be happier were they part of a couple, society plays a role in engendering the dissatisfaction of single people and the disruption of their inter-relationships with others.

Whether or not individuals are conscious of categorising unmarried women as 'heterosexy' in opposition to being 'old maids' or 'urban city singles', 'career women' or spinsters, these images appear to be identifiable and socially accessible (Gordon, 1994, Anderson & Stewart, 1995). These images, presented in the media and accessible to all through shared discourse, define unmarried women as 'different' and 'Other' to married woman (just as women were divided upon these grounds in early twentieth century anti-spinster literature). This can be seen as distorting impressions of unmarried women, accentuating difference between groups and reinforcing the idea of the unmarried woman as deviant. The importance of categorising unmarried women can be connected to the difficulty that might be experienced addressing a woman without referring to her relationship status. The ways in which women are defined through their relationships with others, particularly significant male 'others' (Gordon, 1994, Nadelson & Notman, 1981), becomes problematic when single women are taken in to account.

4.4 Media reflections on marital status

The popular media has seized upon the image of the single career woman, constructing television series around 'modern city singles' portrayed as both glamorous and sexually active. For example 'Ally McBeal' and 'Sex in the City' both centre on attractive, affluent and single professional women. However, in content they are less than positive in what they tell us of life as an unmarried woman. The central characters of both programmes are women looking for 'the one', a man who will complete them, without a male partner they are seemingly unfulfilled by their privileged lives. The message these programmes transmit is that, however competent and successful women appear to be, what they truly desire most is heterosexual partnership. They reinforce society's message that the heterosexual couple unit is the most desirable state for all and, additionally, reassure those who may have failed to achieve the depicted material wealth that they have ultimately succeeded if they have acquired a partner, unlike the dissatisfied heroines.

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Helen Fielding's (1999) single female character Bridget Jones provides another popular representation of this trend. Bridget is another self-sufficient, professional woman who, in spite of everything, feels incomplete without a man. Greer (1999) describes the success of the novel as 'spawning a gaggle of imitations... featuring sassy career women who are insecure, needy, anxious about their body image and disappointed in love,' (p.247) not a positive image of unmarried womanhood. Greer (1999) pinpoints the issue of insecurity that is central to portrayals of single women. Bridget (Fielding, 1999) repeatedly mentions her fear of 'dying alone half-eaten by an Alsation' which is paralleled by Anderson and Stewart's (1995) participants fear of becoming 'bag ladies' and Gordon's participant's fear of becoming 'peculiar' (1994). Perhaps as a consequence of the emphasis on the 'difference' of unmarried women and media and social reinforcement of the inadequacy of this status, single women describe a fear of being ostracised. The rhetoric underlying these statements appears to be that, if their unmarried status proves permanent, single women will 'end' in not only isolation but psychological and/or financial ruin. Such reasoning echoes that used in the discouraging criticism of eighteenth century spinsters warning that one day they would 'wake up' alone (Freeman & Klaus, 1984).

Gittins (1985) confirms the widespread nature of this assumption proposing that single status and glamour rapidly diminishes into a restricted lifestyle where the unmarried become peripheral to social life and begin to be considered 'odd' and 'on the shelf'. She suggests that this transition occurs as early as age twenty-five for women as their peers marry and begin family-orientated lives. Thirty has also been identified as a boundary for unmarried women who are seen to reappraise their lives, experience increased discontent and 'begin to doubt their own sex appeal, personal worth, and capacity to be happier than a grim 'spinsterhood' will permit when faced with the media image of married women: happy, sexy and desirable' (Shostak, 1987, p.358, cited in Newtson & Keith, 1997, Perlmutter & Hall, 1992). Anxiety surrounding a lonely 'end' reinforced by the results of wellbeing research which are often presented as if institutionalisation, premature death and poor health are inevitably the lot of older single adults (Somers, 1981, Marks, 1996).

Self-help literature constitutes an area of the media that has directly targeted women and their relationships. Major successes of this genre include best-seller 'The Rules' by Ellen Fein and Sherrie Schneider (2000), 'The Surrendered Wife' by Laura Doyle (2001) and her recently released 'Surrendered Single' (2002). Both 'The Rules' and 'The Surrendered Wife' have spawned lectures, support groups, telephone consultations, documentaries and books. They

also both see marriage as the ultimate success for women and remaining single as undesirable. 'The Rules' and 'The Surrendered Wife' encourage women, unmarried and married, to adopt passivity and submissiveness in order to attract men and maintain marriages, on the grounds that men are 'natural aggressors'. They also share a mutual distaste for female assertiveness and ambition, criticising career women and feminists for not grasping what is *really* required for women's relationships to succeed.

'The Rules' provides very specific behavioural rules (e.g., 'Let him do all the talking ' p.32) encouraging the adoption of a passive approach to relationship involvement, on the grounds that men 'enjoy the chase'. Fien and Schneider (2000) promote fixation on marriage as providing ultimate fulfilment and threaten singles who don't attend to this that '[They] could easily end up alone.' (p.8). Even those that don't wish to marry are advised to 'do The Rules' on men as they could change their minds and it would be too late. 'The Rules' incorporates much of the culturally available ideology which casts the unmarried woman as dysfunctional and deficient ('Just be grateful you're not!' [single] p.208) and that it continues to be popular can only confirm the marginalised situation of the unmarried woman.

Agnew, Christopher and Gephart (2000) advise that academic psychology should be more attentive to self-help books that provide advice on interpersonal relationships that could be potentially damaging. They 'tested' the effectiveness of advice from 'The Rules' at increasing relationship commitment and concluded that there were few correlations between commitment and practising The Rules - those present being mostly in the direction opposite of that intended. Barbara Darby (2000) compares 'The Rules' to eighteenth century conduct books for women and concludes that they communicate the same message, for women to 'be entirely directed by male authority, [suppress] female desire, [emphasise] physical appearance and [promote] a social demeanour that is silently enigmatic.' (p.340). This is viewed as highly political and patriarchal anti-feminist in seeking to discourage assertiveness and independence and promote fixation upon and subservience within marital relationships.

'The Surrendered Wife' (2001) advises the married, again, to be directed by their husbands in all things, including relinquishing control of their finances and providing sex on demand. Doyle effectively blames women whose husbands are unfaithful or verbally abusive for 'emasculating' them. She encourages women not to tell men their thoughts, as in 'The Rules', and to take responsibility for any marital problems. This coincides with the message of most self-help texts and much research that identifies relationship management as a female

responsibility (Moran, 2001, Freely, 2001, Duck, 1983). Doyle (2001) has been the subject of much criticism but the book continues to sell, an international network of support groups has been established (see www.surrenderedwife.com) and she has expanded her target to 'The Surrendered Single'.

In 'The Surrendered Single' Doyle (2002) again seeks to persuade women to relinquish control of their relationships and behave passively. Women are asked to recognise that '[they] can be blissfully happy with an imperfect man. [They] will certainly be perpetually lonely without one.' (p. 40). Here the only thing separating the single woman from 'bliss' is her lack of involvement in a relationship with (any) man. Women are accordingly advised to 'Accept all offers that come to you unless he's the creature from the Black Lagoon.' (139) reinforcing the message that any relationship with a man is superior to remaining unmarried. Doyle suggests that 'Phrases like "embracing the single life" are very often shorthand for "avoiding the risk of disappointment." (p. 34) directly dismissing positive portrayals of single life. Women are asked to '[accept] all of his qualities and [try] to improve only [themselves]' (p. 49) underlining the central tenet of the self-help genre and the central sexist principle in operation - that women should be accepting of others but not of themselves. As Moran (2001) suggests, self-help books are sold to women and by finding fault with women's relationship management writers are ensuring that they require further 'help'. Increasing levels of divorce and panic among older unmarried women in fear of spinsterhood (Roiphe, 2001) make this an area where any help offered to women, who feel responsible for finding or maintaining a relationship, is likely to be considered and/or accepted.

Media images of the unmarried seemingly constitute part of an environmental pressure towards marriage. In books and on television marriage is portrayed as the ultimate success for women and, more insidiously, as far more fulfilling than a successful professional career and comfortable lifestyle. Popular self-help texts collaborate with this message making both finding a husband and maintaining a marriage the responsibility of women and only achievable through a rejection of single independence and culturing subservience to men. Hanging over the unmarried woman constructed by these sources is the threat that she will 'end up' alone, unfulfilled, a 'peculiar' 'old maid'. These portrayals reinforce social pressures to marry and set up potentially unrealistic ideals of what marriage might offer. They serve an antifeminist agenda, encouraging women to focus on their (traditional) roles as wives and submissive carers and reject ideas of equality or any aspirations towards career success.

4.5. Research questions for the current study

Involvement in a publicly recognised intimate relationship has implications for the individual, which might include consequences for psychological health, social acceptance, financial security and living situation. It is suggested that additional implications include that such a relationship might alter the way that people construct their identities as part of a privileged or marginalised group and how they situate themselves in relation to other status groups. It is proposed that women are particularly affected by this phenomenon, their interrelationships having greater consequences upon the way they are both addressed and perceived (Etaugh & Petroski, 1985).

Population trends and marriage statistics demonstrate a trend toward adults spending a greater proportion of their lives unmarried. However, it is suggested that single people are not as visible or socially esteemed as their married peers and research involving the unmarried has most frequently portrayed them as disadvantaged and deviant. It is suggested that single women particularly, beyond the conventional age of marriage, have been problematised throughout history (Holmes, 1998) and continue to be ostracised by media, literary commentators and through research. This study examines the social and political implications of relationship status for women and their identities, approaching these phenomena as social constructions re/produced through talk.

Through the process of literature review presented research questions have been formulated. The core question remains 'How do women construct their identities and relationship situations through socially available discursive resources?' However in addition to this further questions regarding areas of research interest are listed and described below.

1. Do women construct identity through accounts of relationship status?

Interview accounts describing relationship status and related experiences will be examined in order to examine connections between the construction of selfhood and relationship status. This relates to research interest in independent or relational identity among women and to discourses of marriage as 'two becoming one' person.

2. How do women construct the implications of their relationship status?

The implications of relationship status for women will be examined, in relation to research interests including living situation, finances, social life and occupation.

3. Does relationship status affect women's social relationships?

Research suggests that single women receive negative feedback from couple-orientated social environments. It is intended to examine how relationship status affects women's social relationships.

4. Do age-related relationship status expectations impact on women's accounts?

The involvement of age in accounts of relationship status will be studied, in connection with research findings suggesting older unmarried women are disadvantaged financially and socially and in relation to developmental models that endorse traditional models of age-related relationship involvement.

5. How do women account for instances of relationship dissolution?

Relationship dissolution and becoming single is of particular interest as demonstrating how women account for the transition between the more socially encouraged and privileged married or partnered situation to the status of single. This is also of interest regarding therapeutic interest in allocating blame for singleness and any demonstration of wellbeing deterioration that research would associate with different relationship situations.

6. Do women today construct and relate to the spinster?

Whereas historically spinsters constituted an identifiable social and political group the term and possibly, the concept, has become less visible. However it is suggested by research that contemporary women possess anxiety regarding single late adulthood suggesting that the spinster archetype may still constitute a presence on the discursive landscape.

7. Do work and financial resources remain key to constructions of single womanhood?

Research and historical records show that for many women spinsterhood has been accompanied by financial difficulties. In the present time unmarried women are associated with the image of the career woman and commitment to work. Connections between relationship status, work and financial resources are to be examined.

In order to examine these questions qualitative methods have been selected. Interviews have been selected as an appropriate format through which to address issues of identity and inter-relationships as our 'selves' and our relationships are seen to arise through language and use of discourse (Wood & Duck, 1995, Sillars, Shellen, McIntosh & Pomegranate, 1997, Billig,

2001). It is suggested that our identities, the meanings of our actions and our relationships are as much constituted by talk as they are expressed through talk, therefore it is viewed as important to identify the linguistic resources available and employed (Stewart, 1991, Duck, 1983). The themes identified are then to be de-constructed using repertory grid technique (Kelly, 1991) in order to identify and outline the key aspects of status and identity. Analysis will be undertaken from a feminist social constructionist perspective, the implications of which are to be discussed in the next chapter, examining the political and social consequences of identity and relationships as constructed through both interview accounts and repertory grids.

Chapter 5. Epistemological approach

5.1 Defining my approach

In the Abstract for this study it is suggested that this study has been undertaken from a feminist social constructionist perspective. In this section the aim is to describe and discuss the meanings and implications of this statement.

5.1.1 A feminist approach

In the words of Percy (1998) feminism is 'a theoretical perspective on gender and human behaviour. It takes as its focus the nature, rights and interests of women, and uses a critique of male power and authority to argue for profound changes in the way that male and female humans are produced, represented and treated.' (p.27). Feminism has many forms and variations determined by individual and group concerns and interests (Evans, 1998, Percy, 1998) however central to all feminist work is the belief that patriarchal society has disadvantaged and disempowered women and that it is desirable to change this.

This principle played a part in the conception of this research idea. The author noted the differing treatment of women of different relationship situations in public spaces upon becoming single. This was interpreted a disadvantageous position particular to women living independently of relationships with men and accordingly a belief that this position, connected to women's experiences of wider society, should be changed formed the initial inspiration for this study. When conducting interviews for this study there was an emphasis on listening to women and being accepting and respectful of their accounts, thereby validating their everyday experiences and stories, also a feminist goal (Gill, 1995). Feminism thereby influences the methods chosen, the analytic interpretations offered and the conclusions drawn throughout the study.

Social constructionist and feminist perspective research practices converge on several points, to be discussed (Squires, 1995). In the context of this study, the role of the researcher and her subjectivity is addressed, something recommended by critical discourse analysts and feminists alike (Gill, 1995). Feminist theory and research has made valuable contributions to the development of critical and discourse psychology (see Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 1995). However there are still many points at which feminist and discourse analytic theory and practice diverge, particularly around questions of realism and relativism. This conflict is to be addressed.

5.1.2 A social constructionist approach

Social constructionism has been identified as a perspective developed at the time of the 'turn to text' of the 1970s, a reaction against cognitivism with roots in postmodern literary theory and philosophy (Burr, 1997). This movement rejected the scientific positivist search for truth in knowledge and rules and also the form of grand narratives, ideas of historical and overarching truths. Social constructionists turned away from the idea that people contained fixed personalities or psychic characteristics that might be glimpsed through experimental work instead choosing to study text and talk, conceptualising this as a medium of social action rather than a way of exposing internal thoughts or sensations.

Key to social constructionism is the idea that identity is not fixed but constructed through discourse, as are knowledge, truth and fact. Here concepts ordinarily considered absolute, such as 'truth' and 'fact', are placed in historical and social context and viewed as relative constructions, established through discourse according to the prevailing claims of the powerful. What is considered to be the truth, and how phenomena are understood at any one time is viewed as the discursive product of people and institutions at that time. Michel Foucault's work was pivotal in establishing this, examining changing conceptualisations of scientific truth across history thereby demonstrating their relative contextual nature in his study of medical knowledge (1973).

This creates problems for some politically motivated researchers wishing to adopt a social constructionist approach as it can be seen to deny the truth of oppression. For example such an approach can be seen to render gender categories and women's oppression, truths on which feminism relies, discursive constructions. Consequently feminists who have adopted a social constructionist approach have been faced with a dilemma regarding the extent to which they accept and apply relativism (Squires, 1995, Gill 1995). This tension, encountered in much discourse analytic research, is to be discussed in relation to this study. However it is noted here that this issue frequently remains unresolved, researchers favouring a pragmatic approach - focusing on what can be achieved in practical research terms whilst acknowledging and accepting philosophical conflicts (Gill, 1995, Wetherell, 2001).

Social constructionism has strong connections with the method of data analysis 'discourse analysis' a form of textual analysis increasingly popular in psychology. There are many forms of discourse analysis (DA) that focus on different aspects of talk and employ different levels

of analysis, to be discussed later. Social constructionism and DA focus on studying text as a way of creating social action and also encourage the examination of power in texts. This perspective sees power as important in determining what is seen as truth and valued knowledge and manifest in whether individuals have access to particular discourses (ways of talking). This potential to analyse the workings of power in text is appealing to politically motivated researchers, some of whom see this as more important than difficulties encountered with relativism (Wetherell, 2001).

In this study social constructionism has influenced the approach taken to studying relationship status. Talk is seen as the medium through which relationships and their stories are created (Billig, 2001) and women are seen to be accomplishing different feats of identity construction through these accounts. Assumptions are not made that what women say reflects something 'real' about their psychology but rather that they construct themselves and their relationships from the discursive resources available to them. The particular variety of DA favoured is to be discussed below.

5.2 Discourse analytic approaches

Discourse analysis is a form of textual analysis, more broadly defined by Wetherell (2001) as 'a way of finding out how consequential bits of social life are done'. It has developed from and through sociological and linguistic studies of language and began to become part of the psychologist's research toolkit in the 1970s during the 'crisis in social psychology' (Gergen, 1973). Before discussion of why and how DA has been applied to this study several possible ways of analysing discourse are to be discussed.

5.2.1 Conversation analysis

Conversation Analysis (CA) constitutes a branch of textual analysis interested in examining language and interaction at a micro-level (Heritage, 2001). Harvey Sacks proposed CA in the 1960s as a method of examining naturally occurring language. It looks to find order in language, focusing on how meaning and understanding are produced and acknowledged through conversational turn-taking. Studies work very closely with transcripts and examine the features of talk in order to understand the action and organisation of meaning production inherent in talk.

Celia Kitzinger and Hannah Frith (2001) examine how heterosexual women might refuse sexual intercourse in an interesting CA study. They look at the conventional forms of refusal

conversation in other contexts and their social 'rules' and additionally examining micro features of talk, drawing conclusions out from this close analysis to feminist theory and date-rape prevention campaigning. As Kitzinger and Frith demonstrate, CA seeks to produce a description of the action of conversation on the page rather than 'going beyond' that by researcher interpretation of that action (Taylor, 2001). For the purposes of this study CA would have proved incompatible with the collection and analysis of the desired volume of data as it requires too close an analysis. Also one of the aims of this study was to interpret the action of talk in relation to social position and power, concepts which are seen to operate in and around talk and necessitate the researcher moving away from the focus on text advocated in CA.

5.2.2 Discursive psychology

Derek Edwards and Jonathon Potter (1992) formalised a way analysing discourse engaging in some level of researcher interpretation known as 'Discursive Psychology'. Again this form of analysis eschews thematic interpretations and focuses on the constructive nature of pieces of talk. In a specific application to psychology Edwards and Potter were formally reacting against cognitivism and suggesting that psychologists instead look at how psychological entities are constructed through speech and, adding an element of interpretation, they were looking to identify the purpose of these constructions (Taylor, 2001). Discursive psychologists examine language and its common strategic features in order to be able to say how subjects of talk are constructed therein and to what ends (Horton-Salway, 2001). Studies, like Mary Horton-Salway's (2001) examination of the construction of ME, look to identify conventional discursive strategies used in text and how they function in talk, what participants are accomplishing with their talk.

From the perspective of this study this form of analysis is seen as limiting the scope of research to features of the text. It is not a goal of this study to identify concepts thought of as 'real' and demonstrate their conversational functional. Rather it is seen as desirable to lay aside these, valid and interesting, goals and examine how women's accounts of experience construct social realities and the implications of these for their identities. This scope for broader interpretation is to be found, for the purposes of this study within a Foucauldian discourse analytic approach.

5.2.3 Foucauldian discourse analysis

An alternative approach to the analysis of discourse, employed in this study, is that informed by the writings of Michel Foucault and developed by social researchers with an interest in the play of power in discourse. Foucault saw discourse as constituting society to the extent that there is no meaning, no reality, existing outside discourse (Hall, 2001). As detailed earlier, this inclusiveness causes problems for those wishing to hold certain truths, such as the existence of women as an oppressed group for feminists, outside of the deconstructing analysis of the topic being researched (Squires, 1995, Evans, 1998). In the Foucauldian, postmodern research project discourse is seen to be the medium through which social realities are created and sustained. Power plays an important role in this process, dictating what counts as 'reality' (Carabine, 2001).

Foucauldian DA thereby looks to locate the workings of power and the construction of social reality in talk. This provides it with a broader interpretative role for the analyst who is charged with identifying the play of power and the according social in/equalities. To do so the analyst must move 'beyond' the text. This is not to romanticise the Foucauldian researcher as going further in their search for understanding but to say that here they are required to step back from the close work advocated by CA and discursive psychology when drawing conclusions. For the purposes of this study a Foucauldian approach to DA is adopted. This allows the author to locate women and their relationships in a broad social context of a marriage-centred and promoting culture and how women's experiences and social positions are altered through their relationships with men. Some of the contradictions inherent in the adoption of this approach are to be discussed.

5.3 A feminist social constructionist approach

For the purposes of this study DA offers the opportunity to examine talk and how it relates to identity and social position. Whether it is possible to conduct feminist DA, or analysis informed by political views has been a hotly debated subject. It is suggested that this is possible and that in order to overcome this position of theoretical paralysis the researcher is justified in adopting a pragmatic approach (Squires, 1995).

Social constructionism and discourse analytic approaches share the postmodern belief described above regarding the rejection of notions of a concrete 'reality' underlying social action that can be uncovered through research. Instead discourse analysts look to language as the medium through which social action is accomplished and social reality is both constructed

and maintained. As outlined previously this relativism has been problematic for researchers who wish to exclude certain truths, such as the oppression and existence of women, or Black people, or the working class from their analyses. If these groups do not 'exist' if their experiences are accounts no more valid or 'real' than those who wish to discredit them the point of doing politically motivated research is seen to be lost (Wetherell, 2001).

As a result of this researchers have sought to temper postmodern relativism, retaining the belief that there are some truths existing outside discourse, in order to maintain aspects of political commitment whilst carrying out discourse research. Margaret Wetherell (2001) entitles this perspective 'new' or 'critical' realism. Rosalyn Gill (1995) argues from a feminist perspective for what she terms 'passionately interested enquiry' encouraging feminist researchers to take the positive things they can from DA, namely tools for interrogation and deconstruction, and use them in politically motivated enquiry (p.174). She proposes that feminists should not deny their political values but rather use them in the formulation of 'politically informed relativism' (p.177).

This might be termed a 'pragmatic' approach, discussed by Corinne Squires (1995). Squires documents how feminists have adopted discourse analytic methods with a concern for the goals of achieving political and social change discarding concerns for theoretical debates. She sees DA as in accordance with feminist interest in the social, in lived experience and 'what actually happens in the world' (p.148). However she underlines the conflict between postmodernist rejection of grand narratives and the feminist need to rely on the reality of shared gendered experiences. Judith Evans (1998) also highlights this contradiction, proposing that it is essential to feminism that women are seen in a particular and coherent way.

This study is undertaken from a pragmatic feminist perspective. It employs taken-for-granted realities by working on the notion that women exist as a category sharing experience of this gendered identity. This is not seen as a weakness, though it is acknowledged that this is a distortion of postmodern ideas, but rather as a motivating 'passion', following Gill's interpretation (1995). This foundation is seen as necessary to accepting and interpreting women's experiences, though social constructionist ideas are to be employed elsewhere in examining identity as a fluid construction and in the discussion of power and discourse themes.

5.4 A reflexive approach

It has been considered important in critical qualitative research to illuminate the location of the researcher and their influence on the research process, recasting the role of researcher subjectivity that has posed a problem for positivist scholars hoping to present 'objective' findings. Here, this personal engagement is embraced as a resource assisting interpretation of findings (Parker, 1996) potentially allowing the reader to locate interpretations within a context of the authors assumptions and assisting with any alternative interpretations (Tindall, 1996). This process is in accordance with the Foucauldian idea that there is nothing outside discourse, the researcher is acknowledged as a participant in the production of the findings. The researchers account is recognised as another story and rendered accessible alongside the participants' stories (Wetherell, 2001).

Researchers have approached the issue of reflexivity in various ways, by directly entitling sections, by constructing their own reflexive conversations or more generally in terms of considering this role throughout research (Wetherell, 2001). However it has become a routine and important part of conducting DA to make clear researcher presence in the process. It has also been identified as necessary to the feminist commitment to being accountable for research writings, a way of including researchers in the analytical process (Gill, 1995).

After reporting each study a section entitled 'reflexivity' is to be written in this thesis. The purpose of these sections is to add the researchers account and presence to the study, to make them visible. It is argued that engaging in this kind of work assists the reader in seeing the research process outside the formal description embodied herein and also enables the writer to provide a reminder that and potentially suggest ways in which her subjectivity effected and was affected by conducting the research.

Chapter 6. Study 1 Method

Rationale

Constructions of the unmarried woman in expert and popular discourse have been reviewed, and they suggest that unmarried women may have to engage in particular 'identity work' with respect to their relationship status. The first empirical study undertaken set out to explore women's own accounts of identity, in their own words. A semi-structured interview format was chosen as the most naturalistic way to collect data on current relationship status, past experience and future expectations.

Interviews were considered compatible with a social constructionist perspective, where talk is framed as constructive and subjective rather than as reporting happenings. From this perspective interviews constitute a process of women creating their relationship situations and identities and endowing them with meaning - establishing 'who [they] are and what [they] stand for in the world' (Gergen, 1989, p.70) according to the social demands placed upon them (Shotter, 1985). They are also in accord with the feminist goal of allowing women's voices to be heard, asking women to give account of their own experiences and thereby validating them. A schedule of questions was designed to elicit accounts of relationship status, including issues such as titles, naming and status change (see Appendix Study 1; Interview question schedule).

The opportunity sample was guided by the broad goal of recruiting women aged 20 and 50, a population for whom marriage is a theoretical and statistical probability. Interviewees within this age-range were likely to have confronted relationship decisions and relationship status implications, as well as potentially having occupied a plural of relationship groups and identities.

Design

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 women, aged 20-48, between March and May, 2000. Interviews lasted between 45 minutes and 1 hour 15 minutes. Most were conducted within the university, however where participants could not attend the university interviews were conducted in alternative environments (2 participants' homes and a workplace). All interviews were tape recorded, with interviewees' informed consent (see Appendix Study 1; Interview research contract) and then transcribed (see Appendix Study 1; Study 1 interview transcripts). Five transcripts, selected alphabetically (to avoid favouring

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any contribution where all were valuable), are presented in the appendices, one from each relationship status group identified (single, relationship, cohabiting, engaged, married). Transcripts were analysed using discourse analysis through steps to be described, following Gill (1996) and Potter and Wetherell (1987).

Recruiting participants

Initially it was decided that it would be desirable to enlist participants with a range of ages and backgrounds and therefore it would not be advantageous to recruit directly from the undergraduate population (Banyard & Hunt, 2000). The use of students in interview research, it is suggested, can also be problematic when course credits, or interrelationships within the university setting, motivate contributions.

Health centres and doctors' surgeries were identified as locations attracting all sectors of the population where it might be possible, with co-operation, to make available flyers. Fifty were identified and posted packs containing posters, flyers and a covering letter (see Appendix Study 1; Study 1 promotional materials, Letter requesting institutional co-operation). One participant was so recruited. It was then decided that establishing communication by phone might assist recruitment. Approximately fifty leisure centres, gyms and community centres agreed over the phone to put up posters and distribute flyers. This also attracted one participant. Advertising cards were also placed in the windows of local newsagents for a month, resulting in no response.

Interviewees were then requested through an e-mailed version of the poster sent to university and non-university researcher contacts, postgraduate students, academic and non-academic staff. It was requested of those known to the researcher that they suggest contacts of theirs who might participate. This yielded the other ten respondents. It is suggested that difficulties finding women to interview may have resulted from unwillingness to problematise relationship status.

Participants

Participants were asked to suggest their own pseudonyms and provide a brief personal description, which they were later given the opportunity to verify by post (see Appendix Study 1; Interview follow-up letter, Interview feedback sheet). Several participants chose names traditionally seen as male or gender ambiguous, explaining these as nicknames or the names of friends or relatives rather than demonstrating any subversive political intent. A table

summarising the demographic information provided by interviewees is included below. Beside indications of current relationship status, where applicable, further details are included; 'Div' denoting a previous divorce.

Name	Age	Relationship status		Occupation
Sarah	22	Single		Logistics student
Mima	23	Single		PhD student
Dave	24	Single		PhD student
Sam	25	Single		PhD student
Maggie	35	Single		Police sergeant
Helen	48	Single	Div	Primary teacher
Eva	24	Relationship		Masters student
Sue	48	Cohabiting	Div	Teacher trainer
Tess	20	Engaged/Cohabiting		Law student
Chris	24	Engaged		Part-time PhD
Lillian	31	Married		Careers advisor
Tabitha	43	Married	Div	PhD student

To follow are the brief descriptions of themselves provided by the interviewees (see Appendix Study 1; Interview brief description sheet). These are included in order to allow the reader to make their own inferences on the role of these details in participants' responses.

Tess, studying Law, aged 20, describes herself as Caucasian. She is the mother of an eighteen-month-old and engaged to be married. She plays the piano and is interested in music. Tess is also an avid reader.

Sarah, a Logistics student, aged 22, likes music. She is joining the Royal Airforce after graduation.

Mima, a PhD student, aged 23, describes herself as sociable and ambitious. She likes things that make her laugh. Mima enjoys music, alcohol and is a keen football supporter.

Eva, a Masters student, aged 24, is from Spain. She likes travelling and considers herself to be an active person, particularly enjoying skiing and being outside in good weather. Eva likes people and also enjoys challenges. She has a boyfriend living in Spain.

Chris, a student, aged 24, is engaged to her boyfriend and a Christian. She plays bass guitar and considers herself to be an individualist. Chris is studying for a PhD part-time whilst working.

Dave, a PhD student, aged 24, is very close to her family and her social life is important to her. She likes clubbing and seeing friends. She also plays guitar and music is a big part of her life. Dave also enjoys reading murder-mystery books.

Sam, a PhD student, aged 25 is originally from the Northeast. She enjoys kick-boxing, football and glass-painting and owns cats. She also enjoys music of all types. Sam's parents are divorced and she has one step-brother.

Lillian, a careers advisor, aged 31 has been married for 2 years and has no children and no pets. She has always worked in the public sector.

Maggie, a police sergeant, aged 35 is unmarried. Though she has had numerous boyfriends she has never lived with anyone and is yet to find Mr. Right. She enjoys aerobics and watching soap operas on television. Maggie is also interested in watching people and why they behave as they do.

Tabitha, is a postgraduate student, aged 43. She describes herself as a happily married mother with big ideas and not much time to achieve them in.

Helen, a teacher, aged 48, has 2 sons and has been married twice. She is a Maths co-ordinator and loves music and playing the piano. She describes herself as an uneducated artist, unconventional in outlook and anti-establishment though she doesn't break the law.

Sue, who has a career in teaching, aged 48, has worked formally and informally in primary and higher education, also doing youth and community work. She has moved around the UK a lot and spent 1 year in America.

A researcher profile is to be included below. This emphasises the role of the researcher as a participant in the research process and allows the reader to make informed personal interpretations of how researcher characteristics may have influenced interaction and interpretations.

Anna, I am a postgraduate student, have never been married and do not have children. At the

time of conducting these interviews I was 22 and single. My experiences as a single woman directed me towards this research area. I describe myself as a feminist interested in discourse and the power of language as a tool for social construction.

Procedure

Interviews were arranged by phone or in person, on introduction through contacts. On arrival at the arranged location, usually a university cubicle, I introduced myself and briefed participants on the subject of the research. Research contracts were then read, signed and exchanged (see Appendix Study 1; Interview research contract). These detailed interviewee rights to anonymity, confidentiality, withdrawal of participation or data, on viewing the transcript. Both participant and researcher kept a copy.

Participants suggested a pseudonym and self-description, as detailed above. They were given the opportunity to ask questions at this point and asked if there were any areas they preferred not to discuss. A tape recorder was then turned on, with participant consent, and remained on throughout interviews. Interviews followed a question schedule (see Appendix Study 1; Interview question schedule) where appropriate, though some adaptation to individual circumstances was necessary. The researcher followed up any areas of interest brought up by interviewees. This led to the development of the interview schedule, some questions being removed and others added. The schedule provided a useful framework ensuring that issues considered important were covered in all interviews.

After interviews participants were asked about how they found the experience. Most had questions to ask by this stage and the researcher remained available till these were answered. Participants took away research contracts and a contact sheet thanking them for their participation and giving full details of how to contact the researcher.

Within a month of interviews participants received copies of their transcripts in the post. They also received copies of their self-descriptions included above, forms and postage paid envelopes to assist response, and covering letters reiterating thanks for participating and contact details (see Appendix Study 1; Interview follow-up letter, Interview feedback sheet).

Analysis

Interviews were transcribed by the researcher, using notation developed from elements of other systems (Potter and Wetherell, 1987, Banister, Burman et al, 1994) (see Appendix

Study 1; Transcription key). They were then discourse analysed (Gill, 1996, Willig, 1998). Discourse analysis was selected as an appropriate form of analysis as it enables examination of self and group identity as a constructive action located and positioned in talk rather than as an internal characteristic (Edwards & Potter, 1992, Harre & Gillet, 1994), avoiding ascribing characteristics to individuals of different relationship status as has been done (Gigy, 1980, Marks, 1996). It encourages the researcher to approach the text as an active feat of constructing particular realities through language and characterises the interview as social interaction. The analysis undertaken in this study is that interested in identifying discursive themes and exploring their implications rather than attending specifically to linguistic features (Willig, 1998), as discussed earlier. The steps of the analysis undertaken for this study are described below.

Initially the transcripts were read through repeatedly and potential themes and coding categories were noted. The transcripts were then imported into the qualitative data analysis program NUD*IST 4. They were coded using the themes previously identified and these were repeatedly reworked, creating new coding categories, refining and deleting others. This system, it is suggested, increased the efficiency of the coding process through enhanced manageability of data and increased ease of movement between transcripts. The contents of coding categories was then printed out and re-examined by hand. Many categories were discarded and the remainders were developed into the discourse themes reported.

Chapter 7. Study 1 Findings

7.1 Study 1 results

The discourse themes and linguistic resources utilised within interviewee accounts to construct relationships and identity are to be listed and then further described below.

1. Constructing identity: Defining 'single'
2. Constructing identity: Individual vs. couple identity
3. Constructing relationship status: Status change as scary
4. Constructing relationship status: Fault, blame and accountability
5. Constructing identity: Not entering relationships for the sake of it as strength
6. Constructing identity: Independence as strength and single preserve
7. Constructing identity: Titles as declaration vs. as screen
8. Constructing identity: Retaining surnames as maintaining identity
9. Constructing relationship status: Constructing the wife
10. Constructing relationship status: Life, time and activity as single preserve
11. Constructing relationship status: Single youth vs. spinsterhood
12. Constructing relationship status: Freedom vs. restriction
13. Constructing relationship status: Travel as restricted by relationships
14. Constructing relationship status: Finance as restriction and freedom
15. Constructing relationship status: Talk, regulation and privilege

1. Constructing identity: Defining 'single'

Interviewees describing themselves as 'single' did not, conventionally, define singleness as absence of involvement in intimate relationships. Most defined their status as single when clarification was requested but then went on to describe relationships they were engaged in.

> Anna: Okay. How would you describe your relationship status?
> Mima: Single.
> Anna: Okay=
> Mima: =Well (.) am I allowed to be vague about it?
> Anna: Mhm.
> Mima: Yeah? (2) Si:ngle but (1) mm I don't know I see myself as single but there's somebody (.) that I'm kind of with when I see them it's (.) it's it's really casual.
> Anna: Okay. So how long have you been single? And the other part of the question would have been 'or in that relationship?' so maybe you could (.) kind of do both?
> Mima: (Laughs) Erm I'm single (1) I've been single since January so (2) just about five months but I've also been (.) casually I h I am sing I am single but casually with that other person for (2) a year and a half.

(4-26)

This suggests that researchers, e.g. those comparing marital and single well-being, should be aware of the potentially plural meanings of the term 'single' to those employing it. Some

single interviewees used the term conventionally. However other women calling themselves single described involvement in unusual relationships: such as Dave's relationship by phone or Mima's relationship that she hopes to develop in the future, and relationships like Helen's which did not meet their expectations of a relationship. This suggests that singleness functions as a catch-all status category which includes all women who are *not* involved in recognised relationships rather than those who are not involved in *any* relationships. From this it can be inferred that there are restrictions around what is socially acknowledged as 'a relationship' which interviewees negotiated around. It is suggested that this creates complications within studies that presume singleness is an unproblematic category and that single people's lives are devoid of the benefits of relationships then, on these grounds, compare them to other groups (Marks, 1996, Horowitz et al, 1996).

> Maggie: But again (.) what does 'single' mean? Does single mean that you're not in a relationship or does single just mean that you're not married? I mean you could be single (.) but living with somebody=
> Anna: =Yeah=
> Maggie: =but still, your actual marital status is single isn't it so (.) it's just down to interpretations really.
>
> (1012-1023)

2. Constructing identity: Individual vs. couple identity

Discourses of identity merging at marriage are present in both popular romantic culture and biblical narratives. This merging of selves was not directly addressed by interviewees but it's influence could be detected in the talk of married interviewees, Tabi and Lillian, who mentioned difficulties talking about their marriages and themselves separately. It is implied that these are, more usually, considered to be homogeneous.

> Tabi: Is (.) that fact that I am married to (husband) and that (husband) is (husband) and that it's very difficult to actually split myself and say that (.) just this bit is me that's not so it's like I'm in context and the context of me in in my marr is me as (.) in my marriage.
>
> (1148-1153)

Chris (engaged) described how she 'absorbs' the habits and views of men she is involved with. Helen, married twice, directly addressed the idea that she could not be '*her*self' (italics added) with men she was involved with and 'Tend[ed] to sort of blend with them,' (195) and 'Lose [her] personality' (211). She suggested that in marriage her personality and self-esteem were 'pulled out' by her ex-husbands (147-148). Sue suggested that her personality had become 'subsumed' by her ex-husband, reinforcing the idea that in marriage the individual

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self becomes discursively unavailable. It is possible that these women interpreted their experience of the same phenomenon more negatively as part of their accounting for relationship dissolution or that their relationships were different. However these quotes are interpreted as suggesting that access to discourse of self differs when women becomes restricted when women become married or become involved in relationships and that this changes their identity construction, to some extent it seems that a married woman's 'self' is relational.

Correspondingly, the possession of identity and selfhood were constructed as consequences of singleness. Single women described 'getting to know themselves' while single and 'discovering' themselves (Maggie, 803, Sarah, 489). Mima suggests that as a single woman she has 'more self identity' and Sarah echoes this. This was experienced positively by single interviewees.

> Sarah: Erm (.) one thing that I think is very important is to get to know yourself as a
> person and I feel that a lot of people in relationships don't...
>
> (489-492)

> Mima: Yea:h erm (1) as compared to being in a relationship? Okay, yeah you get (.) I
> think like on your own you get more self-identity.
>
> (123-125)

Lillian explicitly refers to the idea that, in a relationship, people possess both a 'couple' and an 'individual' identity (778). Dickson-Markman and Markman (1987) suggest that the formation of a couple identity is an important part of the early stages of marriage, when couples confront problems created by withdrawal from their friends and being accepted by each others friends. They describe how this situation can become problematic in later stages when couples report not having enough friends. This suggests that, to some extent, the formation of couple identity occurs at the expense of other social relationships.

The employment of multiple selves in talk could be interpreted as a strategy to manage tensions between constructions of Lillian's independence and selfhood, associated with singleness, and her desire to remain married, constructed relationally. Alternatively this dualism could be interpreted as a compromising response to social pressure to identify herself primarily through marital discourse of merged identity. This illustrates how women within relationships might have access to alternative ways of constructing their identity, an option unavailable to single women. Lillian constructs a dilemma of identity construction, her wish

to retain independent self identity, through naming and titles, conflicting with conventions attached to marriage and others expectations of her. This illustrates the connection between women's self-identity and constructions of relationship status.

3. Constructing relationship status: Status change as scary

The narrated impact of relationship status change highlights the significance of relationship status to identity construction and accounting for experience. Descriptions of status change, whether of entering or leaving relationships, commonly involved the term 'shock' and were described as 'scary'. Women contemplating marriage or already married described this as scary. The financial responsibility and commitment associated with marriage were frequently depicted as 'scary'. Interviewee accounts of becoming single often suggested this was 'scary' and implied that they anticipated unspecified negative consequences. Sam describes this experience in both positive and negative terms.

> Sam: Mm. It was very scary erm because I'd previously not been single for quite a while and so erm (.) it was quite frightening (.) but also very, very liberating. Erm (.) and much more fun (.) then I thought it would be (laughs).
>
> (187-191)

> Mima: ...then it finished and that was (.) the most shocking experience ever (.) to come out of that 'cause I just didn't know who I was d'you know.
> Anna: Right.
> Mima: It's like (.) I like being independent but that by that stage in that relationship I wasn't independent I was part of a couple I didn't see myself any other way.
>
> (249-258)

Other women described becoming single as being 'flung into the world again' (Helen 444), 'like [their] right arm had been taken away' (Maggie, 246), and as 'the most shocking life change' (Mima, 242) they had experienced. These words conjure images of a highly emotional experience resulting in confusion and isolation. Above Mima, now single, constructs her self within a past relationship as dependent and not 'herself'. She describes how her self-knowledge and identity were called into question when she became single. Sue describes becoming single after marriage as 'challenging her core being' (247) and how difficult it was to terms with 'being' outside that relationship. This illustrates the extent to which women's identities are implicated in relationships.

> Sue: ...So it was (.) erm I felt enormously rejected and erm well my I felt and this sounds very dramatic but the middle of my whole core being had been challenged by this sort of relationship break up so being single was not at that time a very positive thing.

4. Constructing relationship status: Fault, blame and accountability

Accounts of self-doubt and self-blame for 'failure' in relationships were particularly visible in the accounts of single people. This also featured in the narratives of others telling of the end of past relationships. The idea that a relationship that ends constitutes a 'failure' relates to cultural discourses of the permanence of marriage and is frequently employed within the talk of single and divorced interviewees. Single interviewees particularly suggested that they were to 'blame' for the end of past relationships and, though some break ups were constructed as justifiable, they also questioned whether or not they'd fulfilled obligations to be 'good girlfriends'.

This could be seen as representing evidence for the theorised need for single women to locate someone to blame for their failure to 'find a man' (Lewis and Moon, 1997). However, it is suggested that such accounting represents a way of accounting for the marginalised positions of single women which is in keeping with accessible discourses of single people as deficient. In addition to confirming cultural representations of single 'failure', a strategy less problematic than resisting categorisations for marginalised groups (Kitzinger, 1987), this, more positively, allows single women a degree of agency within these situations creating an opportunity for 'success'. If women construct the close of their relationships as a result of a fault of theirs they create the possibility that they may not repeat this identified fault meaning that it is within their powers to succeed in the future.

> Dave: ...even though it was my decision I felt felt (.) lost I felt I kind of questioned whether I could have really saved it? Whether I could have done anything more or whether I'd done (.) enough. He was going through a pretty rough patch as well he was pretty much stressed out and I was thinking 'Was I a good girlfriend? Did I run away? Er:m oh god I'm gonna be alone! No more seeing him.'
>
> (267-274)

> Maggie: ...because they've got all these other problems they drive people away. because I've been like (.) like depressed over the last twelve months, I think that's probably, well, I'm fairly sure that's probably the reason why we split up in the end (.) because he got fed up of seeing a miserable face.
>
> (889-897)

Single women's accounts included more frequent descriptions of self-doubt and self-criticism than those of married interviewees and those in relationships. This could be because they

don't experience the kind of positive affirmation Sarah describes as part of her last relationship 'Y'know um being told that you're amazingly beautiful I think will never fail to make you feel good... I'm always quite happy when I go out but (.) it did (.) make a difference,' (546-569) as is supported by well-being research (e.g. Greenglass, 1985). Single women are obliged to find ways of constructing their identities and relationship histories without access to discourses of security and emotional 'success' which accounts for intact relationships or marriages. It is also worthy of consideration that rather than assuming single women criticised themselves more that married women and those invested in relationships may have deliberately avoided criticism. Greer's (1999) propositions that it would be unacceptable for people in marriages or relationships to demonstrate doubt and negative emotions.

'Blame' was also central to narratives of the accountability of single or divorced people to their families. Divorced interviewees, Helen, Sue and Tabi, suggested that their families, particularly their mothers, had attributed to them the blame for the break up of their marriages. It was implied that not only had they 'failed' in their marriages but that they had also let down their families. Tabi describes her sister's advice that she should not remarry as she had already 'got it wrong once', conceptualising the likelihood of 'success' as contingent upon skills shown to be absent by her divorce and demonstrating a lack of support for repeated access to the privileged marital position. In situations where their husbands had 'left' women were nevertheless allocated blame for not having made the marriage work, i.e. continue. This confirms proposals that women are responsible for managing relationships with men and implies additionally that women are held as responsible and accountable to others for also prolonging these relationships.

> Tabi: For my family, and I got this from my sister quite clearly there was a feeling that (.) well if you've messed up once (.) then what's the point of getting married again also my family had all (.) I'd been the first one to get married and (.) my husband and I had been courting when my father had died of cancer and so (.) (my ex-husband) was that was my first husband, in a way he was very much revered by the rest of my family they saw him as some kind of figurehead and so they found it really difficult after he left and even though I said, I mean it was his choice he went off, they still felt well you know, that it must be something to do with me, that I'd done something wrong and that well I'd messed up once so why was I getting married again.
>
> (606-623)

Mothers are commonly located within the accounts of single women, in many cases offering positive affirmation but in others criticising their daughters. Sam describes her mother saying

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she was too old (at twenty-five) to be single and would 'end up' a spinster. Dave describes her mother wanting to know why she could not 'save' her relationship with an ex-boyfriend. This suggests that those surrounding single women may reinforce negative images of singlehood and also that relationship involvement is not only a personal choice but something for which women are socially accountable to those around them.

Constructing identity: strength of character

Single interviewees commonly depicted themselves as independent and uncompromising constructing 'strength' of character. Strength was achieved through expressing a preference for keeping surnames at marriage, through not compromising in relationships, through not being involved in relationships for the sake of them and through putting themselves first which was frequently juxtaposed to the prioritisation of pleasing others in the past. Though interviewees of differing relationship status constructed strength as characteristic, those in relationships also associated this quality with independence and singleness.

> Sue: ...then I began to find a lot of positives about being single, making my own choices er not having to run after someone else and get someone else [food] and you know all those sort of dreary things that you do in relationships... I felt it was a very strong time for me as a (.) as a woman in particular (.) and as a single person.
>
> (251-264)

5. Constructing identity: Not entering relationships for the sake of it as strength

A recurring claim which can be seen as functioning to reinforce declarations of strength and independence was that of interviewees not being in relationships for the sake of them and vowing that they would leave relationships if they 'stopped working'.

> Anna: Would you like to see your relationship status change?
> Chris: Mm (.) no I don't think so (.) as long as things stay the way they are obviously (.) if the relationship stopped working out then I would want to end it I wouldn't like to think that I'd just kind of stick with it no matter what but (.) as things are then no er.
>
> (e, 399-407)

Single interviewees, particularly, made social comparisons to friends or 'types' of women who would be in relationships or marriages in order to avoid 'being' alone. Through this device single women demonstrated that they valued their own principles and independence above any wish for a relationship, implying strength of character. This distances single women from depictions of the 'sad single' who is desperate to marry at any cost. Also, it

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implies that it is undesirable to aspire to being in a relationship rather than to desire a particular person. This resonates with romantic ideals that suggest there is one perfect male partner or 'Mr Right' for every woman. This predicts that an individual could not find happiness or fulfilment as part of any other relationship.

> Dave: ...I've been single for six months but I'm not one of these people that erm (.) thinks I'm gonna go out with the next person that comes along to stay with them so that I (.) so that I can avoid being alone. If it's not for me then being single is more important at the time being so.
>
> (38-44)

> Maggie: ... But a lot of that y'know it'd be interesting to know how many of those people that are in relationships are actually happy and how many are just doing it to to fit in and say 'I'm not on my own I have got a partner.'
>
> (725-730)

Interviewees involved in relationships used equivalent assertions constructing independence, suggesting that they were not reliant upon these relationships and could function without them perfectly well. This implied that they also were not involved in relationships 'for the sake of it' legitimising their remaining in their relationships as grounded in desire for the individual. This also suggests that they could be single were it required of them and that therefore they were not, undesirably, dependent on their partners. This drawing closer to the image of the independent single serves to resist discourses of co-dependent helplessness sometimes associated with marriage and evoked by single interviewees.

> Sue: ...I don't know friends or (.) ex-husband or whatever partners would probably say that I'm pretty well self-contained as a person so erm (3) no I'm not one of these don't think I'm one of these who only xxx got a man (.) sort of thing.
>
> (483-488)

6. Constructing identity: Independence as strength and single preserve

One of the most frequently occurring themes involved in accounts of relationships was that of compromise. The idea of women compromising their individual interests and desires in a relationship featured in all accounts, though it was interpreted differently by interviewees of different status. Single interviewees directly addressed compromise as something they were pleased not to be involved in. This can be interpreted in relation to single interviewees' discursive construction of their independence and freedom. They described compromises in relationships of how they had spent time, made decisions and where they were located physically, whether they went out socially and moved geographically, as negative.

Anna: Okay so: you said just then then something about (.) compromise.
Sam: Mm.
Anna: You don't have to make compromises (.) what sort of compromises do you associate with being in a relationship?
Sam: Mainly compromises about how (.) to spend (.) time.
Anna: Right.
Sam: Erm and (.) giving up the time wither with my friends or (.) working to spend time with that person er:m which I no longer have to do or: compromises about (.) even if you're spending time with that person what you're actually going to be spending the time doing so are you going to go out (.) are you going to stay in erm (.) now I can decide (.) whatever I want to do I don't have to think about 'Well I'd really like to go out but they want to stay in so we'll stay in.'

(55-74)

Compromise within relationships was portrayed negatively by single interviewees, in opposition to the self-determination of single life. Those who were married and in relationships described making compromises and also constructed single life as free from this. Tess, who is engaged, described learning to be tidier for her partner when they moved in together, and Tabi, who is married, talked about going out socially when she would rather not and listening to her husband when she did not want to. These compromises were seen as part of the relationships and not interpreted negatively. Single interviewees constructed themselves as experiencing many freedoms; going out without concern for or need to ask permission of a partner, having their own space and making their own decisions, the choice of travelling for their careers and the option to socialise as much as they wanted and to be financially independent.

Sam: Definitely. Erm (1) I feel much more independent much more willing to try new things erm (1) I feel like I see and speak to more people (.) I don't know if that's actually true or not but I feel like I do. I feel like I've got much more confidence er:m (1) and just generally much happier (Sam and Anna laugh).
Anna: Okay, so did it have implications for your social or family life?
Sam: Erm definitely for my social life.
Anna: Right.
Sam: Erm 'cause it's like previously I see my friends much more often I do (.) much more things I've even started (.) new sports I'm hardly in the house erm (.) yeah my social life's improved greatly.

(196-215)

Selfishness was constructed as a possible consequence of the single interviewees' lack of obligation to compromise. Single interviewees acknowledged that selfishness could be ascribed to them, as they weren't required to engage in relationship compromises. Mima (single) displayed particular concern that she was 'selfish' and suggested that being in a relationship would render her less so. Tabi (married) calls herself 'selfish' when she describes

how sometimes she doesn't want to listen to her partner. This connects self-determination to selfishness, which is constructed as an undesirable characteristic. The awareness of and concern about single selfishness could be related to New Right depictions of single people as self-serving and anti-family (Gordon, 1994). It also connects with Jean Baker Miller's (1988) description of the difficulties women have incorporating action and self-determination, rather than giving, into their self-images. Such discourse functions to discourage women from totally embracing self-determination encouraging prioritisation of and involvement in relationships with men over personal goals or desires, otherwise allocating the possession of undesirable characteristics.

> Mima: …I think [people in relationships] get the part of the relationship that's really important as well it's really rewarding d'you know just to be able to consider somebody else. I think it makes you a better person in a way a relationship d'you know because you are you can't be very selfish.
>
> (413-418)

Alternative interpretations of single 'selfishness' include the idea of 'putting [them]selves first'. Interviewees told of how they had in the past compromised themselves for others and come to see this as counterproductive. These descriptions established women as both strong in character and having learnt from experience, providing a more positive interpretation of independent selfhood. In the below quotation Sue suggests that the idea of compromise and pleasing others is a female characteristic connected to overemphasis of the role of relationships in personal happiness. She achieves distances from this idea, establishing herself as more experienced, knowledgeable and independent than the females described.

> Sue: …I'm probably realising that my (.) way in life and my happiness don't [necessarily come down to] the relationship I I'm in which is quite a big change there's this wanting to please which I've always thought as being quite a female attribute erm I don't know it could be to do with getting quite a bit older more experience and those sorts of things but I'm I'm much more self-assured.
>
> (339-347)

7. Constructing identity: Titles as declaration vs. as screen

Responses to the issue of changing surnames and titles at marriage can are interpreted in relation to constructions of public self-identity. Interviewee title preferences were linked to the degree to which they wished to communicate their relationship status or independence to others. Single interviewees and those in relationships narrated different title preferences, employing interpretations of the same rhetoric. Most single participants preferred the title

'Miss'. The reasons for this included personal preference and a desire not to be ambiguous about their marital status. Many single interviewees suggested that 'Ms' was used by women who wished to 'hide' their status, particularly if divorced (Tess, 140), and who were 'ashamed' of being single (Maggie, 177). Ambiguity was constructed as an undesirable consequence of using 'Ms'. Mima (166) suggested that 'Miss' enabled her to display her independence and thereby positively interpreted her title choice as a valued quality and status.

Single women also suggested, frequently, that they would use 'Mrs' if they married—again to avoid ambiguity. Sam, who is single, and Tess, who is engaged, suggested it was part of marriage to publicly display their 'attachment' using 'Mrs'. It was associated with respectability and age. Some single women acknowledged age as influencing title selection. It was suggested that they would presume older women to be 'Mrs' and Maggie supported this idea, suggesting people presumed she was married and addressed her 'Mrs' as a result of her age. This connects to the broader issue of discourses of relationship status and age, described in 'Single Youth vs. Spinsterhood'.

> Maggie: My first name and my surname, then they'll say 'Okay Mrs. So-and-so' because of my age they probably presume (.) I'm married anyway which sometimes it annoys me because they presume just because I'm (.) y'know (.) not twenty-one any more that I must be (.) tied to a man y'know, it's not the case.
>
> (208-215)

Some interviewees, involved in relationships and married, chose to use the title 'Ms'. They suggested this choice was preferable as it was 'undefining' (Chris, 159) and afforded them equality in adopting a title they could maintain regardless status, as men do. Women who had made this choice appeared to have rehearsed their reasons for doing so. Chris (engaged) talked about using different titles in different environments, 'Mrs' for domestic purposes, as did Helen (single), maintaining 'Ms' as their preferred public address. Lillian was the only interviewee to have chosen 'Ms' as an alternative to 'Mrs', maintaining this title after marriage, and in common with other interviewees selecting this title, she reported incidents where others took offence or made negative inferences from her title. Several interviewees acknowledged a tendency to make judgements about character based on women's titles, particularly those using Ms.

> Sue: ...there have been other occasions where (.) maybe I've been having some post delivered or something like that and they'll say 'Mrs...?' and so I'll say 'No Ms.' And they go 'O:h.' You know so the (.) they think it's (.) my probably

being well I feel that they're making some kind of judgement about me that I'm being quite precious or something like that.

<div align="right">(197-204)</div>

Anna: ...Have you ever considered using 'Ms'?
Tess: Sometimes because it's it mean people don't judge you on your title but then I think people do and they think 'Oh she must be divorced,' or, you know 'She's very protective. She's a Miss or Mrs she must be divorced or very xxx hassle or something,' (laughs) because I tend to judge it when I see Ms I think they're not telling so.

<div align="right">(140-150)</div>

Positions in relation to ambiguity can be related to desire for and access to discourse of independence and self-definition. Single women described valuing 'Miss' as a positive declaration of independence, communicating that they were unmarried and not 'ashamed' of this. Those who were in relationships or married could not make equivalent claims to discourses of independence. The title 'Ms' can be interpreted as providing these women with a way of resisting the convention of defining oneself through their relationships, through invoked ambiguity. In marriage, it provides a possibility of constructing an independent non-relational identity whereas using 'Mrs' none exists.

When confronting the idea of title adoption interviewees faced a conflict of desire for self-definition and conventional definition through relationship status. However this tension was resolved where possible by the adoption of occupational titles such as 'Dr.' and 'Marm'. It was clearly less problematic for women to define themselves through their jobs, avoiding conflicts and possible accusations of politicism or feminism associated with the use of 'Ms'.

Anna: Have you always used 'Miss'?
Sam: Yeah. (2) Oh I think I had a phase when I was about fifteen of being 'Ms' it was just a strange fifteen-year-old phase.
Anna: Why did you (.) why=
Sam: =I really don't know I think it was just being fifteen and (.) and wanting to erm (.) was basically why should (.) my (.) relationship status be on broadcast to everyone else whereas like with a man it's always 'Mr' and that's what's you never know their relationship status and with a woman (.) you immediately know whether they're single or married and so it was something about (.) that that I didn't (.) feel that it was fair that women's relationship status is broadcast but now I'm (.) not really worried about it so I tend to use 'Miss'.

<div align="right">(88-107)</div>

Though women using Ms described political motivations for this preference, these were consistently introduced to accounts after less impacting, more personal reasons suggesting they just 'liked' or 'preferred' the title. This could be seen as a contextual device to test

whether or not the interviewer would be receptive to their interpretations of inequality. Alternatively it could be seen as part of wider discourse of distaste for political resistance among women (Beloff et al, 1993). Caroline Dryden (2000) identifies a reluctance among women to take feminism and its political arguments into their personal relationships, implying that they feel to do so is disloyal to their partners. The reluctance among most women to adopt gender politics in personal definition corresponds to individualistic discourses of romance which situate intimate (heterosexual) relationships as private, a consequence of personal desire outside more pragmatic or political concerns (Kitzinger, 1987, Turner & Helms, 1995). It functions politically to discourage engagement with feminist ideals which became cemented to using the status-neutral title of 'Ms' upon the publication of the feminist magazine of that name. Similar rhetoric was employed in accounts of surname preferences at marriage.

8. Constructing identity: Retaining surnames as maintaining identity

Interviewees, with the exception of Tabi (married) and Maggie (single), all suggested they were planning to keep, or had kept, their surnames at marriage. Justifications for this choice included that interviewees 'liked' their surnames, that surnames were related to self-identity, that surnames provided a connection to their families and that they were connected to previously established professional identities.

> Sarah: Mhm (.) I always, always have done as long as I can remember I've wanted to keep my name.
> Anna: Why?
> Sarah: Because (.) erm (.) I think it's (.) al all the things I've been through in my life y'know [hard times and good times and all the rest of it (.) erm (.) I've really got to know myself and I identify myself (.) by that name.
> Anna: [Mhm.
> Mhm.
> Sarah: Erm, and (.) I don't know I suppose I respect the name (.) um y'know and me so [I want to keep it.
> Anna: [Yeah.
>
> (142-162)

> Sue: =Yeah, yeah I think I've probably well I've created this persona (.) I am who I am people know who I am and I haven't got any fantastic reputation or anything like that but I think there's something about (.) erm it's been part of my recognised identity just like my xxx.
>
> (178-183)

In a similar way to women narrating their decisions to use the title 'Ms', women wishing to retain their own surnames at marriage provided emotional justifications, such as 'liking' their

names or not 'liking' their partners', prior to describing more political motives, such as wishing to retain their independent identities. This way of narrating functions to personalise and depoliticise choices and thereby diffuse the impact of political reasoning that places them in conflict with marital convention.

> Sue: I quite liked his surname but that's a completely bizarre reason but there you go (.) and thought it was probably better than the name I had... I think it was important at that time and I think it was important to my then husband and to my family I did lots of things I think to please others because I thought they were the convention to do. Privately inside I felt (.) not uncomfortable, that would be too strong erm (.) I wanted to be strong as a woman and as a feminist and [stay correct] when I want to remain (.) my own identity.
>
> (128-160)

Some interviewees suggested they saw the convention of changing surnames as related to becoming 'property' of a man. They preferred to retain their surnames in order to defy this, an overtly political motive. However, it is suggested that a contradiction is created by interviewees refusal to change their surnames, on personal and political grounds, alongside their endorsement of 'Mrs' as an acceptable consequence of marriage. It is suggested this may constitute a kind of compromise by the interviewees, who construct an interest in accepting the social status and relational identity accorded to the married by endorsing 'Mrs' which conflicts with their desires to retain independent self-identity. Where interviewees acknowledged this contradiction it remained unresolved.

> Sarah: Yes, which is another thing that makes it interesting because I've thought about not changing my surname but I never considered the Miss part (.) it just wh which is strange because (.) I think the reason I've never considered changing Miss is because I'm quite traditional about a lot of things.
> Anna: Mhm.
> Sarah: But then (.) not changing my surname is not traditional (.) it's not the traditional view.
> Anna: No, no.
> Sarah: So it's (.) it doesn't really match (laughs).
> Anna: That's fine (.) if that's what makes you happy.
> Sarah: Yeah. It's quite strange to find that out about myself. I wonder why now. I don't know.
>
> (1127-1152)

> Sam: ... but then it seems daft to use 'Mrs' with my name so (.) used 'Mrs' probably have to take their surname (2) oh I don't know (laughs). Erm (2) maybe.
>
> (149-152)

Within relationships, however, the preferences of women's partners, consistently in favour of convention, contributed to their decisions. Lillian, Sue, Chris and Tess suggested that their partners would prefer them to change their surnames, Chris implying that it would be an affront not to. The dilemma faced by these interviewees, of personal values conflicting with conventions and partner's wishes, is seen in Sue's description of her decision to take her ex-husband's surname.

> Anna: Right. What was it like when you did change your name?
> Sue: Erm (3) strange I mean as a (.) I would have thought I was a feminist then that I had a position on changing my name (.) but there was something about commitment to the marriage as well about changing my name so it was kind of an emotional difficulty.
>
> (120-128)

She resists interpretations of name-change at marriage as a loss of personal identity narrating her choice as a positive move towards defining herself, however she suggests were she to marry again she would not change her name. Lillian who retained her surname in marriage vividly described this conflict. She avoids acknowledging convention and tradition, suggesting that she could not think of any reason to change her surname (181). Lillian describes her partner's reaction to this decision.

> Lillian: And (.) my husband was okay about that (.) erm he was like 'Yeah, yeah, fine whatever you want to do,' so he had a few drinks and then it was like 'Plea:se change your name,' and then it was 'No sorry I'm not going to,' but he er on balance you know he's extremely ha, you know he's fine about it=
> Anna: =Hm=
> Lillian: =he's fine about it but if he had a preference then he'd want me to change my name.
>
> (185-197)

> Lillian: (2) But my husband did do the deal on children if you're interested (laughs) it was like 'Well if we have children will they take my surname?'
> Anna: (1) Mhm.
> Lillian: Which is fine by me because none of the reasons that I have attach to my children.
>
> (260-269)

Lillian naming issues surrounding marriage as part of a bargaining process. It is implied that in exchange for 'being fine' about Lillian retaining her surname her partner was entitled to make conditions or a 'deal'. This implies that he had already made a sacrifice in not pressuring her to take his surname. Lillian also introduces the additional dimension of legacy and inheritance (through her partners wish that any children inherit his surname and continue

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his family line). It could be suggested that a wish to retain family connections also contributes to women's desires to keep their surnames.

9. Constructing relationship status: Constructing the wife

The wife was constructed as different from other women, including those within non-marital relationships. Both jokes described by interviewees utilised the term 'wife' and asking the location of the wife, to antagonise or 'wind up' unmarried men by referring to their non-marital partners or friends. These jokes are narrated as embarrassing to men as they suggest that absent partners or friends are their wives, an intimate and potentially controlling role.

In Mima's jokes the 'wife' is constructed as absent from a public social setting and it is implied that the default 'husband' would know where she resides. In Sarah's joke the wife is also constructed as absent from such a setting and located within the home. This can be related to discourses of 'Life, time and activity as single preserve', associating those in relationships with restriction, and the psychoanalytic idea associating males with public activity and women with the private sphere, particularly the home (Freud, 1940, cited by, Siann, 1994). This association also invokes early nineteenth-century domestic ideology suggesting that 'a woman's place is in the home', a form of social control encouraging middle class women to adopt such positions (Beddoe, 1993).

> Anna: How about the words 'wife' and 'husband'?
> Mima: Erm (.) not obviously in the context of marriage and sometimes humorously as well (.) I I think I use it quite a lot actually (laughs).
> Anna: You do?
> Mima: Yeah probably say 'Where's your wife?' (.) to people (.) and that'll wind them up (.) people who are not definitely not in a serious relationship.
> Anna: Right.
> Mima: So then I'd use the word in (.) an ironic sense.
> Anna: Okay (Mima coughs) and 'husband'?
> Mima: Erm no not so much actually no.
>
> (635-655)

Both interviewees who described jokes using 'wife' suggested that they would not or did not use 'husband' the same way. It is proposed that the same jokes using 'husband' would be unsuccessful because wives are not obliged to know the location of their husbands, who are charged with going out into the world. The attribution of knowledge of the wife's whereabouts to the husband is consistent with Hilary Callan's proposal that women are "Asymmetrically drawn into the 'social person' of their husbands"(p.1, 1984). The consequences of this incorporation of identity, the wife's loss of independent agency, is

reflected in the suggestion that husbands should monitor their movements and be accountable for their wives in the way a parent is for a dependent child.

These jokes function socially as part of the narrator's relationships with those subject to them. Both women described telling these jokes with males. Jennifer Hay (2000) describes how joke telling functions as a male-identified power-related controlling and regulating the behaviour of others and reinforcing the position of the joke-teller. From this perspective the jokes told by interviewees could be interpreted as the use of male conversational strategies to regulate male behaviour, thereby integrating the female joke-teller in male company. By making the closeness of the relationship between a man and his partner or friend a target of derisive humour Mima and Sarah could be seen as discouraging intimacy in these relationships.

Married women's use of the word 'husband', interviewees suggest, is experienced as pleasant and a kind of privilege. Participants commonly described themselves, friends or relatives laughing with delight when first using the words 'my husband'. The ideas of being a wife or reactions to the term 'wife' were not as positive. Nowhere in interview texts was the word 'husband' used to refer to negative imagery of men or to invoke inequality or used as a derogatory term within jokes as 'wife' was. However, such discourse could be present in men's accounts.

Some unmarried women associated being a 'wife' with inequality. Helen, who is single and has been divorced, describes the role of the 'traditional' wife in terms of domestic responsibility and running after others, suggesting that she could not conform to this role again. Sue suggests that she was glad to be free of the responsibilities of cooking and caring for another person when she became single-again. Tess, who is engaged, proposes that she dislikes the terms 'husband' and 'wife' as they evoke images of the wife's role as 'Just to compliment the man.' (950). The wife is not constructed positively, her position is here associated with domestic inequality.

10. Constructing relationship status: Life, time and activity as preserve single
Single interviewees suggested that their relationships with others had changed since leaving relationships. A common claim was they had excluded friends and ignored 'life' outside their relationships and had since seen the error in this. This situates single interviewees as actively valuing their public 'lives' and their friends, and contributes to constructing those in relationships and marriages as socially restricted. The construction of 'life' as denoting public

interactions and as something experienced outside relationships and marriage runs through accounts. Interviewees talked about getting their 'lives' back on becoming single. This could be interpreted as referring to their independent identity regained upon leaving relationships, as in discourses of 'Individual vs. couple identity'.

> Sarah: I think it is very important to get to know yourself as a person and I feel that a lot of people in relationships (.) don't and it takes them coming out of the relationship to suddenly turn around and say 'Er I, I I have have a life, I am my own person I'm not half a whole' (laughs) erm yeah.
>
> (489-496)

Interviewees constructed 'life' or 'reality' in opposition to relationships, which are depicted as romantic and private. The implication that 'life' interferes with relationships adds weight to the idea that relationships are seen to, and preferred, to exist outside the public domain (of 'life' and 'reality') (Gilbert & Walker, 1999).

> Sarah: ...I always had the romantic notion that if you're in love then everything will be roses and it will all be perfect and it brought me back down off the cloud and made me realise that you know real life (.) gets in the way of that.
>
> (758-764)

'Time' is also constructed as a gift of single life. Single interviewees suggested that in relationships they were obliged to 'give up' time and that on becoming single they gained 'free time'. This device emphasises the freedom of single people to be self-determined and eschew compromise and the restrictions associated with involvement in relationships.

When describing changes associated with marriage or relationships interviewees commonly evoked constructions of content and lack of activity. They described being 'settled', 'secure' and 'calm', creating an impression of positive peacefulness that contrasted to the activity depicted as characteristic of singleness. Single interviewees expressed a desired to be 'settled' in the future and connected this to securing a long-term relationship. Sam illustrates this, describing the differences between her married and single friends in terms of action versus contented calm.

> Sam: Erm (2) yeah, yeah I think erm they have much quieter lives er:m they seem to do less and (.) but they also seem much calmer people and quite content erm (1) in sort of I don't know it's difficult to described erm they seem very settled with everything they have in life like they don't seem erm (.) sort of (.) they're not striving for anything er:m (.) whereas I think all my single friends are striving still striving for things still moving on with their lives whereas my

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married friends (.) are settled in sort of every other way as well (.) jobs nn (.) er houses and (.) they seem to have much more erm (.) financial responsibilities.

<div align="right">(254-267)</div>

11. Constructing relationship status: Single youth vs. spinsterhood

> Helen: ...when I was in my twenties, say your age, and you split up with your boyfriend you can call xxx but you're young, you're beautiful and you've got loads of friends and you can go out and before long you meet somebody else. Well it doesn't happen (.) quite so easily and that's an understatement at my age.

<div align="right">(418-488)</div>

All interviewees demonstrating an awareness of status-related expectations associated with age. Singleness was constructed as unproblematic for the young. It was described as positive and 'trendy' (Maggie, 699) in youth whereas older interviewees suggested singleness became increasingly unacceptable with age. Older single interviewees described how young single women could 'travel' for pleasure whereas it would be inappropriate for them to go on holiday alone. It was also suggested that young single women had more access to social leisure pursuits whereas the acceptability of socialising alone was restricted for them (Maggie, 247, 311, Helen, 570). Additionally it was suggested that it was easier to move between relationships and singleness when younger (Helen, 418). Interviewees acknowledged that it was only desirable to be single up to a 'certain age' and that older women were presumed married. This is highlighted by interviewee accounts of the use of titles and the presumption that older women are 'Mrs'.

> Sarah: Mm yes,. Erm. There's a certain, like I said respect attached to a Mrs. rather than a Miss erm (.) for example like I think (1) if you were presented with a a woman that was perhaps forty.
> Anna: Right.
> Sarah: I think well, this is obviously only my belief but I think most people would assume that she was a Mrs.
> Anna: Right.
> Sarah: Y'know erm they I don't know, it's just (1) it's how I feel society's opinion is.
> Anna: Yeah.
> Sarah: That you're not a Miss if you're of that age. Y'know everyone's assumed to be married, y'know (.) once you get to that sort of age.

<div align="right">(1297-1308)</div>

The social conventions surrounding age and marriage construct pressure upon and expectations of older single women which implies disapproval. Helen and Maggie refer to their perceptions of others' disapproval and suspicions that something is 'wrong' with them.

<div align="center">91</div>

They suggest that they internalise these doubts and that this functions to restrict their behaviour. Such questions are similar to those asked by researchers keen to determine 'why?' people remain single (Austrom & Hanel, 1985, Nandelson & Notman, 1981) and, it is suggested, they are not helpful to older single women who are characterised as deviant and flawed.

> Maggie: ...whereas I could go down the pub with my boyfriend I couldn't do it any more I couldn't just go and sit in the pub on my own. Well I mean I could but I just wouldn't because (.) people do stereotype.
> Anna: Mm.
> Maggie: Y'know 'She's sitting in here on her own is she (.) on the pull or (.) y'know whatever.' So I wouldn't do that so it restricted me in terms of going out.
>
> (247-260)

> Maggie: ...there is a sort of stigma about being on your own erm people think (.) well I mean (.) basically my opinion so what I've heard that other people are saying like 'Oh she or he is so-and-so many years of age, they're not married, what's wrong with them? Are they gay? Are they a mommy's-boy?' there's all sorts of stigmas and (.) y'know (.) and I also don't like my friends to xxx [people like that] 'Is it you is there something wrong with you? Perhaps you haven't found Mr. Right or perhaps you're not the right person? Perhaps there's something?' You know and you start to question yourself as well, 'Is it me?'
>
> (669-685)

> Tess: Yeah. I think it's because of the age I am most people tend to be single anyway (.) and nobody's started to find it (.) a threatening word yet to say 'Oh I'm single.' It hasn't got to a sort of (.) I'm the exception rather than the rule it hasn't got to the point where most people have boyfriends [and then there's] the only single.
>
> (913-920)

Youth was constructed as a time when through lack of experience unwise decisions about relationships or marriage might be made. Marriage was associated with maturity and respectability and single never-married women commented on how inappropriate the words 'Mrs' and 'My husband' sounded when used by young friends. A consequences of not being married by a 'certain age' was voiced as 'ending up' a spinster. This was seen entirely as an undesirable fate with the exception of one single interviewee, Mima, who reinterpreted the spinsterhood in a positive way that fitted with her desire for an unmarried life. Several interviewees commented that they themselves, or others, had suggested they might become spinsters, which was seen as universally negative.

> Anna: Right, okay. What was your mother saying?
> Sam: That I would end up a lonely old spinster.
> Anna: (1) So she was thinking about that as a definitely negative thing?

Sam: Yeah definitely negative.

<div align="right">(517-527)</div>

Tess: Yeah. Sometimes I think to myself 'Why wasn't I happy before?' But I know
I wasn't (.) I know that I was always very miserable and thought that I'd be
forever alone and a spinster (.) end up half eaten by an Alsation! (Tess and
Anna laugh) Which is a silly thing to worry about at the age of seventeen but I
did (.) and erm also everybody else seemed to be in relationships.

<div align="right">(319-326)</div>

That interviewees of different ages and social situations all experienced pressure not to
become spinsters illustrates the pervasiveness of this idea which constitutes a pressure to
marry and discredits alternatives. Spinsterhood was associated with 'loneliness' and being
'old'. The idea of 'ending up' alone and old is something interviewees considered extremely
undesirable. Spinsters were seen as having been 'left on the shelf' unable to secure a partner
whereas bachelors were defined more positively, usually as having plural younger partners
and choosing to remain single. That women's singleness in late adulthood can still be
interpreted as a sign of deficiency (the inability to secure a marriage partner) can only be
damaging for both those who wish to remain single and those who become single through
divorce.

Mima was the only interviewees who resisted these negative discourses of spinsterhood,
narrating it as a potentially positive experience. She suggested that spinsterhood has become a
more positive experience and is now titled being a 'career woman'. This discursive
reinterpretation allowed her to construct her future positively as a woman who planned not to
marry. However she went on to suggest, humorously, that she would rather become a 'female
bachelor' as the term 'bachelor' implied a choice. That single adult women should be
presumed not to have chosen such a situation shows the persuasiveness of the myth that all
women desire to marriage. This necessitates the construction of the spinster as unfulfilled and
an object of pity. The pervasiveness of this idea is demonstrated by Mima's example where a
woman desiring to remain unmarried feels it preferable to redefine this state through
terminology designated applicable only to males.

Mima: ...I don't think it's very much in use today is it? It's like instead of being
'spinster' I think people would rather see themselves as 'career women'.
Anna: Right.
Mima: D'you know there's a completely different view of it now. (2) It's more
positive nowadays (.) than it was before. (1) I think (laughs) I'm gonna be one
so I hope so.

<div align="right">(596-605)</div>

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Anna: How about 'bachelor'?

Mima: Yeah 'bachelor' is seen as a much more attractive name isn't it? Yeah I'm gonna be a female bachelor! (laughs) No because I (.) that implies (2) it implies (.) 'spinster' implies being left on the shelf whereas 'bachelor' seems to imply (.) a (.) chosen thing d'you know.

(617-624)

Constructing relationship status: Freedom vs. restriction

A major theme woven through talk about both relationships and identity was one of a conflict between freedom and restriction or action and stillness. The construction of single life was also achieved through descriptions of action: 'going out' socially, sporting activity and 'travelling' for work and leisure. By contrast, people in relationships described their increased 'calm' and 'stability' suggesting decreased activity (though these terms also have emotional meaning relating to identity and discourses of 'Life, time and activity as single preserve'). Central to this construction were descriptions of decreased social activity, more 'staying in' and restricted geographical location, particularly the inability to travel for work or go out without asking for permission from a partner. These features depict the lives of those in relationships as calm and restricted and those of single people as active and free.

12. Constructing relationship status: Going out as single preserve

Interviewee accounts of going out socially were illustrative of the construction of restriction in relationships and freedom as a feature of singleness. Singleness was associated by all with 'going out' and 'having [their own] space'. This freedom was emphasised by single interviewees' descriptions of going out spontaneously as a single person or asking permission of or negotiating with partners within relationships. In these accounts the partner was constructed as gatekeeper.

Sarah: ...I like being single, I don't have to ask anyone (.) for permission (.) to go out or (.) do anything that I want to do [y'know I just have to organise myself which is nice, I like my independence.

Anna: [Right.
[Uhuh.
Do you associate being in a relationship with (.) not being able to do those things?
[Did you feel restricted?

Sarah: Erm [at certain times yes.

(24-36)

Where negotiation with partners was mentioned it was to communicate that being in a relationship resulted in women 'staying in' more. Single individuals described their friends

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who were involved in relationships, particularly those that were married, as having diminished social lives and suggested that they were difficult to see socially, as a result of relationships or prohibitive financial responsibilities. Many single interviewees, though they constructed their lives as active and fulfilling, depicted the idea of decreased social activity and 'staying in' as an acceptable part of involvement in a relationship.

Tess: Everybody has more of a social life than me well I don't know if more of a social life (.) more of an active going-outy social life... I don't think that makes my life any less interesting I think that (.) it's a definitely (1) erm it's the sort of personal choice (.) I don't think I (.) don't feel that my life lack my social life lacks anything compared to theirs even though there's quite a lot of difference (.) they're out and I (.) I tend to do more home things (.) suits me.

(471-487)

Dave: Family aspect of it well I've always got time for my family because they're not too far for me I always make time for them if they want me to go to them I have done I've dropped everything but they've been understanding when I've been seeing someone though so that's not a problem. But social life yeah I love seeing (.) my friends and going out and doing what I want (.) and when I have been dating people it has kind of (.) restricted that but I've not minded but I have noticed then.

(80-93)

The idea of staying in was particularly central to constructions of marriage by the unmarried and particularly the construction of the role of the wife. Wives were located within the home, perhaps as the next step of a process of lessening public activity seen in relationships.

Anna: How did you decide which one's the wife and which one's the husband?
Sarah: Erm (.) the the first issue was that one of them has long hair [(laughs) he's the wife (laughs).
Anna: [Ah.
Sarah: Yeah, it's funny you know no matter which one of them we see we'll say to him 'Where's the wife?' We'll never say 'Where's the husband?' there there's a certain connotation at attached to 'Where's the wife?' kind of the little wifey at home sort of connotation.
Anna: So maybe there are different things attached to the words 'wife'.
Sarah: I think definitely yes.
Anna: The husband's more likely to go out and leave his wife at home?
Sarah: Yes=
Anna: =maybe.
Sarah: That's the the general (.) opinion or consensus (.) attached to that word.

(908-937)

Carla Willig (1998) identifies similar discourse pertaining to sexual risk taking. She describes how wives were discursively constructed, by her interviewees, as located in the home whereas

husbands were described travelling and given presence in the public sphere. This relates to psychoanalytic ideas which associate men with the public sphere of culture and work and women with the private home and additionally invokes domestic ideology placing women 'in the home' (Freud, 1940, Beddoe, 1993). In this study this division is transposed onto the divide between married and unmarried women. Single women were constructed as having broader social lives, having more freedom to involve themselves in their careers, as involved in more activity and travel. This could be interpreted as signifying that single women maintain access to the public sphere, or its' discourse, that is less accessible to those in intimate relationships. Alternatively it could be seen to signify that single women are restricted in their access to discourses of the private sphere, staying in, home and security, as they are expected to be active until they succeed in 'finding a man'.

> Sam: Erm 'cause it's like previously I see my friends much more often I do (.) much more things I've even started (.) new sports I'm hardly in the house erm (.) yeah my social life's improved greatly.
>
> (210-215)

> Dave: I guess as well I like having (.) that what I said about my social network 'cause it's not just yeah I like having a mixture of people in there but I think like to meet someone (.) I can't just sit at home it's gonna happen (.) keep thinking that I have to be out there.
> Anna: Right.
> Dave: Not necessarily looking but if I'm not out there then there's no chance (.) of my status changing.
> Anna: Yeah.
> Dave: Being out there and just even going out down the pub or something like that and going to a club (.) it's like for me it's keeping myself out and about.
>
> (786-806)

13. Constructing relationship status: Travel as restricted by relationships

Most participants brought up travel, for both leisure and employment. Single interviewees described how their status freed them to pursue jobs in other areas and countries. Interviewees in relationships or marriages suggested that they were restricted in where they could apply for jobs. The implications of geography are many: work was important to many interviewees involved in relationships and it was also implicated in the construction of identity and naming.

> Sam: … you no longer have to compromise with y well with your partner and erm you have freedom to do whatever you want. Erm for example if you're offered a job on the other side of the world you can take it you don't have to think about how that would effect your relationship.
>
> (296-302)

Tabi: (12) I think sometimes (.) I feel that being in a relationship (.) can hold you back (.) in the sense that you are restricted by (.) well geography erm (.) well I'm restricted geographically because of the fact that (husband) works within the family business and the family business is located where it is so (.) so that means that I can't just decide that I can go and work wherever I have to I have to think about (.) erm the (.) sort of travel side of it and whether it's feasible so in that respect I sometimes feel as though being in a relationship is restrictive.

(904-916)

Chris: I know one friend who's single who's just come back from a year I (.) in Australia which I wouldn't consider doing because I'm in a relationship and I'd have to leave him for twelve months whereas she just kind of upped and went which (1) was quite different to my life in that way...

(332-338)

The idea of 'travelling' for leisure was mentioned by several participants as exclusively the preserve of single individuals. However interviewees, particularly older single women, discussed how they felt they could not go on holidays alone though they wanted to travel more. As inferred by Maggie this construction may also be related to the association between singleness and youth and the idea that older women are presumed to have married and 'settled down'.

Maggie: When you're young it's the trendy thing to (.) go round the world on your own, y'know but when you get to an age where you just think [I wanna do] other things so (.) but what that discloses that society leads you to think doesn't it?

(698-704)

14. Constructing relationship status: Finance as restriction and freedom

Chris: ...I don't see my married (.) friends go married about twelve months ago suddenly they've got the extra responsibility of like a mortgage and furniture and paying for food and stuff like that erm and (.) they kind of have to run their social life around what they can afford at the time of the month with the bills and stuff like that.

(314-322)

Single interviewees constructed financial responsibilities as a major influence upon the lives of those married and in relationships. It was suggested that financial commitments functioned to restrict the social lives of married friends. Maggie also implies that in becoming financially dependent on their husbands her married friends were trapping themselves in relationships that they might not otherwise wish to remain in.

Maggie: And they have to make certain sacrifices which (.) which I don't y'know my independence is still there whereas they, they [have to depend on] their partner (.)for financial support for how much they need (.) I know one of them is happy but I don't know about the other one but sometimes I think, are you still married because of the children or, y'know.

(422-440)

Married participants, alternatively, constructed single independence as conditional. Tabi suggested that single individuals were actually far less independent than married people and marriage enabled her independence. She described how domestic and financial responsibilities were greater for single individuals and that when living alone her independence had decreased. Lillian suggested that her husband's income enabled her to be more flexible in her working hours and allowed her freedom that single people couldn't claim. Sue also suggests that her partner's income assures her security beyond her own employment.

Tabi: (laughs) Would my life my work like be different? If I was on my own. Yeah I'd probably have to get more involved with (.) everyday commitments which would mean that for my for my work life (.) it would make my work life different whereas at the moment a lot of everyday commitments (.) I can leave and also I have nothing to do with the financial side of things as well that would be different er:m then I would be that would change as well which w which would change me so (.) so it would make a big difference.

(193-203)

Income was also related to issues of power and trust in the discourse of relationships. Both married interviewees mentioned sharing money and control of money within their relationship as an issue of trust and, in Tabi's case, something she found initially difficult to adjust to. Lillian suggested that to her money represented power in relationships a notion reinforced by the accounts of Tess and Helen. Tess recounted how she only felt 'worthwhile' in her relationship now that she was contributing money to running her household. Helen narrated the story of her divorce and how devastating it was when her ex-husband went to great lengths to possess some of her wealth. As was mentioned by those with employed partners, on average men are still paid more than women. As a consequence, though those in relationships may possess more financial security they are at a power disadvantage within that relationship.

Tess: So (.) definitely we have a s (.) not equal partnership, he's got loads of money but (.) having being able to contribute something to the financial situation has made it much easier, much easier (.) at the beginning it was terrible.

(647-652)

15. Constructing relationship status: Talk, regulation and privilege

Talk between and within groups on the basis of relationship status seemed to construct qualitative differences in content. Single interviewees emphasised the division between those in relationships and themselves in terms of sometimes vivid differences in interests and 'priorities' (Maggie, 414, Mima, 377). This acted as a positive reinforcing strategy for single individuals, depicting those involved in relationships as 'obsessed' by children (Maggie, 414) or domestic concerns (Dave, 538) and single people as having a variety of interests (Dave, 520).

> Dave: Definitely I think (.) single I think (.) the friends that are in relationships when you talk to them well it is a big part of their lives because they've been with this person in intimate contact for years or what-have-you they tend to talk about that (.) and not much else (laughs).
> Anna: Right.
> Dave: They tend to talk about just that really and I feel like (.) someone in my position who's single I mean because I'm single there's no one person who's a big focus a big part of my life lots of things are important lots of things that might be trivial to them are important to me because I think (.) 'cause I've got there are more things that take up my time not just one person but many people and many things.
>
> (508-525)

> Maggie: ...like before they'd be going out all the time (.) y'know we'd talk about different things but now when I visit them it's all talking about the children which (.) I understand that but y'know (.) when you haven't got any yourself it's like talking about something which you haven't got.
>
> (401-406)

However this narrated conflict of priorities also constitutes a disadvantage of being single for some: the unavailability of friends with relationship commitments. Also Sarah (single) suggested that she had less to talk about than when she was involved in a relationship. This suggests that involvement in a relationship and the subsequent ability to converse about this constitutes material for and access to a type of relationship-related talk between women. Lillian specifically suggests that it is inappropriate and not 'socially acceptable' for people in relationships to talk to single people (717).

> Tess: It's easier for me to talk about my relationship with (partner) to people who are in other serious relationships. 'Cause other people tend to have a completely disproportionate view of things (.) like erm (.) smallest thing goes wrong 'Oh: well you have to dump them. Dump him and get out of there,' or erm (.) obviously or the other way when (.) I might get it out of proportion probably but (.) someone who's in a relationship will understand that you need to rant

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and rave about it because it's really annoying (laughs) so (.) it's easier to talk to people that are in a similar situation so that might mean I'd choose to talk to people that are (.) serious about someone but (.) other than that in general terms if it's nothing to do with relationships than I can relate to them exactly the same.

(496-512)

In the quote above Tess suggests she does not discuss relationship issues with single people as she feels they have a 'disproportionate view' on her concerns and are likely to offer inappropriate advice. In addition to this both married participants suggested that they tended to socialise with married people and that complications might arise were they to socialise with single people.

> Tabi: I did strike up friends with a number of other students who were not married and who were not in relationships an:d (.) what I found (.) well probably because the were female friends and not and not male friends (.) is that they is that the relationship is very different because (.) I (1) my mothering side seemed to be more dominant in those relationships.
>
> (717-725)

> Lillian: But yes, certainly to socialise it would be hard I think as a single person to meet (.) to be talking to two people who were in a (.) relationship together for any length of time in a social situation where (.) you haven't met them before because it would be like the gooseberry factor wouldn't it whereas if there's two of you talking to another couple that's perfectly sort of (.) socially acceptable and the conversation would be reflecting that as well. Erm, so yeah (.) sad but true.
>
> (717-728)

These quotations contribute to the idea that for people in relationships talking to single people is different and less comfortable. Interviewees suggest that those in relationships cannot be themselves (mothering side involuntarily activated) with single people, it is not socially acceptable for them to socialise and additionally they would not understand the concerns of people in relationships. This divisive discourse is perpetuated by single interviewees' suggestion they 'don't understand' the concerns of the married (Eva, 426) and that their lives and concerns *are* completely different.

Talk is also constructed as an integral part of relationships, the ability to talk openly with a partner and achieve 'closeness'. Tabi describes one of the advantages of marriage being her right to telephone her husband whenever she wants to and always be assured of his attention. The accounts of interviewees in non-marital relationships suggest it may also be a part these.

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Sue: …Erm, my current partnership I would say maybe not in previous partnerships
           is (.) well emotional well-being erm someone just to talk to in a non-
           threatening non-judgemental way who you can bounce arguments off.

                                                                                    (398-403)

Older single women, Maggie and Helen, suggested that they missed the availability of
someone to talk to when they returned from work. It is implied that they experienced this
support in previous relationships. However other single women did not suggest that they felt
they were deprived of conversation of any sort. This could be because of communal living
arrangements, which provide the same support, or because they had not experienced this type
of interaction previously and therefore did not expect it and could not miss it. It could also be
interpreted as indicating that the need for such a relationship is created by adjustment to close
conditions in marriage or cohabitation.

7.2 Study 1 conclusions

These interviews were approached with the intention of examining the construction of
relationship status and identity, particularly focusing on the construction of unmarried
women. The discourse themes described identify the ways in which the discursive resources
available to women in their particular social locations were deployed in accounts to achieve
constructions of their own status and consequently depict their identities. The conclusions that
are drawn from these interviews are to be described in four categories that, it is suggested,
embody the themes described: Constructing identity, Naming and ambiguity, Singleness as
impediment, Restriction and freedom.

1. Constructing identity

Single interviewees described themselves as in possession of greater self-knowledge and
identity. This contrasted to descriptions from interviewees in relationships of 'absorbing'
partners' views and the inability to consider selves separately from their relationships. The
extent to which constructions of self identity were connected to relationship status was
illustrated by the shock and confusion described by interviewees at times of status change,
questioning 'who [they were]'. Both ways of constructing self-identity were interpreted as
positive by individuals, Lillian being the only interviewee to construct conflict. She described
her possession of separate couple and individual identities and suggested that maintaining a
strong independent identity was problematic for her relationship.

    Lillian: I think some people give up a lot more independence than I have in getting
             married. Often because they want to but not always because they want to I

mean I wouldn't and didn't so the risk in doing that is that you have two people who are very independent that still have a relationship and if you want to make that work over a long period of time then it's probably harder to do it that way.

Anna: Right.

Lillian: Erm (.) then if you just assume that you have the same goals or that the unit becomes the most important thing (.) that may sound so so (.) you can have an individual identity but you also have an identity as a couple don't you.

Anna: Mhm.

Lillian: And I think I think sometimes people take on the identity as a couple much more strongly than they do as an individual I have (.) have an identity as both but my individual one is probably more strong.

<div align="right">(765-792)</div>

Lillian suggests that often people focus on their 'couple identity' to the detriment of their 'individual identity'. It is suggested that this refers to the phenomenon of relational identity developed by women in relationships (who had difficulty describing themselves separately from their relationships) described above. It is also proposed that the development of relational identity, as Lillian suggests, is part of the way relationships are constructed and attempts to resist this are likely to cause women complications, as seen in issues of naming.

2. Naming and ambiguity

Participants constructed distinct positions in relation to the selection of titles and surname change at marriage. Single interviewees suggested that the title 'Miss' functioned as a positive declaration of independence and characterised 'Ms' as ambiguous and suspicious. Single women's distrust and the disapproval experienced by interviewees using 'Ms' illustrates the social importance ascribed to women defining themselves by relationship status. Interviewees described themselves and others making negative inferences about the characters of women using 'Ms' based on their reluctance to proclaim their status.

Those interviewees involved in relationships used 'Ms' to deliberately engender ambiguity. This was interpreted positively as a way of resisting the conventional drive to identify women by relationship status. It is suggested that both single women and those in relationships desired to define themselves through names and titles that did not construct their identity as relational. When 'Miss', indicating single independence, became less inappropriate women concerned to retain their independent identity chose the ambiguity of 'Ms'. However using this rhetoric of independence can alternatively be interpreted as a consequence of the position of unmarried women, to whom the discourses of marriage are inaccessible.

Interviewees were keen not to change their surnames at marriage, suggesting that their names were part of their identity, privately and at work. Those in relationships described how this conflicted with the wishes of partners. This resistance from male partners could be connected to the undesirability of women potentially making political statements through their personal choices, rhetoric associated with feminism. Karen R. Blaisure and Katherine R. Allen (1995) suggest that repercussions for women seeking politicised equality within their relationships can include divorce, proposing that women wishing to maintain relationships might strategically obscure or disguise politically motivated relationship decisions, like name choices. It is suggested that, accordingly, many interviewees, when accounting for their surname and title preferences, attempted to de-politicise their choices, e.g., first suggesting that they 'just liked' their names. This could also be interpreted as a way of eschewing the label of 'feminist', which has many negative associations (Beloff, Hepburn, MacDonald, & Siann, 1993) that may be reflected in the character inferences connected to 'Ms'.

3. Singleness as impediment

Singleness was constructed, in many ways, as problematic, particularly for older women. The accounts of single interviewees contained passages of self-criticism and disapproval voiced by others, including family members. The accounts of married interviewees and those in relationships did not include equivalent recollections of status-related disapproval. Relationships and marriages that had ended were described by some as 'failures' and seen as evidence of personal flaws by others. This relates to Greer's (1999) suggestion that marriage is seen as a success for women. These inferences reflect on the qualities attributed to single women and constitute a pressure to maintain relationships.

Singleness was conceptualised as age-related and developmental. Young women were more positive about their status and spoke of fewer restrictions. They constructed themselves as independent and their peers in relationships and marriages as calmer, more settled and socially limited. Young single interviewees associated marriage with respectability and maturity. A tendency was acknowledged to presume that women above 'a certain age' were married. Older single women described how others presumed that they were married and how the couple-orientation of social functions and the disapproval of others resulted in social difficulties for them. Interviewees were aware of other's scrutiny and felt this restricted them socially. Peter Stein (1981) confirms that single people above thirty experience an intense pressure to marry.

Women introduced the idea of spinsterhood to their accounts independently of questions concerning this, particularly single interviewees describing their futures and how others described them. Accounts relating to spinsterhood were overwhelmingly negative and suggested that being a spinster implied that no man would marry them, whereas bachelors were seen to have chosen their paths. Interviewees described a fear of becoming spinsters, if they were single, and all considered the idea unpleasant. This is seen to suggest that though the term may not be in frequent use the figure of the spinster is still present in discourse surrounding relationship status, representing an undesirable way for single women to 'end up' and, thereby, an encouragement to marry.

Such discourse echoes the pathologising of older unmarried woman of the eighteen and nineteen hundreds and can be interpreted as an indication that male-independent lifestyles for women remain discouraged and devalued. Single women, particularly older interviewees, demonstrated self-blame for their status coinciding with criticisms recounted from family members and general disapproval and 'stigma'. Women wished to avoid spinsterhood and suggested that enjoyable single life was age- and time- limited. These suggestions imply that unless she wants to face criticism, disapproval and social restrictions a woman should marry by a 'certain age'.

4. Freedom and restriction

Descriptions of single life were characterised by freedom and independence whereas relationships were constructed as restrictive, socially and geographically. Wives were situated within the home and those involved in non-marital relationships talked about 'staying in' more and socialising less than when they were single. This increasing privatisation of life was reinforced by single women's constructions of the lifestyles of their peers. These constructions can be interpreted as signifying that single women have extended access to social activity, in comparison to those involved in relationships.

However, older interviewees did not describe single freedom so positively. It was expected that with age and maturity women would 'settle down' and their lives would become home-centred. Additionally some single interviewees associated social activity with finding a partner to 'settle down' with implying that younger single women may be obliged to remain publicly active in terms of jobs and social activities as a means to fulfilling expectations of marriage rather than as an alternative. This would suggest that behavioural restriction is

inevitable, as a result of relationships and marriage or the social disapproval encountered by older single women.

Summary

Discourses of identity and naming indicate that women experience resistance to their desires to define their identity through independent selfhood, particularly in relationships. They suggest that women are expected to, and commonly do, define and experience themselves through relationships with male partners. It is argued that this may be disadvantageous to women when taking into account the possibility of status change and the emotional difficulties associated with self-redefinition, illustrated by interviewees experiencing divorce as challenging their 'core being'.

Relationships were constructed as restrictive in comparison to singleness in youth. Singleness when older and spinsterhood were constructed as additionally restrictive and threatening, lacking the calm and security ascribed to growing older within marriage and relationships. Older single women experienced social disapproval and, as younger single women did, criticism related to their status from those around them. It is suggested that discourse constructing status as age-related and the negative consequences of remaining unmarried act to pressure women into desiring relationships and marriage. Pressure to form publicly acknowledged relationships and identify themselves through these results in singleness, particularly for women beyond a 'certain age', being viewed as an indication of failure and inadequacy both by themselves and others. This can only be detrimental to those who cannot find a partner, do not wish to be involved in relationships or those involved in Lesbian and Gay relationships.

7.3 Study 1 reflexivity

The process of recruiting participants presented a considerable obstacle to the progress of this part of the study and an introduction to the practical complications of 'doing' research. After realising that advertising alone would not bring my sample running I became concerned that my inability to offer financial rewards, as others doing research around me did, was going to greatly impede the progress of the study (my faith in interested volunteers waning). In the first year of this study I had attended several discourse analytical training events and was eager to begin interviewing and analysis, anticipating correctly that this would assist in the development of my early ideas.

I felt prepared to face interviewees with my research but it had yet to occur to me how being led into the university and to sit in a sparsely furnished research cubicle might have an impact upon the women I was speaking to. I can now see that for the woman who had responded to poster advertising this environment may have been anxiety-provoking and resulted in some level of initial reticence. I made an effort to make the environment comfortable for interviewees, providing refreshments and comfortable chairs, tried to dress smartly but not to appear intimidating and also aimed to be friendly and open in the vital conversation which occurred prior to and post-interview, as well as during. I let women speak when they got into telling stories and concentrated on listening and responding to them positively. I did not take notes during the interviews and allowed women to read the question schedule during or before where interviewees were interested in doing this.

My feminism and broader interest in humane research meant that I wanted the women to feel that they were being listened to, that their accounts were valued and that they had the right to challenge or stop me in the process of the research. In an effort not to distress the participants I allowed them to proceed with making statements I disagreed with, without expressing my dissent. This was an issue I had encountered in a previous research project. However it is something I remain ambivalent about. Where women made statements I considered anti-feminist or in some way critical of beliefs important to me I let them pass, in order to allow the women to feel unconditionally accepted. To do otherwise would have meant not only that I would risk distressing interviewees and therefore making it unlikely they would engage in the research process in future, but also that I censored the accounts collected, that women would then withhold accounts that they saw as deviating from my world view. I can see that it could be argued that I betrayed the project of feminism by letting opportunities to speak up pass by, however I stand by my decision to prioritise the well-being of the participants.

The sampling method adopted limited the sample to those with access to e-mail, or contacts with e-mail, to acquaintances or their contacts. It is acknowledged that all participants in this study had received a high level of education and were employed in primarily middle class occupations. Additionally the sample was young in age and often their accounts were predictive. These considerations went on to inform my aims for study 2, which included explicitly seeking access to the accounts of younger women and from women of different occupations and educational levels. Contacting this sample through other methods, to be described, made it easier to identify such a sample.

Many participants suggested that they found the interview experience interesting. I enjoyed the experience of interviewing and as it was occurring I began to recognise common themes and statements that I went on to verify in the analysis process. It is suggested that my age may have affected the participants, younger women sharing experiences of university and similar relationships where older women referred explicitly to my younger age and lack of marital experience. This may have been advantageous in prompting these women to explain their experiences to me whereas they may otherwise have assumed that they were shared. However this brought up an issue of difference, where my assumptions regarding the connecting commonality of woman-to-woman 'chat' were challenged.

Though I do not feel this could have been avoided, it was initially harder for me to consciously break from the conventions of polite conversation with older interviewees, Tabi, Helen and Sue, something that was required at some stages of the interviews. I attribute this to social conventions surrounding mother-daughter relationships (roles invoked in Tabi's discussion of her friendship with younger and unmarried women), i.e., I would not ask such questions of my mother or her friends who are of a similar age to the older interviewees, and accordingly the altered dynamics of the interview situation, where I was leading interaction with women who might also be more used to controlling and engaging in less intimate conversation with younger women.

When it was suggested that I learn how to undertake qualitative analyses with a computer package, NUD*IST 4, my response was hesitant. The idea of using technology in the process of analysing talk seemed to be potentially damaging to the organic, handcrafted qualitative research product. I had encountered distaste for such programs at training courses. However I worked through the tutorial and learnt that I remained in control of the analytic process and, thankfully, the computer couldn't 'do' qualitative analysis. This learning process and beginning to experiment with the use of the computer program I believe now helped me learn to manage my data. I had not developed a strategy for how I would undertake analyses once I reached a point where I could not remember every feature of all the scripts. The program helped me develop confidence in the idea that I would not loose any of my scripts and neither would I be unable to proceed with my analysis if I couldn't remember the location of a particularly memorable quote.

I found the process of analysis, and particularly the constructive writing of the discourse themes, extremely encouraging. I began analysis by repeated reading of the transcripts and

then using the computer to build themed collections of quotes for every nuance of interesting action I detected. I then re-examined the resulting huge collection of pre-themes and eliminated and merged certain ones, on the grounds that I had discovered better ways of describing a particular phenomenon or that sometimes there was not enough evidence to support my hunches. However after repeated examination and alteration of the categories I decided on the set of themes described here. I went on to explore the relationships between these discourses by hand, spending hours arranging post-it notes representing themes on a large sheet of card before developing my account of the findings presented here. Writing up at this stage was important in reassuring me that there were issues to be further addressed. I was excited to see that I hadn't anticipated them all, for example the issue of finances, added to the study 2 interview schedule, was absent from the question schedule but featured significantly in the accounts of women who were or had been engaged in marriages. Most importantly, findings demonstrated that there was something 'going on' in the women's talk (I hadn't been mistaken in my initial instincts that drew me to the area) and I had begun to work out what that was.

Chapter 8. Study 2 Method

Rationale

Having explored the accounts of women broadly within the age range in which a transition to marriage was the most likely, it became apparent that research, outside that specifically focused upon adult development, has overlooked the experiences of older women. Whereas many of the responses of younger participants were prospective older women were more likely to have undergone a plural of status changes and their implications, or to have attained 'spinster' or unmarried status as a lifelong achievement. Older women were also more likely to have established stable social locations from which to construct other groups. This group seemed worthy of attention, given the implicit or explicit concern expressed by some participants, and through popular representations, regarding the possibility of 'ending up' a 'spinster' in later life.

The sample for the second study was purposively selected from an older population of women. Once again, semi-structured interviews were selected as the most naturalistic method for collecting women's accounts. Stephenson at al (1999) suggest that older women are inclined to emphasise their family relationships rather than any occupational or public achievements when interviewed by women. In this study such an inclination may have proved advantageous as relationship stories, commonly shared among women, are the desired interview content. The schedule used in study 1 was modified to suit the older target group, and to explore issues that had emerged and been suggested by interviewees from study 1, including the ways in which relationship status impact on financial resources and employment (see Appendix Study 2; Interview question schedule).

Design

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 13 women, aged 44-87 in May 2001. Interviews lasted approximately an hour. All were tape recorded at the participant's residences, with their informed consent (see Appendix Study 1; Interview research contract) and then transcribed (see Appendix Study 2; Interview transcripts). Four of these transcripts are presented in the appendices, selected alphabetically (to avoid favouring any contribution where all were valuable), from each relationship status group identified (single, cohabiting, married and widowed). Transcripts were analysed using discourse analysis through steps to be described, following Gill (1996) and Potter and Wetherell (1987).

Recruiting participants

Initially it was decided to contact retirement homes and centres for the elderly in order to locate an elderly population who might be willing to participate. All nursing homes and related organisations in the city and surrounding area featured in the telephone directory were contacted by telephone. The researcher asked Matrons and managers whether their organisations might house interested participants. The majority of organisations suggested that their residents were too 'confused' to take part or that the majority required extensive care and suffered from dementia and other conditions which would make it unlikely that they could take part in the interview process. Two institutions suggested that they had spoken with residents and that several would be interested in being interviewed (see Appendix Study 2: Letter & sample questions requesting institutional co-operation).

On visiting one of these organisations it became clear that if any of the residents had been interested in being interviewed they had since forgotten this. It is suggested that their interest and consent had been presumed. After three aborted attempts at interviewing, which caused some level of distress to both researcher and participant one woman was interviewed. Three women agreed to be interviewed at the other institution and were interviewed in a lounge and a bedroom.

The remaining nine interviewees were recruited through snowballing, some through a contact from previous interviews and the older women through an elderly neighbour. It was intended to interview spinsters but the snowballing process could not provide any connections. Here it is noted that this group constitutes a neglected research population.

Participants

Interviewees provided pseudonyms and brief descriptions of themselves to be included in the study, which they were later given the opportunity to verify by post (see Appendix Study 2; Interview follow-up letters). Again an interviewee chose to use a pseudonym associated with men, without intending any political statement. Directly below is a table displaying summary demographic information provided by the participants. Where applicable further relationship status information is displayed alongside their current status in the form of 'Div' indicating that interviewees have previously been divorced.

Name	Age	Relationship status		Occupation
Judy	48	Single	Div	Educational assistant
Fred	61	Cohabiting	Div	Retired teacher & HE student
Sylvia	44	Married		PhD student
Carrie	48	Married		Classroom assistant & housewife
Ellen	51	Married		Building computers & websites
Elise	65	Married		Retired teacher
Julie	62	Widowed		Post office
Nora	68	Widowed		Retired nurse & volunteer work
Enid	77	Widowed		Retired
Mabel	80	Widowed		Ex-army & housewife
Una	80	Widowed		Housewife
Jane	84	Widowed		Retired teacher
Lynne	87	Widowed		Housewife

Below the brief personal descriptions provided by participants are to be included, alongside a researcher profile, in order to equip the reader with enough information to inform their own readings of interview accounts.

Sylvia, aged forty-four, is a postgraduate student who lives in the countryside, is married and has three children aged between six and eleven. She is hoping to carry on doing research and specialise in children's literacy.

Carrie, forty-eight, is a teaching assistant and a housewife. She enjoys going out for meals and describes herself as very much a family person. Carrie is married with one daughter.

Judy, aged forty-eight, likes going to the cinema and reading. She also enjoys listening to music and is interested in animals. Judy is has two daughters, has been divorced and is single. She works as an educational assistant to a children with special needs.

Ellen, aged fifty-one, enjoys building computers, gardening and building websites. She is married.

Fred, sixty-one, is retired but describes herself as very busy doing lots of things. She is

continuing her education. Fred has been divorced, has three children, and is now cohabiting with her partner.

Julie, aged sixty-two, likes reading, gardening and driving the car. She enjoys sunshine but not rain and likes animals. Julie is widowed and has one son. She works in a post office.

Elise, aged sixty-five, enjoys gardening and walking. She moved to her current home ten years ago. Elise is married and has children.

Nora, sixty-eight, is interested in environmental projects and loves gardening, cooking and eating. She is a practising Christian Methodist and involved in voluntary work through her church. Nora has been widowed and lives alone.

Enid, aged seventy-seven, hates gardening but likes sports and bingo. She has been widowed.

Mabel, aged eighty, likes the cinema and television and loves music. She also enjoys puzzles and crosswords. Mabel has always loved knitting and used to make her own clothes. Mabel is widowed and has two children. She was involved in the army during the Second World War and then became a housewife.

Una, aged eighty, enjoys going out and cooking but does *not* like gardening. She has been widowed and lives alone.

Jane, eighty-four, has been widowed and says that she has been learning to live alone for two years. She goes to church meetings, belongs to a local museum society and reads a lot. Arthritis has made walking difficult for her and she has a carer. Jane likes being with people and describes how she gets involved with their lives, as she has with her carer.

Lynne, aged eighty-seven, is very fond of knitting for charity. She enjoys coach outings and attends church. Lynne has been widowed and lives alone.

Anna. At the time of conducting these interviews I was aged 23 and had moved in with my

partner. Interviewees frequently asked about my relationships and it is possible that my responses effected how the interviewees positioned themselves in relation to non-marital relationships.

Procedure

Interviews were arranged by phone, initially through Matrons and retirement home managers, and individually with other interviewees. On arrival at the arranged location I introduced myself and talked to the interviewees about the project and any other subjects that the interviewee brought up. As before the interviews were preceded by the exchange of research contracts (see Appendix Study 1: Interview research contract) and the provision of descriptions and in some cases pseudonyms.

Interviews were tape recorded, with participant consent. An interview-schedule, developed as a result of previous analysis and experience, was used as a guide (see Appendix Study 2: Interview question schedule). Interviewees were given a copy of the schedule to look over and follow along with the interview if they desired to do so. In many cases additional avenues of questioning were pursued, as a result of issues brought up by interviewees.

After interviews participants were debriefed and the researcher remained as long as was considered polite to discuss the interview or any other issues that came up. Commonly discussions were more informal and the researcher remained in order to share a drink with the participant. All interviewees were given a copy of the research contract and a contact sheet detailing thanks and information about how to contact the researcher (see Appendix Study 1: Interview researcher contact sheet).

Transcripts and descriptions were posted out to participants within the month, with feedback forms and postage paid envelopes (see Appendix Study 1; Interview feedback sheet, Appendix Study 2; Interview follow-up letters, Interview transcripts). Several interviewees from these interviews replied with feedback, mostly containing good wishes and commenting on their surprise at the non-linear nature of their talk. Two interviewees expressed serious concerns about the validity of their data on these grounds and both were replied to with reassurance from the researcher about the value of their contributions.

Analysis

Interviews were transcribed by the researcher employing notation, as before. They were also analysed both by hand and using QSR NUD*IST 4 and N6, using thematic discourse analysis. The transcripts were examined using a process similar to that used for the previous interview set, including repeated reading in order to develop and refine a set of themes.

Chapter 9. Study 2 Findings

9. 1 Study 2 results

The discourse themes identified from the transcripts are listed below. These are then to be described and illustrated.

1. Constructing relationship status: Status expectations as age-related
2. Constructing relationship status: Living situation as status-dependent
3. Constructing identity: Wifehood as domestic
4. Constructing identity: Surnames as relational
5. Constructing relationship status: Social opportunity as status-dependent
6. Constructing relationship status: Marital talk as integral
7. Constructing relationship status: Financial in/dependence as status-dependent
8. Constructing relationship status: Marital commitment as unique
9. Constructing relationship status: Marital success as work-dependent
10. Constructing relationship status: Divorce as a consequence of negligence
11. Constructing relationship status: Child well-being as force for convention
12. Constructing relationship status: Compromise vs. Selfishness
13. Constructing relationship status: Marriage vs. Occupation
14. Constructing relationship status: Spinsterhood as involuntary

1. Constructing relationship status: Status expectations as age-related

> Ellen: When we decided?
> Anna: Yes.
> Ellen: Er the first reaction was that I was too young, did I know what I was doing. Erm you should sort of play the field a little more, usual things but as I said "As far as I'm concerned I've found my ideal partner."
> Anna: Yes.
> Ellen: "Why do I why should I drop him and carry on looking round and (.) miss him?" (laughs) You know I mean he was what I wanted and I knew that was what I wanted (.) and they all said "Oh you're eighteen, you'll change." Thirty-three years later I'm still waiting to change so [I guess I was right and they were wrong! (laughs)
> Anna: [Ah:
>
> (104-117)

> Anna: Mhm. Ok how did your friends and family react when you decided to get married?
> Nora: They were all delighted! Absolutely (.) my mother wept over the telephone! (laughs) so.
> Anna: Ah! Did they expect you to get married?
> Nora: (1) I think possibly by the time I was forty-one no. (1) But er (.) it's just (.) they were all delighted. Everybody got on we all got on well together.
>
> (176-183)

Many interviewees raised age difference and age at marriage as an issue of concern in their relationships and in their perspective on others'. As the extracts above demonstrate, age often played a part in determining the responses of family and friends upon receiving news of an upcoming marriage. Young women were commonly advised by those around them not to marry but 'play the field' and were cast as immature and unable to make sound choices. Nora, who married at 41, describes above her family's surprise at her announcement and confirms that they were right to expect she wouldn't marry. This supports the proposition that 'beyond a certain age' women consider themselves, and are considered by others, beyond marriageability. Other women commented that they married early or late confirming expectations that marital status is seen to be part of an age-related narrative which is reinforced by family and friends.

> Milly: Next thing was (1) you know (.) he was away such a lot she decided oh she'd had enough. Anyway (.) the next thing was (.) erm we heard she was marrying one of the fellas from the bank.
> Anna: Really?
> Milly: Yes! She's older than him. (1) But er (.) they were a bit surprised he's (.) I think she's about eight years older than him.
> Anna: Yeah.
> Milly: Some of the girls were a bit you know about that.
> Anna: Yeah.
> (913-923)

> Mabel: But she did marry again bless her. A long time afterwards and he was twenty years younger than her and the marriage was excellent.
> Anna: Ah.
> Mabel: Uhuh. She was with (him) for what twenty-years till she died. We were all a little bit upset when they got married because (he) was my age! Perhaps I was a month older than him. And we thought "Oh dear!" We liked him (.) we never dr we never dreamed (.) that they were interested in each other.
> Anna: Yes.
> Mabel: (My husband) did. (My husband) said straight away when Mam wrote us and said she was marrying (him) and he said "Didn't you know they loved each other?" (laughs) Oh yeah, a wonderful marriage I mean if I hear of anybody now who's years younger I say "Well my Mum and she made a go of it and was very happy." You know.
> (723-738)

Age differences between partners were also identified as proving a potential obstacle to the acceptance of their own relationships and their acceptance of others'. Interviewees expressed concern about others' responses to their relationships with older and younger men. Carrie suggested that she had been concerned at marriage that her husband's name made him *sound* older so she had avoided using it when talking about him. Women with older and younger

husbands experienced resistance from those around them or anticipated this. Fred describes the great lengths to which she and her younger partner went to communicate the news of their relationship to others, anticipating negative responses.

Fred: We actually went away on holiday together and still didn't tell people. But our very closest friends it still didn't click with them and I made up a board game, a guessing board game to trying and get it over (Anna laughs) so because I (.) I just couldn't face them and I didn't I just thought "Whatever will they think?" So I made up this board game and they still didn't get it and we still had to tell them after all these damned things! (Anna laughs) Yeah. It was (.) something very similar to (.) when I fell in love when I was younger because it was quite exciting really. We've got great respect for each other and (.) we have our loony moments (.) it's great. I wouldn't do without him (laughs).
Anna: Ah.
Fred: I wouldn't he's a love.
Anna: So why would (.) why couldn't you just tell your Friends?
Fred: I think it was the age difference. See with me being in (.) well I was in my late fifties then.
Anna: Mm.
Fred: I think it's just (.) just the way you're brought up.
Anna: Yeah.
Fred: And (.) I feel that (.) people will quite happily accept (.) the woman younger than the man.
Anna: Yep.
Fred: But this way round (.) we have come across any prejudice, open prejudice, at all but I just feel (.) that there's something in the press and what-have-you saying women, older women and with a younger man you know carrying on with this toy-boy type.
Anna: Yeah.
Fred: (2) So (.) (why people be prejudice about that).
Anna: (2) (Fred laughs) I certainly don't have the answer to that question.
Fred: I don't. So (.) there you are. I just wouldn't be without him now.
Anna: Mhm.

(439-484)

Fred: Very happy and (.) yeah everybody was very happy.
Anna: (1) Ok.
Fred: Course I'm probably like anybody else in that (my partner's) twenty years what twenty-one years younger than me (laughs) so it does make a (.) a difference but everybody's (.) it doesn't really but you'd think some people might be a bit (.) odd about it an:d (.) all our friends (.) well most of our friends knew both of us anyway its just been accepted. No problems.

(186-194)

Interviewees drew particular attention to disapproval of women marrying younger men. Mabel, above, described her initial disapproval of her mother's second marriage to a younger man. Such relationships constitute unconventional pairings going against the traditional older male/younger female model, which has been identified as part of the patriarchal power

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relationships institutionalised in marriage (Jeffreys, 1990). These age-related conventions make it less likely that older women will find relationships as older men are less likely to remain unmarried post-divorce and usually marry younger women (Maushart, 2001). Older women who form relationships with younger men then risk social disapproval from those at work, family and friends though interviewee accounts would suggest that such resistance can be overcome.

2. Constructing relationship status: Living situation as status-dependent

> Anna: move out of the house or would you? Would you still have done that? Would you have carried on teaching and.
> Jane: No I wouldn't. I don't know what I would have done. I don't know. (5) I imagine I'd have had to but it's much more automatic (.) when you meet your fella and you go out and look for somewhere to live.
>
> (412-417)

Older interviewees accorded great importance to purchasing a house at marriage or as soon as possible afterwards. At the time of their marriage there was no opportunity for them to leave their parents homes prior to marriage and many also remained in their parents homes post-marriage until they could afford to buy homes. Having their own house was one of the advantages of marriage often cited, in some instances as an opportunity to escape controlling parents. Many interviewees described relocating to new towns or cities to set up homes with their husbands upon being married. It was, consistently, women who relocated where necessary, interrupting the career development of those continuing to work, and isolating them from family and friends. This routine sacrifice demonstrates the extent to which establishing a home is the responsibility of wives and the privileging of male careers and social networks. However, particularly in the past, this might be considered the only financially viable choice for couples where men have increased earning potential. The establishment of a post-marital household is identified by Gittins (1985) as part of the idealised construction of marriage.

> Anna: So I already asked and you said that you did want to get married (.) did you expect to get married when you did or had you got other plans?
> Carrie: (1) No (.) I didn't have other plans I was I wanted to get married. I wanted to get married I wanted to (.) have a home of my own I wanted my own home I wanted to be able to invite people to my home. Erm (.) and twenty sort of (.) seven years ago you didn't very often (.) have a home unless you were (.) going to get married you didn't (.) it's different these days things are different and (.) life is so very different so perhaps we wouldn't have got married as young.

Anna: Mhm.

However for older unmarried women, divorced and widowed, there is no ideal location. For these women their financial and employment situations were central to their living situations. Jobs were more important in this context as they were facing mortgage payments newly alone and for the widowed saving and money received from and houses purchased by their deceased husbands were crucial to their living situations. Divorced interviewee, Judy, had dependent children at the time of her marital dissolution, as did Tabitha and Helen in earlier interviews. These women additionally had to support their children on a single income, potentially supplemented by ex-husbands.

> Anna: Could you tell me what it was like when you first started living on your own?
> Fred: (3) I was frightened that I wasn't going to manage financially (.) and I didn't have very much at all when I came here (.) physically (.) within the household but er (.) gradually built it up and I became very secure here. It was mine and I was completely felt very secure here (.) but very frightened when I came here (.) despite the fact that I'd made that decision. I was scared.

> Anna: did you find that when you were married it changed that aspect of your life?
> Judy: Yes I suppose it did. Erm I mean when we were married (.) all my money was sort of luxuries, holidays and new things for the house and his money went to pay the mortgage whereas now (.) my money has to pay the mortgage when I was married I didn't have to worry about having a job (.) now (.) you know I do worry about losing my job and the job I'm in is (.) erm sort of reviewed every year and every year around this time I'm thinking "Oh, shall I still have a job in September and (.) if I haven't what will I do?" And I'm always aware that I've got to keep a small amount (.) in the bank in case I am (.) you know unemployed for whatever reason but having said that I still (.) wouldn't consider changing my job even though it is a bit precarious because I enjoy the job I'm in and (.) perhaps I'd earn some (.) more somewhere else but (.) you know I think it's important that I like being where I am.

For some elderly women being widowed resulted in institutionalisation or alternatively, for Jane, who could afford it, employing home help. Older women living alone, many of whom were experienced increased infirmity as well as poverty, had a less strong claim to retaining their homes those with living spouses, corresponding to research findings suggesting that elderly unmarried women are more likely to be institutionalised.

> Carrie: (3) I j I don't know, I don't know it's very, very difficult to know whether I

would have xxx myself to someone else I really don't know (.) I can't really. I suppose I would really because I w (.) I just wanted a home and I wanted a home to share.

Anna: Yeah.

Carrie: You know (.) not that I was unhappy at home a at my home home but er (.) I think I would because I was that sort of a person a sort of (.) a homely type of person wanted to do (.) be the little [cook] wife and do all the cooking (laughs).

(384-397)

'Home' was a concept associated with marriage and family. Those who were married spoke, like Carrie above, of being a home type of person, wanting to run a home and to be a wife at home. The role of the wife was constructed as managing the home and, in combination with reduced social engagements and interrupted work histories, this contributed to the situation of married women as located in the home. Unmarried women were seen as going out more and being more committed to work, situating them outside the private realm of the home. This contributes to earlier depictions of wives as constrained to the home and private female sphere of family relationships.

3. Constructing identity: Wifehood as domestic

Carrie: can't really. I suppose I would really because I w (.) I just wanted a home and I wanted a home to share.

Anna: Yeah.

Carrie: You know (.) not that I was unhappy at home a at my home home but er (.) I think I would because I was that sort of a person a sort of (.) a homely type of person wanted to do (.) be the little [cook] wife and do all the cooking (laughs).

(391-397)

Among older women there was greater acceptance of marital convention and all women confirmed that they enjoyed being wives. Frequently women talked of adopting their husband's surnames and saying 'my husband' as sources of pride in being married to their husbands. Women constructed archetypal images of the housewife as aspirational at the time of their marriage. However Sylvia and Julie suggested that their were contexts in which they would not like to be called 'wife'. In these instances an association between the word 'wife' and inequality or subservience was invoked, as in earlier interviews.

Sylv: I don't think I (.) the fact that I'm a mother I know is (.) part of my self-concept because it takes up such a vast amount of my time (.) the fact that I'm, I'm not really the sort of wife that looks after my husband. Do you know what I mean?

Anna: Yes.

Sylv: I think we (.) I demand of him that we're more equal than that (laughs) so I'm not sure it has the same the fact the word 'wife' doesn't have the same connotations for me as the word 'mother' because (.) that's not the way it is in our marriage.

Anna: Yes.

Sylv: But we are rather more equal than that which makes (.) clearly makes me (.) when I said that I must be meaning (.) the word 'wife' (.) sounds unequal.

Anna: Mhm.

Sylv: God how strange (1) that's interesting (laughs).

Anna: Its been suggested that the word 'wife' does have some connotations of inequality, by other people.

Sylv: I mean I think I think I: think of it positively simply because I know that (.) that (.) I mean (my husband) wouldn't introduce me as his wife if he didn't think of it positively.

Anna: No. Erm and and obviously it's a it's not a negative experience for you.

Sylv: No it's not a negative experience but I think if I was thinking (.) I think the reason it's not part of my self-concept must be, and I've never actually thought of this before so this is a bit of a revelation as far as I'm concerned, I mean the way I have described to you the terms I've used makes it sound as if I'm slightly implying (.) that the role of wife is a kind of (.) subservient role. (.) Doesn't it? I don't know, you'll maybe rewind it and have to listen to it again [I think I've just caught myself out there I'm not sure.

Anna: [You can read it, yeah yeah.

Sylv: But I don't think of myself as subservient and that's probably I don't use the word 'wife' for myself.

Anna: Well people have said that they associate it with a traditional, not necessarily subservient but a kind of maybe it's because it's often paired with 'housewife' as a=

Sylv: =Domestic role, domestic role, yeah exactly, exactly. So I think that's probably why and the word 'husband' the connotation's there of the man going out and finding the, getting the you know.

Anna: Yeah.

Sylv: The job and stuff like that so I guess that's probably why (.) being somebody that once was goes out into the world of work and stuff. I did give up work for a while but (.) I've always done something. Even when I gave up work I did a (.) you know another degree and I I simply gave up work because (1) er I didn't want to have a nanny.

Anna: Yeah.

(1005-1056)

Sylvia articulates a dilemma similar to that described by other younger interviewees in which their experiences of being married are positive but there are unacknowledged negative associations with the term 'wife'. Here Sylvia resists the title 'wife' arguing that it is inappropriate because she has an equal relationship with her husband and 'goes out into the world of work and stuff.' Being a wife is, again, associated with inequality, domesticity, being unemployed and confinement to the private sphere of the home.

4. Constructing identity: Surnames as relational

Anna: I think the people that I've spoken to have used, people who have been engaged or living with a partner they haven't wanted to be called 'Miss' because they don't feel they are single and they don't want to give that message but at the same time it provides, it's ambiguous, or if it's a political point and they'd rather (.) say that women shouldn't be (.) you shouldn't know about their marital state.

Jane: (2) I don't think that taking somebody's name makes you a slave to the other person though, myself. But I would say that this didn't happen with my generation because this has only come in I mean they're (.) (my son) would have been fifty-nine so it's a long time since they were married and these sort of questions weren't asked then.

(243-246)

Conventions surrounding naming at marriage, constructed primarily as an identity issue in earlier interviews, here appeared to constitute part of a more general drive to conform to larger constructions of family, foregrounding the needs of others rather than self-identity concerns. The majority of interviewees suggested that neither themselves nor any acquaintance of their generation considered there to be an alternative to adopting their husband's surnames, though some suggested that others may have liked to.

Contrary to the implication of these accounts, women were resisting and protesting this convention before interviewees faced these decisions - Elizabeth Cady Stanton spoke against adopting husbands' surnames in 1848 (cited in Foss & Edson, 1989). Interviewees narrate being happy to do this but, as they professed no knowledge of any alternative, this can be seen as the only possible way of accounting for their choices positively. Most interviewees professed knowledge of another younger woman who had retained her maiden name at marriage, portraying them as part of a different generation to whom different choices were available. However some older women, like Jane above and Una, criticised the unconventional choices made by younger women often using discourses of child well-being to justify their disapproval.

Anna: Do you know anyone who didn't change their name to the [same as their husband's?

Una: [Yes I do.

Anna: And do you know why they made that choice?

Una: I don't really know why they did but they've been married many, many years now and they still go in their single names. Well my attitude is if you're married (.) you (.) change your name er (.) I just don't know why she didn't change her name I mean she's been married an awful (.) lot of years but she's still is called by her [name yes.

Anna: [Original name, yes.

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Has that caused her any problems do you know?

Una: (1) I don't really know I think with the children it's rather difficult if erm I think she calls the children by the (.) father's name, yes the children go by the father's name. Erm (.) which I think is confusing for the children (.) I mean obviously they're going to ask questions as they get a bit older (.) "Why is Daddy's name (.) erm whatever and Mummy's name is another name?" So you've got to explain all those things to them haven't you, as to why.

(88-107)

Again, as in interviews with younger women, interviewees often suggested that they preferred their husbands' names and none of the elderly women used rhetoric of naming and identity to justify their choices. Older women often demonstrated their awareness of identity rhetoric in naming choices to dismiss this. This established them as pro-convention and more concerned with family and child issues in opposition to other younger women who might be more concerned about themselves or about political concerns. Sylvia described how she had used her maiden name for business purposes but gradually moved over to adopting her husband's name completely. She also directly suggested that naming was not connected to identity but went on to contradict this, elucidating a conflict that she became aware of within the interview.

Sylv: maiden name (.) but she actually does call herself by her maiden name so I think in a way if you're if you're doing half your life on (.) with your maiden name then it that carries on (.) because at some point you have to decide which one you are. I mean otherwise you do get this confusion.

Anna: Mhm.

Sylv: So I think if you're going to carry on with it in a in a big part (.) then you may as well carry on with it in entirely, you know what I mean.

Anna: Yeah.

Sylv: Erm but I've never I mean there are a few people that I know just simply never refer to themselves by their (.) by their (1) um married names.

Anna: Mm. So do you think it has some kind of significance if (.) if if there are two and there is (.) if having two names you felt compelled or if other people in general feel compelled to choose one of them that there is some kind of (.) connection with identity there?

Sylv: Yes I think there is a connection with identity, yes. You're you're right there erm (.) because (.) especially when (.) when it comes to a signature that's something you do something so automatically isn't it, and if it's something you have to think about (1) and then it isn't something that comes automatically then it sort of feels uncomfortable.

Anna: Mm.

Sylv: Er and therefore it can't be part of your (.) true self if you see what I mean.

Anna: Yes.

Sylv: So I suppose, I suppose you have to decide either one way or the other and then stick to that one because a mix mix mixture of things doesn't really well doesn't work doesn't I can only think of one person (.) who erm who I who used to be my boss a long time ago who used to call herself 'Miss Something'

and that was because again it (.) the (.) the business was called kind of you know 'Smith and Bloggs' and she was the Smith bit of it.

Anna: Yes.

Sylv: So I guess that was the reason but she was called the other name at home (.) erm (.) sometimes teachers do it (.) a lot of teachers, or they (.) turn their turn their name into a double-barrel name that's one another way of so in a way you are you've got you're resolving an identity issue either by adopting one or the other or turning it into a sort of double (.) double surname.

(325-368)

Earlier in the interview Sylvia had declared that naming choices were not related to identity and selfhood but in the above extract she becomes aware that she employs such rhetoric in her account. She demonstrates that retaining a maiden name for the purposes of occupational identity, as she did, is most commonly impermanent, as individuals then have to 'decide who they are'. This implies that names are indeed important to identity and that married women are pressed to choose only one, usually marital identity, when theoretically presented with a multiplicity of available names and identities. Sylvia's account suggests that women are compelled to identify themselves through one, usually marital surname, thereby demonstrating their allegiances to personal, rather than occupational concerns. Here identity rhetoric is used in accordance with convention as a drive towards adopting relational identity.

5. Constructing relationship status: Social opportunity as status-dependent

Ellen: they moved away I mean a lot of our friends did live quite a long way away, our original friends that were friends at the time, so you make new friends and obviously things change, you tend to make friends with other married couples (.) which is what we did.

Anna: Yeah.

Ellen: Erm sort of people where (my husband) was working we got to know them and you you your circle of friends changed (.) gradually. You know we still kept in touch with the others but (.) it did all change you saw some of those less and other more.

Anna: Erm did you did you find that you tended meet more married couples, it was easier to socialise with other married couples or [did you.

Ellen: [Yeah, yeah. Don't know why.

(134-147)

Sylv: Erm and the other thing I suppose is that it's not just that's not just happened to us it's also at the same time happened to our other friends who've gone through the same thing so (.) so we've all got into our little boxes. It kind of (.) narrows, narrowed down but (.) I mean (1) it's happ I mean more with, with the children so it's kind of family orientated but there's still that life out there.

Anna: Yeah.

Sylv: And also I suppose erm (.) where I used to meet friends through work and things

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I now have met friends (.) as much through other things like schools or
whatever so you meet different people from different walks of your life.

(162-173)

As in previous interviews, talk about socialising created divisions delineating the status of

those interviewees might socialise with and the availability of opportunities to engage in

social interaction. When narrating transition from being single to marriage women described a

reduction of social opportunities with an increase in responsibilities, particularly at the birth

of children. They also described meeting more couples upon marriage and how it became

more convenient to socialise with other married couples. Echoing rhetoric employed in

previous interviews women suggested that it would be socially inappropriate to socialise with

single people.

> Sylv: Um I would say I mean I still know erm I'm still friends with single people but I
> (.) I would say that (.) you you (.) once you're married and you've got children
> you're most comfortable with people who are in the same situation (.) because
> you are aware, at least I was certainly very aware erm that (1) when you're
> going through the sort of breast-feeding nappies stage that's actually incredibly
> boring for anybody else who isn't at that stage. And even now if we go on
> holiday with somebody who's got much, much younger children than us you
> suddenly think "Oh my god! Does it really take three-quarters of an hour to put
> on a pair of wellies!" you know "Lets get out of the house, can't we just go?"
> (laughs) You forget, you forget that it took that long so you're most
> comfortable with people that are more-or-less at the same stage.
>
> Anna: Mhm.
>
> Sylv: Because then everybody ends up having a good time and nobody feels so (.) you
> know erm (.) that they don't want to be with other people's children or that (.)
> whatever. So I think that on the whole yep we all are fairly similar (.) but I've
> still got great friends who are (.) single but I think they need to keep some
> single friends themselves otherwise (.) they'd go barmy.
>
> Anna: So in some ways it is useful or easier?
>
> Sylv: Yeah and it just it kind in a way actually it's even more than that because when
> you're two people i.e. in a marriage of two people (.) and so you actually
> choose friends where there are two people that you both get on with because
> erm which is why it works best if somebody you know if one of.
>
> (453-481)

Unmarried women described difficulties socialising as a single person. It was suggested that

public places to socialise in are aimed towards young people and therefore inappropriate for

them, particularly pubs. These women confirmed that women felt uncomfortable visiting

public social spaces to alone, though one woman described overcoming this reluctance out of

necessity. Additionally, it was described that women lost contacts upon divorce and that they

found their married friends largely unavailable to them due to domestic responsibilities. This

reinforces boundaries between individuals of different status and underlines the peripheral status of the older unmarried woman.

> Anna: with? A couple of people have mentioned to me that they find it easier (.) to go out as part of a couple.
> Fred: I think so (.) yes. (.) Yeah I do 'cause there are still places (.) with me being older there are still places that I don't feel comfortable on my own. I wouldn't go into a pub on my own unless there I knew I was meeting someone or if I'd come in with someone I still don't think feel comfortable though on my own (.) although I have done it (.) once or twice but still (.) not happy about it.
>
> (175-183)

Widowed women frequently recounted reduced social activity after the death of their husbands. It was reported that they were distrusted and suspected of by trying to steal other women's husbands. Several widows, however, suggested that they did not want to go out and that they did not agree with others' reports of social isolation. This may have functioned to prevent these individuals from facing an unpleasant reality of social rejection as a result of status.

> Julie: Erm (2) I don't go out (.) often because it is difficult for you. Erm when you're widowed (.) a lot of people think you're after their husbands.
> Anna: Oh.
> Julie: So it's very difficult, it really is. It takes a while for people to trust that you're not after their husbands (.) it's the last thing on your mind.
> Anna: Yes.
>
> (41-48)

With widows wanting to stay in, divorced women finding it difficult to socialise and the married reporting being too busy to socialise it would be possible to draw the conclusion that regardless of status adult females do not take part in social activity. It might be the case that the leisure and entertainment industry is generally targeted at young people, as older adults are expected to lead private, home-based lives. Or it could be the case that older adults socialise in different ways, generally within private homes. It is suggested that these social structures function to marginalise the unmarried older woman who cannot be party to the majority form of socialising - married couples together. These women showed a similar sense of the inappropriateness of socialising outside these boundaries trapping older unmarried women in a position where they are not accepted into private communities of married couples or the public domain of pubs and clubs, designated for the young and males.

> Anna: Ok. Erm since you've been on your own has that made a difference to your social activities?

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Enid: Very much so. Yes it has. I think where a woman's concerned it's it isn't the same going out on your own as it is a man going out on his own, not really.

Anna: That it's less acceptable for, there's less things for a woman to do on her own?

Enid: Definitely yes there is, yes.

(45-52)

6. Constructing relationship status: Marital talk as integral

As in earlier interviews, interviewees constructed talk as integral to marriage. Talk was implicated as sustaining marriage, as is also demonstrated in discourses of Marital success as work-dependent and Divorce as a consequence of negligence. Talk constituted both a privilege enjoyed by married and a problem-solving tool. Wives talked about being able to 'say anything' to their husbands and widows described how they missed being able to talk to their husbands after socialising.

Anna: Ok. Now is there anything extra you can tell me about your views about marriage or relationships and things like that?

Enid: No, I don't think so. I think today there's not a lot of love to start off with in marriage and there's not a lot of talking. I think if there was more talking and love at the beginning people would put up with a lot more and there wouldn't be so many divorces.

(233-240)

Anna: Erm would you say there were any disadvantages to being on your own?

Julie: You've got nobody to talk to really, about your innermost feelings, I feel that's a disadvantage actually, your innermost feelings when you're in a marriage (.) erm you can say anything, it just doesn't matter what you say (.) erm when you (.) hold a conversation with (.) anybody else really (.) you are (1) watching what you say.

Anna: Mm.

Julie: But as I say with a happy marriage you can say anything.

Anna: Yes.

(166-177)

Anna: Yeah. Erm are there disadvantages?

Nora: (2) To some extent I suppose things you can't do that you (.) heavy things and er (.) and some of the things that you have to ask other people to help you with (.) but (.) and you haven't got anything to discuss anything with and that's what I miss most.

Anna: Yes.

Nora: Not having someone to discuss things with (.) because before my marriage I lived (.) with a community in a community (.) I've always lived in a community.

Anna: Yeah.

Nora: So there have always been people to talk to about books and (.) everything under the sun and my husband was the same we discussed and and (.) he was interested in politics and you miss (.) somebody to sound out things and I missed having someone else doing my studying. I have missed having somebody to sound off (.) things with.

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Anna: Yes.

Such discourse constructs the marriage relationship as a unique forum for honest talk and companionship. This corresponds to idealised models of companionate marriage and is in accord with interviewee suggestions that husbands become 'best friends'. These constructions of the marriage relationship invoke idealised popular counselling models that situate talk as the answer to problems and unfettered exchange as the basis for healthy relationships Gottman & Silver, 1999). This conception goes against traditional and self-help ideals which propose only strategic disclosure. Interviewees who had been widowed did not see this connection as replicable and others talked about this intercourse as restricted to marriage. However Fred describes her new non-marital relationship as fulfilling a similar function of providing a forum for open talk, suggesting that this advantage of marriage might be attainable in other instances.

> Fred: I've become a lot more independent. And (1) I don't mind saying what I actually think whereas we were (.) we were brought up to (.) have opinions (1) and discuss things in a sort of pxxx way but not to sort of (.) not to come out with anything (.) just on your own whereas (.) (my partner) and I talk things through a lot, it's a very different relationship that we've got. I mean I was (.) I wasn't actually subservient but I was almost subservient, you know it was an accepted thing that the man was the (.) the head of the household and this is an extremely (.) different relationship. We talk things through and respect each other (.) from that point of view (.) (Interruption: chimes sounding) It's the wind you know! (Fred and Anna laugh). Yeah we're we're very open with each other (.) which I wasn't before and I think I've learnt (.)
> (367-380)

Though older women in earlier interviewed confirmed that they missed that form of talk younger women did not report a corresponding gap in their lives. This may be because they had yet to experience this form of relationship or it might be the case that such intimate talk can occur between cohabitees that are unmarried. The widows who described missing talk lived alone and Maggie from earlier interviews who reported missing this talk was also newly living alone. It is possible that those who live in platonic or cohabiting relationships establish similar talking relationships. It is acknowledged that for older widowed interviewees, unless they moved into institutions it would be unacceptable to consider moving in with friends or partners. However, it might be this transition from constant companionship to living totally alone that provoked this noted yearning for talk particularly. It is suggested that constrictions around living situations for older women enforce this lack of companionship, thereby rendering marriage more attractive and spinsterhood less so.

7. Constructing relationship status: Financial in/dependence as status-dependent

Mabel: We needed the money but my (.) in those days my husband was like a lot of men in those days, didn't want their wives going out to work. They felt it was their duty (.) to provide, you know. Er (1) I (.) I nearly did get a job I went after one because my friend was working in the offices at the (company) factory in (the city) and I was a little bit er (.) lonely with (my husband) at work and I was a little bit lonely and er my friend said "Why don't you come down to the (company) factory and you could get a job there." So I went down and talked to the manager down there, I was just a clerk you know in the office and he said "Yes," he said "Could you come in on the Friday?" and he said "Could you come in on the Monday?" and I said, "Yes thank you." You know, very pleased so when (my husband) came home in the evening (.) I said "Oh I've got a little job," "Oh," he said "Where?" I said " (The company), just a little (.) office job." "Oh!" he said "I'll ring up the firm up the firm then." I said "Why?" and he said "You're going out to work I won't. If you want to go out to work," he says "It's alright with me." Well I knew then that (laughs) I didn't I didn't have to go out to work. I then started knitting then I fell for xxx so you know the baby was coming on so I was too busy knitting and (.) that was it, so I never did go out to work. We needed the money, we did you know. I mean I admire the youngsters of today (.) I mean my two (1) daughters-in-law I mean they've all worked and always have worked (.) course in those days you see (1) they didn't.

(258-284)

Money was particularly important in constructing both responsibilities within marriage and the lifestyles of both the married and unmarried. In the stories of many older interviewees the purchase of a home was one of the major goals associated with marriage. For these women it was ideal to cease work upon marriage, though those with lower incomes reported continuing work. Above Mabel outlines how the social conventions of the time were manifest in her marriage, her husband preventing her from taking work even when they were in need of the extra income.

Nora: acted up as matron. (1) So I (.) er yes I (.) I don't I don't know really so I suppose my life did change completely.
Anna: Mhm.
Nora: And I didn't have to worry about money any more. I'd always (.) been (.) always had to be very, very careful.
Anna: Yeah.
Nora: And er (.) I suppose that was the thing being supported for the first time in my life since I was fifteen.
Anna: And you enjoyed that?
Nora: To a certain extent it it takes (.) er:m (.) I didn't like having to ask for money I found that difficult.

(148-158)

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Constructed within all marriages was the gendered financial power structure as witnessed in earlier interviews. Women spoke of difficulties adjusting to being without their own money but most willingly took on a dependent role as part of their marital situation. As encouraged in 'The Surrendered Wife' (2001) women frequently advocated the pooling of resources and transferring of financial management to the husband as a fundamental part of marital roles, apparently indicating trust but also allowing him greater financial power. This is interpreted as romanticising female interdependence, a potentially dangerous phenomenon when so many married women will face becoming single-again.

> Sylv: Erm so yes I suppose and hopefully (.) erm (.) I mean I think where it works best is where you do treat (.) erm your earnings on both sides as a kind of joint income that you just put in the pot I think (.) I think it's quite dangerous when people, I mean I'm not s I mean you can have (.) you can have your own account, you can have your running away money to keep your own independence and stuff but (.) I I (.) it just gets (.) messy and uncomfortable if you sort of say "Shall I pay for this or are you going to pay for that?" and it's just much better to put it all in one pot and let it sort itself out and then you don't have those awful 'cause financial (.) I think in in a marriage that's got lots of problems finances would be one of those things that's causing the problems so to try and avoid the problems it's better (.) certainly just to say that it all goes in the same pot whatever you earn, whoever it all goes in the same pot so you've got to allow trust and generosity into the relationship. If you do then you can rest assured that the other person will help you out.
>
> (1089-1106)

> Ellen: Not particularly, not in not (.) initially, because I'd stopped work (.) er I mean obviously while we were (.) going out together er there were two wages and I used to live with my parents then, but you had more money to spend on yourself if you wished and on going out. When we first got married and I stopped work 'cause we'd moved, erm (.) it seemed a little hard for a while until I got a job again because it was only just the one wage and you'd got a house to run then you didn't have a house to run on it before.
>
> (254-322)

Wives often described their transition to marriage as involving spending less money on themselves and socialising. This spending freedom was compared to the responsibilities of marriage. However, for those who were unmarried this was not so, as a consequence of the financial responsibilities of supporting themselves. Women who have been through divorce are known to be financially disadvantaged (Maushart, 2001). As with never-married women, they have to house themselves and any dependants on one income, on average less than men, and they are more likely to have discontinuous work histories and reduced earning power in comparison. Divorced women recounted how when they were married their incomes were

supplementary whereas their husbands provided the central household income. Upon divorce they were forced to revise this situation, resulting in struggles to maintain homes and increased importance of jobs.

> Anna: did you find that when you were married it changed that aspect of your life?
> Judy: Yes I suppose it did. Erm I mean when we were married (.) all my money was sort of luxuries, holidays and new things for the house and his money went to pay the mortgage whereas now (.) my money has to pay the mortgage when I was married I didn't have to worry about having a job (.) now (.) you know I do worry about losing my job and the job I'm in in is (.) erm sort of reviewed every year and every year around this time I'm thinking "Oh, shall I still have a job in September and (.) if I haven't what will I do?" And I'm always aware that I've got to keep a small amount (.) in the bank in case I am (.) you know unemployed for whatever reason but having said that I still (.) wouldn't consider changing my job even though it is a bit precarious because I enjoy the job I'm in and (.) perhaps I'd earn some (.) more somewhere else but (.) you know I think it's important that I like being where I am.
>
> (252-263)

Money was also of increased importance to widows. Many recounted tales of how their lives have been enabled by careful saving and financial planning from their husbands or in earlier in their marriages. Particularly among older women who didn't work after marriage, it was essential that their husbands were generous in providing for their dependant wives.

> Nora: after my husband's death. Apart from anything else this house and garden were a wreck and I was (.) getting things back to normal here. Erm and so I was able to say I didn't want to work full-time because I had a widow (.) a small widow's pension it the widow's pension gave me (.) a sense of (.) I could please myself (.) and as from fifteen (.) to forty I had worked full-time and often (.) really sixty-hour weeks it was just nice being able to say "I want to work these hours." And it just and it gave me that strength.
>
> (276-284)

The elderly women interviewed associated marriage with being able to live in their own homes and leave their parents. They then became dependent upon their husbands' earnings and later on their provisions for widowhood. It is possible that when today's married women are widowed they will not be as dependent upon the provisions made by their husbands and their earnings. As in earlier interviews with younger women Nora, above, outlines that marriage is associated with financial advantages which allow women to be less dependent on their own earnings affording them choice about levels of commitment to employment.

However it is suggested that this level of interdependence is potentially dangerous as many women face divorce and are less likely to remarry than men. Divorced women face trying to

adjust to living, possibly supporting dependants, on reduced income with commonly interrupted work histories and reduced earning power, meaning that they are less financially healthy than men and never-married women. Depictions of financial interdependence as romantic and integral to marital trust serve only to make it financially difficult for women to attain independence, within or after marriage. It is suggested that this tradition should be resisted.

8. Constructing relationship status: Marital commitment as unique

Commitment is constructed as one of the qualities exclusive to and inherent in marriage relationships. Many married women suggested that commitment was absent from cohabiting or non-marital relationships. This quality was constructed as related to successfully maintaining a marriage and to bringing up children. Single parents and unmarried parents were seen as uncommitted to their relationships and therefore lesser parents. Interviewees described feelings of stability, security and being settled as additional exclusive advantages of marriage. Commitment was connected to discourses of persistence in working at marriage, overcoming obstacles and success in prolonging marriage. In this way it was seen to function as protection from marital dissolution, adding to discourses of divorce as a result of action, i.e., as a result of not committing a couple might not attempt to work through problems and divorce, as in Sylvia's example below.

> Carrie: I do feel strongly about that. Er I think that it's sad when they're all separate and one's visiting the other and (.) sometimes it can't be helped but (.) quite often in this day and age it can be it's a it can be it's a planned baby they're planning to have a family but they haven't given themselves the commitment.
> Anna: Yes.
> Carrie: You know to me you need to commit yourself (.) to that situation.
> Anna: Yes.
>
> (564-524)

> Ellen: Erm well yeah they're a negative thing because (.) er not in that (.) marriage itself is I think it is something everybody should have but it's just this stability thing (.) and I think if you're thinking of having children the idea that "Well if we get married we can always get divorced," or "We can just live together then split up if it doesn't work out." Is sad. It shows lack of commitment. I mean as far as I was concerned when I got married I made vows (.) and I meant them.
> Anna: Yeah.
> Ellen: And that's it. I mean something would have to go very drastically wrong for me to break those vows (.) I think (my husband) would have to break them first.
>
> (381-393)

> Sylv: So if people (.) people get married for all lots of different reasons I suppose and

I but I think that (.) whatever I said before, I can't remember what I said but about the fact that (.) erm (.) er (.) marriage itself can't necessarily be the answer because people can still get divorced and do (.) I think you've got to have that commitment and you've got to have that commitment to be prepared (1) to do a bit of give and take because otherwise the first hiccup that comes along erm people just decide that they've had enough of this and they don't want to do it anymore (1) and whether you're married or not (.) that can (.) just stop it.

<div align="right">(670-680)</div>

9. Constructing relationship status: Marital success as work-dependent

The depiction of 'work' in marriage, meaning the investment of effort into maintaining the relationship, constitutes an element of the construction of agency and action in maintaining marriage and preventing divorce. Failure to work at marriage, including not talking through conflicts or trying hard enough and investing enough effort in relationships, is frequently invoked by married interviewees as a cause of divorce. Judy, a divorced interviewee, details accusations from previous friends of not working at her marriage. This corresponds with the accounts of single interviewees in earlier interviews who were obliged to justify the dissolution of their past relationships and were seen as responsible for their 'failure'. This discourse casts married women as successful at their marital work as a consequence of putting effort in and therefore renders them different to those who divorce without 'working' at their relationships.

Ellen: Erm and we're quite happy with that. Erm but I think it's just people don't think about it enough and don't make the right choices. I mean I so often I have heard people say when they get married "Well if it doesn't work out we can always get divorced." (1) which to me is an odd attitude to go into I went into marriage thinking "Well this is for life."

Anna: Mhm.

Ellen: I love him and I want to be with him so you know (.) I'm not thinking, you know "Well if we fall out I'll get divorced." If you have a bit of a difference you sort it out. You work at it you don't just walk away and think "Oh well I'll find somebody else."

<div align="right">(424-435)</div>

Anna: security and being settled? People have said that it helped.

Jane: (2) I think it did. (2) I suppose lots of people think that you (.) you marry and think that (.) your life's going to be sweet all the way well you know life isn't like that and so (.) we were quite [forward], I was quite [forward] had a shouting match and things like that but I always thought that if you could express your opinions (.) clear the air and then settle down and (.) learn to avoid all the corners and so on.

<div align="right">(419-426)</div>

Nora: including his mother-in-law, it wasn't that easy. And I think you really I well

<div align="center">133</div>

we were both mature so it was easy and I think that people seem to think that
(.) that you know it's just going to you know just because you love each other
it's just going to (.) be easy and it isn't (.) it isn't. You have to put up with (.)
and give way over some things (1) erm I don't (.) I don't know any more about
(.) I I do think that people don't work at enough they seem to think even before
their married they think "Well if we (.) well we can always have a divorce."
Before they've even started and you know it's slightly negative.

Anna: Yeah.

<div align="right">(488-499)</div>

Sylv: father and oh it's all just such a mess. Erm and (.) I don't
      know I think sometimes (.) I think sometimes people just don't
      try and sort things out early enough and they get (.) and I've
      done that I've done the sort of (.) "Well I'm jolly well cross
      with you and so therefore I'll make you pay," sort of, you
      know that sort of infantile behaviour, you carry on being like
      that even when you're an adult you can be like that with your
      (.) husband or wife or partner, or whatever you want to call
      them. Erm and if you don't snap out of that and actually talk
      about it together (.) then you can end up going in opposite
      directions and xxx and I think people just (.) I think people
      give up very easily because in our soc I but I think that's
      not I think it's bound up with so many other things I don't

<div align="right">(1132-1144)</div>

Discourse of divorce as a consequence of negligence constitutes part of this theme as does
discourse of unmarried and divorced persons as uncommitted, constructing a lack of care.
Here married women distance themselves from the divorced and unmarried implying that by
undertaking marital work and investing care in their relationships they can protect themselves
from divorce. This has a self-congratulatory function also, suggesting that by remaining
married they have accomplished an effortful endeavour. The divorced, in contrast, are
portrayed as uncommitted and unable or unwilling to make their marriages succeed. Divorce
women, alternatively, construct their accounts of marital dissolution through mechanisms of
failed relationship process rather than flaw and failure.

These discourses reinforce marriage-mythology by encouraging those who are married or
wish to marry to view themselves as different to the growing percentage of divorced people
and able to resist this situation by will. It encourages the marginalisation of the divorced and
manifests in talk of the accountability of women post-marriage and post-relationship to those
around them to provide evidence that they 'worked' at sustaining the relationship.

10. Constructing relationship status: Divorce as a consequence of negligence

Interviewee disapproval of divorce was communicated through discourses of (failing to) work in marriage. Nowhere in these accounts was it contemplated that divorce might be advantageous, that marriage could be dysfunctional or potentially harmful. Neither was it considered that to end a marriage might be just as much a rational choice as to begin one.

> Nora: don't (.) I don't know any more about (.) I I do think that people don't work at enough they seem to think even before they're married they think "Well if we (.) well we can always have a divorce." Before they've even started and you know it's slightly negative.
> Anna: Yeah.

(494-499)

Divorce was constructed as a consequence of poor marriage 'work', 'selfishness' (a trait similarly ascribed to the unmarried), not 'talking' (one of the privileges and problem-solving mechanisms of marriage), lack of commitment and inadequate conflict-resolution. Additionally interviewees commonly gave voice to individuals approaching marriage with the perspective that 'If it doesn't work they can get a divorce'. This construction of pre-marital complacency located among others who are getting married emphasises the difference between them and the committed married (the interviewees giving account). This depiction also reinforces the conception that those who divorce invite marital dissolution through their behaviour. Divorced people, it is inferred, fail in not 'trying' to manage their marriages successfully rather than by choosing to divorce.

> Ellen: Erm well yeah they're a negative thing because (.) er not in that (.) marriage itself is I think it is something everybody should have but it's just this stability thing (.) and I think if you're thinking of having children the idea that "Well if we get married we can always get divorced," or "We can just live together then split up if it doesn't work out." Is sad. It shows lack of commitment. I mean as far as I was concerned when I got married I made vows (.) and I meant them.
> Anna: Yeah.
> Ellen: And that's it. I mean something would have to go very drastically wrong for me to break those vows (.) I think (my husband) would have to break them first.
> Anna: Mhm.
> Ellen: So that's just me but (.) I think it's sad that people won't make a commitment (.) particularly with children. And I think it's particularly sad where single women just go and get themselves pregnant because they want children but they don't want a man. That's unfair to the children. (1) I mean I know from a happy childhood what it's like having two parents who are there for you and it is a happy childhood. And I think it's a very sad I know how it would have devastated me if one of my parents had left (.) so I just find it sad.

(381-403)

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These depictions of divorce allow married women to construct an element of agency in sustaining marital relationships therefore avoiding divorce. Where divorced women are depicted as 'not trying' to continue their marriages an opportunity is created for married women to construct themselves as in control of their own status, i.e., if *they do* try they can protect themselves from vulnerability to divorce. Divorced women did not recount accepting blame in their stories of marital dissolution but rather used similar discourse to imply that marital dissolution resulted from break down of the depicted process of marital talk.

> Anna: Ok. Do you (.) do you see the decrease in the marriage rate as a negative thing or just as a way of people making a choice, having a choice?
> Fred: I think it's probably people making a choice. Xxx.
> Anna: No, no.
> Fred: I mean mine was the choice to walk out of that marriage.
> Anna: Yes.
> Fred: So why shouldn't I [anybody have] that choice. I wasn't happy I didn't want it to be the rest of my life. Tried talking it over and couldn't and (.) couldn't do anything about it so.
>
> (314-324)

The two divorced interviewees did not use discourses of deficiency to account for their divorces. However their accounting also implicated talk as pivotal to marital problem solving. Fred suggested that she and her ex-husband could not 'talk over' conflicts, depicting this mechanism as unavailable to them and therefore divorce as the consequence of malfunctioning process. Judy described visiting the marriage counselling service 'Relate' as the 'work' she did to repair her marriage, unsuccessfully, before deciding upon divorce. In both of these cases different forms of talk were attempted in order to sustain marriages and these unsuccessful attempts functioned to legitimise subsequent decisions to divorce. Maushart (2001) confirms the role of talk, or communication, in marriage and divorce as the responsibility of women

It is possible that interviewees used discourse of failed process as an alternative to divulging intimate details of their relationships to the researcher. However, it is suggested that such accounts are more useful than intimate details would be in demonstrating how divorced women might publicly narrate their experiences. Interviewees, divorced and married, described how friends of divorcing couples only remain friendly with one of them. Judy's account of this process demonstrates how some of her previous friends applied the rhetoric of divorce as a result of lacking investment in marriage on her part, demonstrating how such discourse might manifest.

Judy: Er: I can see the friends that I want to see more but its also made a difference in that some friends obviously decided that they (.) that they didn't particularly want to see me anymore. They judged me and found me wanting in fact, one particular friend said to me (.) you know, "Couldn't you have made it work? Did you try and make it work?" Well yes I did, I went to erm Relate (.) before I got divorced I certainly didn't enter into it into it easily.

Anna: No.

(54-62)

Divorcees, Judy and Fred, did not portray their divorces as their fault, though both owned the choice to leave their marriages, and neither did they express any regret or negativity surrounding their decisions. Fred explains that she was unhappy and could not resolve marital problems through talk whereas Judy explains that she did not make her choice easily but went to counselling before deciding to divorce. Fred and Judy describe going through a grieving process and being frightened and anxious about living on their own again. However they both suggest that their experiences had positive consequences or as Judy suggests 'nothing changed for the worse.'

In contrast to the accounts of devastation provided by married and widowed interviewees divorced women were able to account for their divorces as difficult events which they successfully progressed from without negative consequences for themselves. Though they may be obliged to construct their divorces as having only limited impact upon their lives in order to successfully construct narratives and identities these women have accomplished something considerable in achieving this in an environment which sees the divorced as damaged and dissolved marriages as failures.

Anna: wanted to get married and do that sort of thing. When you did first get married erm (.) what kind of experience was it, was it a positive thing that met your expectations?

Fred: Yeah. We were very happy. I've got a lot of happy memories to look back on.

Anna: Yep.

Fred: We went through a rough period after the marriage but (.) we're great friends again now (.) we don't see each other very often but we're good friends. We've had children together so (2) it made it difficult xxx. No, we're ok.

(336-345)

11. Constructing relationship status: Child well-being as force for convention

Married interviewees routinely employed accounts of child-welfare to warrant claims regarding the potentially damaging nature of unconventional lifestyles. In these accounts children are constructed as innocents – they serve as the victims of single parents, unmarried parents and cohabiters who are depicted as uncommitted and prioritising their own needs.

Disapproval of non-marital relationships is constructed as a consequence of professed sympathy for the children of people involved in these relationships.

> Carrie: and I just feel that (.) a child needs we bring children into this world and I think they need both of their parents if at all possible.
> Anna: Yes.
> Carrie: I do feel strongly about that. Er I think that it's sad when they're all separate and one's visiting the other and (.) sometimes it can't be helped but (.) quite often in this day and age it can be it's a it can be it's a planned baby they're planning to have a family but they haven't given themselves the commitment.
> Anna: Yes.
> Carrie: You know to me you need to commit yourself (.) to that situation.
> Anna: Yes.
>
> (510-523)

Children are also invoked to highlight the negative consequences of divorce. Married women tell of how young children are passed between divorced parents, constructing a much used media image of the social ills of marital dissolution. These images portray divorced people as inconsiderate of their children and as hurting them through their lack of commitment to their marriage. Accounts of the suffering of children construct divorced parents as blind to this damage and as different to the still-married interviewee.

> Ellen: Erm well yeah they're a negative thing because (.) er not in that (.) marriage itself is I think it is something everybody should have but it's just this stability thing (.) and I think if you're thinking of having children the idea that "Well if we get married we can always get divorced," or "We can just live together then split up if it doesn't work out." Is sad. It shows lack of commitment. I mean as far as I was concerned when I got married I made vows (.) and I meant them.
> Anna: Yeah.
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> Ellen: So that's just me but (.) I think it's sad that people won't make a commitment (.) particularly with children. And I think it's particularly sad where single women just go and get themselves pregnant because they want children but they don't want a man. That's unfair to the children. (1) I mean I know from a happy childhood what it's like having two parents who are there for you and it is a happy childhood. And I think it's a very sad I know how it would have devastated me if one of my parents had left (.) so I just find it sad.
>
> (381-403)

Children, in these passages, function as a force towards marriage, as needing marriage to lead happy lives. They are also featured in accounts as requiring conventional naming practices, an issue also linked to their well-being. Children were depicted the victims of unconventional parents who might cause them (and others) social difficulties and embarrassment by not

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conforming to surname conventions at marriage. Such rhetoric appeals to political right wing ideals which privilege marriage and the nuclear family and reinforces societal pressure to conform to conventions of naming and status. These accounts distance the conventional, and thereby considerate, married interviewees from ostracised others who do not conform to archetypal images of family and veils the pressure of social convention with concern for the welfare of children brought up in these situations.

Anna: [Original name, yes.
      Has that caused her any problems do you know?
Una: (1) I don't really know I think with the children it's rather difficult if erm I think she calls the children by the (.) father's name, yes the children go by the father's name. Erm (.) which I think is confusing for the children (.) I mean obviously they're going to ask questions as they get a bit older (.) "Why is Daddy's name (.) erm whatever and Mummy's name is another name?" So you've got to explain all those things to them haven't you, as to why.

<div align="right">(98-107)</div>

Jane: (.) sometimes I (.) if it was a girl I knew so well I find it very difficult when they're sending a letter at Christmas with a cheque in. "Shall I send it to (their full name) or shall I send it," and for a long time I'd forgotten what the man's surname was and I said I said to her mother "Oh," she ways "I hate it, I hate it." Fancy going up to the school and saying "My name's so-and-so and my children were born," you know this makes a trouble.
Anna: Yeah.
Jane: Now (my grandson's partner) that's just had her first baby they talked a lot about this erm (.) you can also register their surname as well now (the baby's) that's (the baby) she's going to be called (this surname) because that's the father's name (spells name). But if it had been a boy they would have called him (the mother's surname) which is her maiden name. Well I consider that an absolute nonsense.
Anna: So.
Jane: I don't know what's the point of it! What's the point of it? I just don't know. It is. I don't know, I just don't understand and we just laugh about it.
Anna: But it's important to them.
Jane: But why is it so important to all these young people? Do they feel lessened by taking a man's name? Because really it's only a convenient title.

<div align="right">(283-306)</div>

Sylv: It was so romantic! 'Cause they weren't just doing it because everyone else was getting married they were doing it because they I don't know I I asked them "Why did you actually get married?" and she just said "I just thought it would be easier (1) because then you know, the children's' name and my name and everybody else's name would be the same, there wasn't a reason not to anymore."
Anna: Mhm.

<div align="right">(662-669)</div>

12. Constructing relationship status: Compromise vs. Selfishness

Anna: Mhm. (2) Do you feel that being married and being in your relationship has
changed things about you? Have you learnt different things?

Elise: Yes I think that you learn (.) about give and take that when you get married
you're sort of (.) well you come to it with very sort of set ideas (.) erm I think
that you you learn that you've got to sort of (.) not necessarily give way but
you've got to reach a compromise together and you've just got to (.) sort of
give and take, yes, [I changed] in that yes.

<div align="right">(238-246)</div>

Anna: What about disadvantages of being married?

Sylv: Disadvantages of being married (1) erm the only one I can think of is the one I
mentioned before which is that you you're not your entirely your own master
you have to you would (.) you know you I can't just go and work in the
Caribbean erm (.) I'd have to (.) you know you (.) your relationship with your
(.) spouse and your children is so sort of embedded in you that (.) you don't
just fly off (clicks fingers) and do something just for the sake of just for you.
You become less selfish (.) yep (laughs).

<div align="right">(693-702)</div>

Relationships were constructed as a site of compromise for women, as in earlier interviews. Married interviewees frequently described marriage as facilitating their learning 'give and take', to 'compromise' and to 'share'. This was constructed as a lesson of marriage, unavailable to single people. In juxtaposition, single lifestyles were often described and criticised as 'selfish'. Taking responsibility for others, caring for them and making sacrifices for others was depicted as part of marriage and the role of the wife. Such selflessness was portrayed as a virtue, involving sacrificing women's own desires for those of their husbands and children. The married mother was portrayed, as below, as responsible for the family and primarily a resource and provider of security for others.

Anna: Yes.

Una: Erm when I lost my mother that was the (.) saddest thing that ever happened.
Very, very sad, 'cause your mother really is (.) the anchor, I feel that your
mother is the anchor. You take all of your (.) troubles to them erm any worries
you tell them about and they are (.) always there.

<div align="right">(208-213)</div>

In contrast, single people were seen as selfish, purely self-motivated and lacking consideration for others. Unmarried people were seen to prioritise their own needs, which was constructed as part of a status-related character flaw. Selfishness was also seen as a potential cause of divorce, providing a motivation for married women to behave selflessly. This

implied, as in discourses of Divorce as a consequence of negligence, that through good
behaviour women can protect themselves from marital dissolution.

> Sylv: roles there have come together so there's less there's less role definition but
> there's also more everybody needs to be fulfilled as a person but there's a
> balance between the two and I think sometimes when you, sometimes people
> aren't able to give up that selfishness. I mean it's good to be wanting your self-
> fulfilment but if it's too much then it becomes selfishness so (.) there's got to
> be a balance somewhere and I think that sometimes that marriages go wrong
> because people aren't willing to give up that side of them. And I just feel that
> perhaps they give up too easily. Erm (2) as to whether I
>
> (1165-1174)

> Una: I don't think there are any advantages to being on your own, not as such. I
> wouldn't call that I wouldn't call it an advantage really doing as you like.
> Anna: Yes.
> Una: To me it's a selfish (.) attitude (.) when you want to do as you like.
> Anna: Mhm.
> Una: I don't know, that's only my opinion I may be wrong, I may be wrong.
>
> (328-336)

Independence was associated with the unmarried and with selfishness by some interviewees.
They were seen as pursuing their own desires and career ambitions. This failed to
acknowledge that for those living alone, particularly the divorced, this was likely as a result of
economic necessity. Fred described the development of her independence after divorce as a
necessity enabling her to socialise and attain an improved level of equality within her current
relationship.

> Anna: Ok, is there anything you can tell me regarding your opinions or experiences of
> being single, being married or being in relationships generally?
> Fred: Mm (2) I I st (.) I do feel that you're accepted more as a couple whether you're
> married or not.
> Anna: In what way?
> Fred: Er socially. It's it's er (.) just seems that you know one adult goes free with
> another adult and that kind of thing I come up against very often (.) entrance
> fees and that.
> Anna: Yeah.
> Fred: Mind you again you come up against exactly the same two children go free with
> two parents and we had three children so! (laughs) It's it's this two point four
> isn't it.
> Anna: Yeah.
> Fred: But I think socially (.) I I sort of had to fight out of that when I was on my own.
> I am quite independent I'd go to the theatre or go to the cinema or whatever
> 'cause if I didn't I just wouldn't have gone.
> Anna: Did you erm (.) has being married and then living on your own do you feel that
> you've learnt things or changed across?
> Fred: I've become a lot more independent. And (1) I don't mind saying what I actually

think whereas we were (.) we were brought up to (.) have opinions (1) and discuss things in a sort of pxxx way but not to sort of (.) not to come out with anything (.) just on your own whereas (.) (my partner) and I

(346-3ᵀ1)

Many younger interviewees constructed compromise as a negative consequence of relationships, in opposition to single freedom. However these older, married women see their choices as characterised by selfishness and compromise within relationships as a positive part of marriage. This could be because they are positively interpreting what is actually a necessity for them in their status positions or because older married women consider it appropriate to confirm traditional ideas that women receive more gratification from giving to others than achieving themselves (Baker Miller, 1988). This generation-related contrast in interpretations can be seen as functional in reinforcing the positive consequences of situations almost inevitable for each group. Even if they are to marry later younger women today will be obliged to achieve financial and social independence from their families before marriage, whereas older women were expected to proceed to straight from their parental homes to domestic giving roles.

13. Constructing relationship status: Marriage vs. Occupation

> Ellen: Erm I was actually (2) sixteen and my teachers actually wanted me to go on to art college (.) at the time. Er which is probably what I would have done, had I not met but having met (my husband) that (.) my future changed as far as I was concerned I was no longer interested in going off to college. That was going to take far too long (.) erm I just didn't want to go away so it was then I left after my O levels and got a job.
> Anna: Yeah.
> Ellen: It wasn't the ideal job for me I must say. Erm at the time I tried to get something with art but there was nothing in this area so er (.) yeah that would have been different I probably would have gone to college. But having met (my husband) I (.) I didn't apply.
> Anna: Yes.
> Ellen: One was more important than the other.

(274-289)

As images of the modern career woman suggest, married interviewees presumed that unmarried people prioritised their careers over their personal lives. This contrasts with images of spinsters who are presumed to have been 'left on the shelf' rather than having chosen to prioritise other aspects of their lives. This could be connected to age-related models of status that presume that nobody would choose to remain single 'beyond a certain age'. It was suggested that single people must have chosen to focus on their careers rather than get

married. Others described single people of their acquaintance who were quite happy without being married because of their careers. It seemed that where marriage was not prioritised careers were the most accessible alternative.

> Anna: Yeah. So when you were (.) very young were you interested in weddings and=
> Nora: =Not particularly in weddings I loved my job and I liked travelling.
> Anna: Yeah.
> Nora: And so I did it wasn't (.) it wasn't top of my (.) erm priorities.
>
> (17-24)

Divorced interviewees suggested that their jobs had indeed become more important. However this was a result of economic necessity rather than as a result of ambition, criteria that could easily apply to women who never-married. At divorce women became dependent upon their own incomes making their jobs far more central to their lives. As detailed earlier, for unmarried women it is difficult to survive on their own incomes and therefore their careers may be central through need rather than choice.

> Anna: Yes, yeah.
> Sylv: Erm (1) I think people do use the word 'bachelor' like "Oh he's just, you know (.) a hard and fast bachelor," meaning he's never going to get married and he's never going to get a [life] exchanged like a box sort of thing. And it doesn't have the same pejorative connotations as (.) the other one [spinster], I don't think. Usually if people are wanting to say that about a woman then they'll they'll (.) put it in slightly different terms they'll say something like "Well of course she's just married to her job," or "She just adores being a teacher and having lots of time for her students." Or you know they'll put it in those sorts of terms.
>
> (869-880)

It seems curious that, in discourse, marriage is juxtaposed to having a career rather than other personal relationships or living situations, especially now that the majority of women work. It is suggested that this functions to perpetuate the division between public or private, male or female traditional life trajectories, i.e., if women do not follow the traditional female life path directed towards marriage then the only alternative is to follow the male-identified career-path. This prevents alternative relationship and living situation choices from being validated. It is nowhere considered by interviewees that people might remain unmarried to instead pursue non-marital relationships or remain celibate and that their careers might be no more meaningful than their own.

This emphasis on career as an equivalent lifestyle choice to marriage can be seen to allow the unmarried to justify their positions without drawing attention to, and validating, alternative lifestyle choices. It allows the unmarried to avoid making socially unacceptable declarations about their preferences and thereby ostracise themselves by suggesting that they do not wish to marry. Manifestation of this can be seen in the below exchange from Jane's interview where she enquires as to the marital intentions of the researcher. Here the researcher instantly resorts to career-related justifications of her unmarried status rather than raising her political position, which might have been both offensive to Jane and disruptive to the interview.

> Jane: Will you not believe in marriage or er?
> Anna: I don't know really because it's all very well for me to say at this point but I (.)
> I feel (.) I don't know what's going to happen in my life anyway because I'm
> busy with studying at the moment and that's another year and a half and er
> then (.).
> Jane: What sort of job are you going to look for then?
> Anna: Well I don't erm (.) possibly a teaching lecturing post in psychology because
> I've been xxx for a couple of years now I really enjoy it, I enjoy working with
> the students but erm. I feel there's a lot of things that I still haven't decided.
>
> (866-876)

The career woman image and the shared conviction that unmarried women have remained so because of commitment to their jobs occludes alternative lifestyles and depoliticises decisions to resist social conventions and remain unmarried. It gives an unrealistic perspective on the lifestyles of the unmarried who are more likely to experience poverty and no more likely to live high-powered business-driven lifestyles. However this association between being single and prioritising a career provides, as implicated by Mima in earlier interviews and Sylvia above, a way in which unmarried older women can construct a socially acceptable positive identities including an implication of choice in remaining unmarried. This assumption allows unmarried women to justify their status without challenging the status quo and thereby causing themselves social difficulties. This is likely to result in social comfort for the unmarried, who can avoid justification of their personal lives, and the married, who remain a privileged and unchallenged group, however it is suggested that it obscures the variety of lifestyle choices and prevents their validation.

14. Constructing relationship status: Spinsterhood as involuntary

> Elise: (1) Er: I've heard it in a joke er there's a joke that says 'spinster of this parish'
> which was never sort of great but that's only in a joke and I should think (1)
> that's several years since I heard that.
> Anna: What kind of associations does it have what kind of things does it make you

think of?

Elise: I suppose it makes you think of a rather sort of (.) severe, elderly er (.) live alone.

Anna: Mhm.

Elise: Er you know, thin, wizened sort of person really, that's what it conjures up, unfortunately yes.

(296-306)

Anna: Yeah. Some people have mentioned that they particularly don't like that word, that it's an insult.

Ellen: No I don't like it. I know it's a correct word.

Anna: Yes.

Ellen: Erm it's a sort of legally correct word but it does (.) have wrong connotations, you tend to think of a little dried-up (laughs) cranky old woman you know who's never had a man and (laughs). That's what people usually mean, when they say it.

(315-323)

These interviewees approached spinsterhood as a pitiable misfortune, rather than a threatening possibility. It was associated with emotional and sexual inexperience, with physical unattractiveness, negative characteristics and a lack of choice. All interviewees presumed that spinsters had to have been 'left on the shelf' not chosen by a man and therefore constructed them as pitiable. Married women who had children compared their experiences to childless spinsters of their acquaintance and frequently reported that they were unhappy people with 'narrow' lives.

Jane: And that made it so much easier at the time. (2) Ooh yes I did have a much more interesting life than one or two of my school friends that (.) never married. Their life has been (1) nothing like as interesting as mine has been and that's nothing that must have been due to my relationship because erm (.) well you need somebody to do these things with don't you, and so on.

Anna: Yes.

Jane: Oh yes I'm sure my life would have been much (.) much more restricted had I not [living] with him.

(510-519)

The positioning of narrow single lives in opposition to married fulfilment was perpetuated by married interviewee's accounts of what they might have done if they hadn't married. Many suggested that their lives would have been narrow and unfulfilling and described the lives of single people as full of regret and lacking interesting or varied experiences. This corresponds to earlier research suggesting that the experiences of the unmarried are socially devalued, as they don't conform to normative patterns of life satisfaction (Baine et al, 1992).

Enid: =I think that will be a bad thing definitely when they get older. I don't think they

can see it now but it's when they get older and they haven't got any family or whatever you want (.) that's when I think it's gonna hit them hard (.) because they've got no security just living with somebody have they?

Anna: So do you think marriage is important?

Enid: I do definitely, I definitely do.

(225-232)

As all interviewees in this part of the study had previous experience of marriage spinsterhood did not present a possible future and thereby did constitute a threat to them. These interviews knew they could not 'end up' 'sour old spinsters'. From this perspective they had already been 'chosen' by men and could not return to that most undesirable shelf even if they were divorced or widowed. Single-again women and widows saw themselves as fundamentally different from spinsters in character as well as lifestyle. Having been part of the privileged married group they were in no danger of not being chosen, not being desired by a man.

Anna: Does it have any particular associations for you? What does it make you think of?

Mabel: What 'spinster'?

Anna: Yeah.

Mabel: (1) Just an old dear who was left on the shelf I should think (laughs).

Anna: Some people think of it as a negative word, something you wouldn't want to be, a 'spinster'.

Mabel: Yeah, well I wouldn't want to be a spinster. Not really. But then again, if that's the way they want to be.

(748-757)

Mabel: (.) if they haven't met the right one why shouldn't they stay on their own? You know I wouldn't like to have been on my own but if they choose that life you know, I knew a lady poor (name omitted) she's now in a (.) nursing home but she (.) she in fact she's never even walked out with a boy. Ever such an attractive lady I could never understand it. She was brought up by an aunt and uncle and they lived out in the country on a farm and when they sold the farm they set her up in this lovely little bungalow over there and they bought that for her and she's really nice she soon as we came here the first xxx I was in she invited us over, you know, very nice. She never married and I was saying to her one day she was showing me photographs of herself, very nice they were she was a nice looking lady and I said "Did you ever have a boyfriend (name omitted)?" "Never." She said "I've never been kissed or anything." (laughs) I said "Oh you're missing out love!" (laughs) she's in a nursing home now poor thing, she's about what eighty-three, when you get to this age.

(796-813)

It is suggested that in contemporary culture for women not to engage in or experience heterosexual intercourse renders them deviant and pitiable. This relates to previously described images of single women where women are compelled to distance themselves from asexual spinsters or old maids. This application of compulsory sexuality conflates age-related

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prejudices, implying that older people are not sexual beings, with marital status expectations. The conclusion is thereby drawn that elderly unmarried women have lived lives 'on the shelf' where no sexual interest has been shown in them and they have been without sensual experiences, as with Mabel's acquaintance above. The assumption is contained that life without sexuality and motherhood could only be unfulfilling, illuminating the cultural limitations of the prescribed female lifestory. It is not considered that some marriages are between people who are not sexually intimate and that it is possible to engage in sexual behaviour and motherhood outside marriage – options both criticised elsewhere in accounts.

9.2 Study 2 conclusions

These interviewees fulfilled aims to explore issues of relationship status and identity accounts among older women. The women in this sample had more experience, than the younger women interviewed in study 1, of relationship status change and of the consequences of particular relationship related identities. This consolidation of position provides them with a location from which to narrate accounts of their choices and those of others. The themes identified move away from individual identity rhetoric towards a more traditional relational construction of the female role and identity. Nevertheless several themes featured in earlier accounts developed through these interviewees, including the restrictions and developmental conception of relationship trajectories.

1. Age and relationship status

In study 1 interviews spinsterhood and singleness in old age presented a threat, an undesirable fate that might befall them. Growing older was associated with getting married and settling down, accounts suggesting that upon marriage their lives would become calmer. However those women who had not achieved these goals by 'a certain' age experienced negative feedback from their environments. Accounts across age groups, as demonstrated in these interviews, constructed an age-related relationship status career path reflected in women's expectations of their own lives and their responses to others.

Women were expected to 'play the field' when young and discouraged from marriage by family and friends. When older, seemingly from their twenties, women began to be subject to scrutiny from those around them, holding them accountable for relationship break ups and encouraging them to marry sometimes employing the threat of spinsterhood. Unmarried and divorced women described various social constraints, in addition to financial disadvantage, resulting in a restricted lifestyle. As Patterson et al (1999) suggest, marriage led to a path of

guidelines including buying a home, changing locations and work schedules and the privatisation of social life. There was no such location or clear path for unmarried women in terms of living situation and social activity, rendering them peripheral and deviant. Elderly married interviewees reinforced the cultural devaluation of unmarried lifestyles talking of the narrow lives and regrets of unmarried women.

Groups outside of the traditional pattern, such as unmarried women or single parents, cohabitees and spinsters, were criticised by their friends and families, reinforcing support for traditional life paths. Reported negative reactions to age-difference in marriage relationships, particularly to younger male partnerships, reinforced traditional depictions of age-related constructions of marriage. These responses encouraged women to make more traditional, slightly older, choice of a marital partner, maintaining power differentials in favour of the male. Older women were thought of as unlikely marriage material and spinsters were construed by as deviant and pitiable. Spinsterhood was portrayed as, again, an unfortunate fate rather than a choice, devaluing male-independent lifestyles.

2. Marriage and compromise vs. independence

Interviewees in study 1 constructed a concern with identity and independent selfhood through discourses of naming and titles. However older interviewees directly disparaged such rhetoric and foregrounded issues of marriage and children, encouraging identification through marriage. This was part of a larger trend towards seeing younger and unmarried people as comparatively self-motivated, rather than interested in others, a disliked quality. Marriage was seen as teaching 'give and take' and married interviewees accounted for naming issues by giving priority to others, for the benefit of children or the convenience of others. Suggestions that children suffered from unmarried parenthood and unconventional naming choices reinforced the dominance of these traditional expectations, foregrounding conventions and the needs of others rather than being 'selfish', like the unmarried.

Selfishness was constructed as a quality owned by un-named others, unmarried or courting divorce, not by interviewees. Marriage provided interviewees with a caring role demonstrating consideration from others, by naming others selfish they reinforced this and created distance between themselves and other groups. It was suggested that selfish behaviour might result in divorce. As with other themes, this rhetoric complemented the married as selfless by implication and implied that they would be able to avoid divorce through virtuous behaviour. Associations of selfishness and the unmarried can be seen as a negative

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interpretation of discourses of independence. From the perspective of the single and single-again independence was sometimes an advantage of their status and a necessity. For women who were unmarried and divorced it is essential that they are independent, which might be interpreted as selfishness, in order to maintain themselves. Images of independent unmarried womanhood can be connected to the idea of the career woman.

Unmarried women, not yet elderly spinsters, were assumed to have chosen to prioritise their careers over their personal relationships. Foregrounding work was seen as the automatic alternative and nowhere was it considered that people might remain unmarried simply because they did not *want* to marry. This focus on career as an alternative to marriage obscures other lifestyle choices, leaving no ideological space in which unmarried women might construct a preference for cohabiting relationships, parenting relationships or platonic relationships. Such rhetoric also occludes consideration of arguments against marriage. Seeing career commitment as the only alternative to a marital focus adds to depictions of single female life as narrow as it depicts women's interests outside marriage as limited to work, rather than alternative relationships or interests. This perpetuates gendered life course expectations painting the unmarried woman as again essentially different and implying that if women do not wish to traditionally marry and privatise their lives they must follow the masculine path and become career orientated. However it allows unmarried older women to create a positive independent identities including, most fundamentally, an element of choice remaining unmarried.

3. Marriage and lifestyle guidelines

Marriage was associated with acquiring a home and establishing a household. For elderly women there were few other opportunities to leave parental homes and buying a house appeared to be a goal of marriage for many couples. This is in accord with definitions of wifehood which centre on the home and domestic responsibilities. Additionally accounts depicted women's lives, upon marriage, becoming more home-focused and involving more financial and household responsibility. Interviewees described meeting and socialising more with other married couples who reinforced their relationships.

Unmarried women, alternatively, had no access to similar lifestyle guidelines. The divorced were faced with the difficulties of establishing financially independent households on a reduced income. Unmarried women described difficulties socialising, suggesting that it was considered unacceptable for them to go out alone. This suggests that as women get older they

are expected to become home-focused, however those who are unmarried are excluded from the shared social network delineated by married women.

Married women described financial interdependence as part of marriage, romanticising the sharing involved. Younger married interviewees told of the consequences of such arrangements including the opportunity to reduce work hours and undertake low-paid employment. For widows, who usually had ceased work upon marriage, savings and pensions were crucial. These can be seen as advantages of marriage, allowing women increased freedom as a result of access to the higher income of males. However, the possible consequences of such arrangements in contemporary marriage were illustrated by the financial difficulties described by divorced women, to whom employment took on an increasing importance. It is suggested that the reduced career involvement and financial dependence espoused by several married interviewees, and 'The Surrendered Wife', reduces women's power to control and leave their marriages and their potential to support themselves and any dependants were they to be left.

4. Accounting for divorce

Several themes identified in the talk of married women constructed married people as different from the divorced, in their approach to and their management of relationships. Uncensored talk was seen as pivotal to marriage, one of the most frequently cited advantages of being married and something missed by widows. It was constructed as the central form of conflict-resolution and the absence of talk was implicated as causing divorce, both by the married and divorced. Divorced women identified an inability to 'talk things through' in marriage as a problem precipitating divorce. Such accounts from married interviewees allowed them to render the divorced accountable for their situations, implying that divorced people did not talk enough or try hard enough to resolve conflicts through talk. This distanced them from the divorced and implied that through talk they defend themselves from vulnerability to divorce. For the divorced such rhetoric was used to deflect personal accountability by instead citing problems in the process of talk within their marriage.

Talk constituted a form of 'work', an endeavour constructed as essential to sustaining marriage. Those who divorced and unidentified others were seen as adopting a complacent approach to marriage, viewing it as 'easy' and considering the possibility of divorce if they experienced any difficulties. This established married interviewees as committed to marriage and as prepared to invest effort and work into their relationships. Married interviewees

described commitment as exclusive to marriage, absent from non-marital relationships and another potential cause of divorce. This was related to overcoming problems rather than resorting to divorce, as less committed others might. Divorced interviewees reported, across interviews, that others held them accountable for their marital dissolution, accusing them of failing to work at their relationships. This contributed to a general impression constructed by married interviewees that they were qualitatively different and approached their relationships more wisely, again allowing them to defend themselves from potential vulnerability to divorce.

Summary

All interviewees acknowledged a working model of the female life path involving changes in relationship status, which was reinforced by the expectations of themselves and others. Women described receiving negative responses from their families and friends when attempting to transgress outside of this pattern by marrying young, choosing to marry someone much older or younger or by choosing to divorce. Attached to this model were traditional expectations about life progress, which slightly altered across interviewee age groups. All women expected to establish a household upon marriage and for their lives to become more home-focused. This also effected the working patterns of interviewees, marriage allowing women to depend less on their own incomes and in the case of older women stop paid employment. Women whose lives deviated from this path found themselves without such a lifestyle model to follow, dependent on their own incomes and therefore more tied to their employment and additionally restricted socially as peripheral to both the younger single public social life and the older married private social network.

Married interviewees construed the lives of the unmarried as unfulfilling, narrow and regretful, lacking meaningful relationships and pitiable in old age. Single people were seen to be selfish and unenviable, in comparison to relational roles within a marriage. The well being of children was used as a justification for condemning unmarried and single parents as selfish. Accordingly relational identity construction was espoused reinforcing traditional, patriarchal conventions. The criticism of independence among unmarried women is seen as reinforcing traditional forces toward marriage and relational identification. Career women were seen as choosing an occupational life focus over marriage. However nowhere in the accounts of marriage interviewees was is countenanced that women might not wish to marry, those involved in alternative relationships were only acknowledged as selfish and inconsiderate parents and users of confusing names and titles, refusing to follow conventions.

Talk was an important constituent of descriptions of relationships, particularly marriage. It was seen as a form of relationship work and used as a way of differentiating the committed married interviewee from their conception of the divorced population. The divorced were portrayed as individuals who were not committed to their marriages, who did not work at sustaining them and who did not use talk efficiently as a way of resolving conflicts. This enabled married interviewees to construct an element of agency in divorce, implying that they were able to avoid divorce through certain identified behaviours. Constructing this sense of agency enables women to develop accounts of marital security, which must be meticulously constructed in the face of contemporary divorce rates. Many older interviewees who were widows or had been married through to old age and therefore were likely to remain so could safely invoke this invulnerability. Divorced women experienced negative responses from their environments but did not construct themselves as to blame for their divorces, instead citing problems in the talking process, voicing no regrets and describing positive developments in their single lives.

Married interviewees constructed their marriages as positive and their identities as relational. All interviewees acknowledged age-related expectations of female life patterns and those whose choices conformed to these patterns experiences support from their environments and pursued culturally defined life patterns allied to marriage. However those who deviated from this pattern experienced negative responses from their environments. The unmarried were construed as undesirably self-motivated, the divorced as potentially deficient from pre-marriage and spinsters as pitiable women rejected by men. These interviewees demonstrated the prevalence of traditional expectations about marriage and women's roles and identities. Such expectations occlude and contradict the variety of lifestyles available to and led by contemporary women. Perhaps this demonstrates the speed at which alternative discourses of unmarried lifestyles will need to be created as average life patterns alter, in order to de-marginalise the unmarried woman.

9.3 Study 2 reflexivity

The experience of interviewing women in retirement homes and institutions was generally negative. It was evident from the responses of several women, who I had been assured wanted to be interviewed, that they had *not* been asked if they wanted to participate or alternatively had since changed their minds or forgotten. This proved distressing to both parties, two women who did not participate appeared convinced that I was covertly collecting information

for the government and one woman became highly emotional and angrily raised her voice whilst repeating her refusal to be interviewed for some time after I had left the room. I was unprepared for these responses and found my first visit to an institution very upsetting. I had no wish to cause upset or force women to be interviewed. I had witnessed care staff attempting to cajole distressed elderly women into being interviewed for my project, an undesirable prospect that I discouraged strongly. The first visit rendered me quite despondent, denting my idealistic model of a collaborative, friendly and empowering research process.

Those women who were interviewed in institutions were pleasant and helpful though some staff members I came into contact with were not. I sensed some resentment about my presence in the institutions and possible suspicion about my motives. I took care to be polite and informative about my research with all concerned, staff and residents. Before visiting I telephoned and sent paperwork in order to make the process transparent and I talked to all of those I came into contact with, respectfully and openly. I believe that my presence in these institutions caused a level of excitement or curiosity but did not create great waves of interest, there were routines going on that were rightly more important than my visits. I would not contemplate approaching retirement homes or other care institutions, thereby approaching residents indirectly, in the future.

It proved less problematic to snowball from interviewees who were contacted and interviewed in their own homes. They seemed to be understandably more comfortable in their own homes and this I believe influenced the interview process and content. Women were more talkative and sometimes used their belongings around them (usually family photographs) in their accounts. The interview visits were longer than university interviews partly because there was more conversation either side of the formal interview. Women commonly offered me hospitality, food and drink, and were keener to engage in informal conversation and through this I feel developed a stronger positive connection with some of these women. I don't feel it's possible to single out particular interviews where these connections were invoked as I liked and admired many of these women. Though I did not share many of their values these women were very friendly and helpful, which may again have some connection to how our age differences mirrored familial connections.

In comparison to the interviews of study 1 I detected a noticeable positive change in the balance of power in the research process. I went to women's homes at their convenience this time, where they provided the environment and refreshments and they were at liberty to

remove me if they pleased (thought thankfully this was not an issue that arose). I see this as a positive and comparatively empowering way of conducting interviews. Women commonly asked about my age and several women discussed the university experiences of their children and grandchildren with me. They took the opportunity to evaluate me in these terms, as a guest in their homes, whereas in the university researcher and interviewees took up the pre-existing script, where the researcher is in charge.

After receiving their transcripts these interviewees more frequently used the reply envelopes provided. Several wrote to wish me luck in my research however one woman sent an emotional letter apologising for the incoherent and unhelpful content of her interview. I responded immediately with correspondence emphasising that her transcript was helpful and explaining that what seemed to her incoherent talk was the ordinary appearance of speech written down 'word-for-word', something I was accustomed to. After this I responded to a similar but less severe letter noting the incoherence of a transcript. I employed the same response aiming to reassure her that her transcript was not unusual and was useful. This alerted me to a potential danger of sending out research materials: it had not previously occurred to me that research participants might be damaged by research feedback sent out with the intention of being transparent and reassuring to interviewees. In future I included a paragraph in the letters accompanying transcripts when they were sent out emphasising the normality of transcripts seeming difficult to read or incoherent, in order to combat interviewee concerns.

Again the process of analysis was where 'it all happened' for me. Though I was building on my ideas whenever I talked to anyone about my research, including during interviews, the process of continually reading and writing about the transcripts was where those ideas started to crystallise. Working on this data, using NUD*IST and by hand, I had already developed confidence in the analysis process and in the validity of the subject area and was building on the ideas and experiences of study 1. Again I built up a long list of initial ideas whilst examining the transcripts, which I proceeded to clarify and refine according to their distinctiveness (whether they were re-describing themes identified) and their whether on re-inspection they were sufficiently evident to stand alongside themes identified. After establishing the set of discourses reported here I again spent time trying to establish how they worked with each other in order to examine their meanings and implications. This time I was conscious of the findings building upon the work of study 1, constituting part of a larger

structure of interwoven discourses leaning on each other. Deciding where to go next proved the biggest personal challenge of the study.

Chapter 10. Study 3 Method

10.1 Reflecting on interviews

In empirical studies 1 and 2 interviews were employed to collect spoken accounts exploring and elucidating the ways in which women constructed relationship status and identity. Interviewing was an appropriate choice of research method as it allowed the examination of discursive resources in action. Among the advantages of using interviews were the familiarity of interviewees with the format, the flexibility of interviewing to including areas of researcher and interviewee interest and the opportunity to observe accounts of relationships and identity in the form they are typically negotiated socially. Analysis of study 1 interviews promoted development of the interview schedule and illuminated the need to alter the sample. Study 2 included the interview accounts of older women of more varied educational and employment backgrounds, giving voice to accounts from these differing locations. After analysing these interviews is was decided to adopt a different research method for reasons to be discussed.

Part of the strength of women's interview accounts was seen to lie in their conventional and rehearsed format. The commonplace nature of relationship talk among women meant that interviews provided a comfortable arena in which interviewees could discursively construct their identities and relationships. Though it is acknowledged that there are differences in the relationship between speakers and directedness of talk between informal conversation and interviews, it is suggested that relationship accounts are built and rehearsed in talk using limited discursive resources in both contexts. However, it was recognised that interviews following a research schedule could be considered leading. It was possible that women considered important aspects of relationships that they were not asked about during interviews. Though women often provided stories within their answers, which introduced new threads to their accounts, the interview structure could have restricted accounts.

Repertory grid interviewing was selected as a form of research method that, in contrast to interviews, asked interviewees to identify and describe the issues of importance, around the area of research interest. Rather than following a researcher-written schedule repertory grid interviewees used word cards, known as 'elements', to represent the similarities and differences between relationship status situations, following this with a rating task. Through this process women were describing and working through the aspects of relationship status and identity salient to them.

This diversified the focus of the study by allowing directional contributions from interviewees and asking them to engage in a structured task. The repertory grid task provided multiple opportunities for women to contribute areas of interest, discuss and evaluate these constructs. From a social constructionist perspective the repertory grid task constitutes another way of promoting talk around relationships and selfhood and representing discursive connections between these concepts.

10.2 Changing direction

George Kelly (1991) developed repertory grid technique in the 1950s as part of Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) as a method for studying the mind at a time when psychology had been gripped by behaviourism (Morea, 1990). Kelly construed individuals as 'knowing scientists' using hierarchically arranged constructs to navigate their worlds. He used repertory grid interviews in a therapeutic context to elucidate these thought maps for examination (Morea, 1990). Discussion around the repertory grid task was intended to bring researchers closer to the overarching 'core constructs' individuals use to construct their realities, believed to be the 'essence' of persons (Stewart & Stewart, 1981). In this way the repertory grid interview was conceptualised as a way of examining how individuals view the world, revealing the particular aspects of subjects that interviewees consider the most important.

This approach shares with social constructionism the conviction that there are only individual accounts of realities rather than pursuing one true account (Morea, 1990). However, in contrast to Kelly's internally focused approach in this study and from a social constructionist approach individuals are seen to construe their realities and bring meaning to their experiences by drawing upon socially available shared discursive resources. Consequently the repertory grid task and interview talk are seen as ways of exploring the resources accessible to individuals in different social situations rather than providing any reflection of thought structures. In this study talk is conceptualised as a way of elaborating upon constructs by employing shared discursive resources which are socially available without making any claims on the internal psychology of the individual.

The use of numerical ratings in the repertory grid interview process is less compatible with a social constructionist qualitative approach. is the use of numerical ratings. These ratings are not meaningful as ratio level data, i.e., though the element 'Single' may be rated four on a scale of happy-lonely it does not necessarily follow that a single person is twice as lonely and half as happy as a 'Wife' rated two. Rather, ratings were herein approached as representations

of the inter-relationships between elements, and later constructs, helping to create an overall impression of how women positioned relationship status groups in relation to themselves and others. Participants were encouraged to assign ratings according to their first ideas of appropriate ratings in order to constitute a snapshot composition of their constructions of relationship status and identity.

It would be possible to view the employment of the repertory grid task as conflicting with the underpinnings of a social constructionist approach. Providing a task and requesting that interviewees indicate concepts in the form of numbers, rather than talk, might be viewed as failing to reflect ordinary social practice. However, here this difference from a more naturalistic interview format is seen as useful. Repertory grid interviews provided a structure necessitating that participants moved away from conversational interviewing, using familiar relationship terms as a starting point for the description of constructs. Numerical ratings were construed as representing relationships utilising numbers as a familiar vocabulary, regularly employed in conversation.

Another important aspect of repertory grid interviews was the varied analytic focus it enabled. As was Kelly's intention, repertory grid interviews produce information about individuals and how they organise constructs (Stewart & Stewart, 1981), whether interpreted as Kelly's thought maps or, in this study, as instances of the employment of discursive resources. Whereas in studies 1 and 2 transcripts were coded for themes, across participants, study 3 provided an opportunity to maintain the individual contributions of interviewees and attend to them in the form of case studies, allowing for consideration of the implications of individual social locations. Though this might also have been achieved through interview case studies in this instance, an advantage was gained from triangulating the results of the repertory grid task whilst maintaining the individuality of women's contributions.

Repertory grid interviews provided a structure through which women delineated the most accessible aspects of relationship status and identity available to interviewees from their social locations, describing them through talk and through ratings. These ratings provided an additional opportunity to observe the relationships between the relationship status elements and constructs, in numerical form, which could then be analysed alongside the interview transcripts and notes.

10.3 Study 3 method

Rationale

Having extended the interview exploration of relationship status and identity in study it was decided to undertake repertory grid interviews for study 3. It was decided to use a repertory grid task involving sorting and discussing relationship status word-cards and rating these cards, in addition to being tape-recorded where consent was given. This method was seen as providing an interviewee-centred and structured way to examine, on an individual level, how women discursively construct relationship status and identity.

Sampling was undertaken by snowballing from contacts made through study 2 interviews. It was intended to, again approach women ranging in age from 20 upwards who are likely to have engaged in relationship transitions and have experience of constructing their relationship status in a social context. As in study 2 it was considered important to include older women, though institutionalised elderly were not approached, through concern not to repeat previous difficulties and as the task involves a level of complexity that was considered unsuitable for those experiencing cognitive impairment.

Design

Repertory grid interviews were conducted with 33 women, aged 20-63 between September and November 2001. Interviews lasted approximately an hour, though with more variance than time taken for interviews. Interviewees were given the opportunity to opt out of being tape-recorded, which 15 participants took, as it was considered that valuable data could be drawn from the task results without an accompanying transcript. It is considered that otherwise inaccessible participants felt more comfortable without the tape recorder, though tape recording was preferred and promoted where participants were willing to be taped. Taped repertory grid interviews were then transcribed for analysis. Elicited constructs were analysed anonymously for themes. Additionally repertory grid results were entered into the Web grid II online analysis program and the resulting principal components analysis graphs were utilised to form case studies.

Recruiting participants

It was desired to recruit a variety of ages to complete the task. However, after conducting initial interviews it was decided not to pursue interviewing elderly women as before. Several previous interviewees appeared to find the interview process confusing and it was decided

that consequently the largely more complicated repertory grid task might prove more inappropriate and cause difficulties with some women of this age group.

The task of recruiting participants was again undertaken through snowballing through contacts made in previous interviews. None of those involved in previous interviews undertook the repertory grid task in order to ensure that interviewees had not gained an idea of the areas which the interview schedule had declared an interest in.

All repertory grid interviews were conducted in private homes. Several participants referred me on to their mothers, daughters, friends or colleagues. This was advantageous in providing interviewees of different ages. It also resulted in individuals completing the task in the homes of friends or relatives.

Participants

All interviewees were asked to suggest their own pseudonyms and self-descriptions to be included in the study and given the opportunity to verify these through the post (see Appendix Study 3; Repertory grid brief description record, Repertory grid follow-up letters). Once again women chose names which are associated with men without stated political intent. Below is a reference table of summary demographic information provided by interviewees. Alongside descriptions of their current relationship status where applicable further details are included in the form of 'CH' indicating cohabitation with a partner and 'Div' indicating that the interviewee has previously been divorced.

Name	Age	Relationship status		Occupation
Bob	20	Single		Student nurse
Piper	21	Single		Sociology student
Collin	21	Single		History student
Jo	22	Single		PhD student
Kay	25	Single		Student
Egg	26	Single		PhD student
Marjorie	49	Single	Div	Special needs education
Jessie	54	Single & CH	Div	Retail supervisor
Caroline	22	Boyfriend		Sociology student
Josephine	23	Boyfriend		Unemployed teacher
Mim	24	Boyfriend		PhD student
Cleo	20	Cohabiting		Part-time casual work
Anthony	22	Cohabiting		PhD student
Clare	23	Cohabiting		Unemployed
Cora	21	Engaged		Dance teacher
Betty	20	Engaged & CH		Environment student

Luan	21	Engaged & CH	Office work
Topsy	23	Married	Nurse
Caliban	30	Married	Lecturer
Rachel	36	Married	Secretary
Lol	44	Married	Classroom assistant
Pam	45	Married	Unemployed
Jan	48	Married	Special needs education
Beryl	51	Married	Bank worker
Freda	51	Married	Checkout operator
Jose	52	Married	Special needs education
Bessie	59	Married	Gas board worker
Di	63	Married	Retired housewife
Eily	49	Married Div	Retired & HE student
Ange	53	Married Div	Paralegal
Beth	21	Separated	Legal secretary
Laura	45	Separated	Nursery teacher
Kat	50	Separated	Primary teacher

Brief self-descriptions provided by each participant are included below, including a researcher profile. They are provided in order to assist reader interpretations of interviewee accounts.

Betty, aged 20, is interested in the environment, which is what her degree is about. She hopes to be in environmental management. Betty enjoys going to rock clubs, doesn't like television and spends most of her time on the internet. She was interviewed at a friend's house. Betty is engaged and living with her boyfriend.

Bob, age 20, is a student nurse. She enjoys reading books but doesn't do running. Bob is agnostic and was interviewed at the house of friends.

Cleo, aged 20, did an HND and is now working part-time. She is interested in media and is going on to do a degree next year. Cleo likes going to the cinema and watching films, she reads a lot of books. She lives with her boyfriend and was interviewed in her home.

Piper, aged 21, is in her final year at university studying Sociology and looking forward to leaving and getting a job. She enjoys going to the cinema and doesn't like being skint! She was interviewed in her shared house.

Collin, age 21, is a History student. She is single with no children and is interested in television and socialising. Collin was interviewed in her shared house.

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Cora, age 21, works teaching dance. She enjoys dance and listening to music. Cora also enjoys teaching kids (some of them!) and likes going out socialising, watching films and football (specifically Arsenal). She is engaged. Cora was interviewed in her mother's home.

Luan, age 21, works in an office doing general admin. She is engaged and both herself and her fiancé live with her Mum. Luan likes going out socialising, reading and watching TV and films. She was interviewed in her home.

Beth, age 21, enjoys working a legal secretary. She also likes studying law, reading and running. Beth is separated with one daughter and was interviewed in her home.

Caroline, age 22, likes music and going to gigs. She is a Sociology student and spends a lot of time studying. She doesn't like horrifically noisy clubs as she considers herself too old! Caroline has a boyfriend. She was interviewed in her shared house.

Anthony, aged 22, has just started a PhD in neuro. She enjoys playing football and going out and socialising. She also enjoys having her own flat. Anthony was interviewed at her university. She lives with her boyfriend.

Jo, age 22, plays the trumpet in a band and likes watching films and going out for pizza with friends. She is interested in psychology and language processing and was interviewed at her university.

Josephine, age 23, is a teacher, currently unemployed. She is very interested in live music, likes reading fantasy-occult fiction and humour. She also enjoys cycling, both the activity and watching it on TV. Josephine lives with her parents, she came to the university to be interviewed. She has a boyfriend.

Clare, age 23, has a degree and is currently unemployed. She likes craft activities and going to art galleries but does not like driving! Clare shares a flat with her boyfriend, where the interview was conducted.

Topsy, age 23, enjoys working as a nurse. She also likes socialising, going out for meals with

friends and is a big animal lover. Topsy married recently, she was interviewed in her mother's home.

Mim, age 24, is doing a PhD which is passing slowly. She is happy and outgoing, she likes talking, TV and reading. She dislikes people that are cruel and housework. Mim was interviewed in her office and chose to withdraw her involvement in the study soon after the interview began.

Kay, age 25, is still a student. She enjoys her studies as well as socialising with friends, theatre and music. Kay was interviewed at university.

Egg, age 26, is interested in pottery. She likes going to the gym and dancing, which she used to take classes in. Egg loves going to the cinema. She got a degree in neuroscience, worked for a drug company for a year then worked in the NHS for two years before starting a PhD. She was interviewed in her office.

Caliban, aged 30, enjoys science-fiction and science-fantasy literature, music and horse-riding. She is married with one son and works as a lecturer. Caliban was interviewed at her place of work.

Rachel, aged 36, enjoys working as a secretary, likes to keep fit by cycling and step classes and also enjoys gardening. She is married and has three young children. She was interviewed in her home.

Lol, age 44, has been married a long time. She has two teenage children and works in a school. Lol likes travel. She was interviewed in her own home.

Laura, age 45, enjoys sport, playing badminton and tennis. She likes being outside in the hot weather and doesn't like winter. Laura likes going on holiday and doesn't like cooking. She works as a nursery teacher and Laura is separated with two children. She was interviewed in her home.

Pam, age 45, is unemployed. She enjoys socialising and going out, dancing and music. Pam has no ideas about future employment. She is married, has two children and was interviewed in her home.

Jan, age 48, likes gardening and says she is quite lazy! She is married with three children and works in special needs secondary education.

Eily, age 49, is retired and has interests in education. She enjoys classical music, table tennis, travel and food. Eily is a married a second time and was interviewed in her own home.

Marjorie, aged 49, works in special needs education. She likes reading and listening to music, enjoys live music and has a great love of animals. Marjorie has two adult children and is divorced. She was interviewed in her home.

Kat, age 50, is a qualified teacher. She loves animals, particularly dogs, and being a Mummy. She is separated and has two children. Kat was interviewed in her own home.

Beryl, aged 51, enjoys life in general. She is married, has one adult daughter and works in a bank. Beryl was interviewed in her home.

Freda, age 51, works as a checkout operator. She is interested in walking and socialising. Freda is married with two adult children and a grandchild. She was interviewed in her own home.

Jose, age 52, enjoys going to the gym but not swimming. She likes going out with friends twice a week and enjoys spending time with her family, who she sees a lot. Jose works with special needs children. She is married with three children and one grandchild and was interviewed in her home.

Ange, aged 53, enjoys any work involving writing and also likes to write songs. She says she is becoming reclusive as she gets older. Ange likes to read and garden and is kind to people. Ange is married for a third time, has one daughter, lives alone and works as a paralegal. She was interviewed in her home.

Jessie, aged 54, works as a supervisor in a retail outlet. Her hobbies include trying to restore her house to its original Victorian state. Jessie enjoys reading autobiographies, has 5 children from 18-35 and 2 grandchildren.

Bessie, age 59, likes playing golf, gardening and going to a health club. She works for the gas board. Bessie is married with 3 daughters and 5 grandchildren. She was interviewed in the home of a friend.

Di, age 63, is retired and a housewife. She enjoys music, particularly jazz, and fishing. She also enjoys her grandchildren, walking and general hobbies. Di is married with four children and was interviewed in her own home.

Anna. At the time of conducting these interviews I was 23 and still living with my partner. I had grown in confidence, regarding approaching participants, and this in combination with my contacts from previous interviews meant the snowballing was less difficult for this part of the study.

Procedure

Repertory grid interviews were arranged by phone or in person, where interviewees lived nearby contacts that they had suggested. They were all conducted in the homes of the participants or in the homes of their friends or family. Possibly because of the age differences between these women and study 2 interviewees, the homes of these participants seemed more active and created more task interruptions. Family, particularly children, and pets interrupted several interviews but this was unproblematic and considered an integral part of interviewees lives.

As it had been decided that where they expressed a preference, individuals did not have to be tape-recorded to participate in this part of the study this was discussed first. As with interviews, participants often expressed their preferences upon viewing the tape recorder, some expressing a conditional dislike of being tape recorded at initial meetings or in phone conversations. A slight majority of participants were happy to be recorded in order to be useful but some, particularly older women, took part on the condition that they didn't have to be taped. The opportunity to involve some of these women, who would not have completed taped interviews, in the study was viewed as an advantage of using the task.

Interviewee and researcher initially read and signed a research contract and a pseudonym and brief description were noted (see Appendix Study 3; Repertory grid brief description record, Repertory grid research contract). The researcher then went on to explain the repertory grid task using an example of profession-related elements ('Teacher', 'Nurse') and a laminated

ratings sheet. Example pairings were varied and the elements deliberately chosen as unlikely to generate responses appropriate for the relationship task. One of the main intentions of using the task was absolute interviewee generation of constructs, avoiding researcher contribution. However, the researcher adopted a humane approach encouraging interviewees to discuss their thoughts or take a break from the task if they became 'stuck' and frustrated.

The elements written upon the cards were drawn from the many terms pertaining to relationship status used by interviewees earlier in the study. Transcripts were examined for terms indicating separate statuses and after piloting a large number or elements with a volunteer eighteen were selected. The eighteen elements presented to the participants included: Myself now, Myself future, Myself past, My ideal self, Single, Party girl, Flirt, Girlfriend, Career woman, Spinster, Partner, Cohabiter, Wife, Housewife, Mother, Divorcee, Widow and Separated. Two participants, Clare and Anthony, sorted 17 elements before Separated was added to the set, on the grounds that it represented a marginal position between statuses not otherwise implicated by the elements. The other change to the elements implemented was that the language of the self elements was naturalised, changing from 'Self now' to 'Myself now', on the grounds that this might make it easier for the participants to work with these cards.

At the beginning of the task the element cards were spread out on a table or floor surface, and they were asked to make eight choices of a similar pair and one different card. Their responses were noted down, in their own words, and then they were asked to rate all elements on the dimension they had used to discriminate between the pair and the single card (see Appendix Study 3; Repertory grid task record sheet). Initially it was anticipated that asking interviewees to make eight choices would be too difficult. However, though most expressed doubts about their ability to do this many at the beginning, all individuals completed the task. After initial interviews the researcher routinely offered participants a break after they had completed four choices. Many interviewees seemed to find this useful after complaining of getting 'stuck' in a particular thought pattern. Throughout interviews participants were made aware of their right to stop doing the task, if only for a break.

Mixed responses to the task were received. An early participant, Mim, withdrew her involvement from the study immediately after demonstration of the task. She reasoned that she could not differentiate between relationship words on any criteria other than spelling. This is interpreted as a response to perceptions on her part that the research task was designed to

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lead her into making prejudiced statements. The nature of the task was discussed and her wish to withdraw her involvement was respected. Alternatively, several participants said that they enjoyed the task or that they found it very interesting. Egg, in particular, suggested that she enjoyed the task and wished to continue doing it after completing the required eight choices. In general responses to the task were less extreme. It is suggested that participants could potentially achieve more through the rep grid process that didn't occur in normal conversation, whereas interviews provided a more conventional opportunity to construct relationship narratives.

After completing the task participants frequently wanted to discuss the task, expressing an interest in how it 'worked'. The researcher remained available for questioning and frequently engaged in informal conversation with interviewees and others in their homes. Interviewees were left with copies of the research contract and a contact sheet providing details of how to get in touch with the researcher (see Appendix Study 3; Researcher contact sheet). Transcripts or notes, were sent out to participants together with their self descriptions, stamped reply envelopes, feedback sheets and a covering letter providing contact details and inviting them to verify the material (see Appendix Study 3; Repertory grid follow-up letters, Repertory grid transcripts).

Analysis

The repertory grid task proved a rich source of data, generating transcripts, element selections, constructs and ratings. The researcher, using notation as before, transcribed taped interviews. Repertory grid elements and ratings were inputted into Web Grid II, an online analysis program that generated principal component analysis charts for each participant. Though the charts are referred to as 'principle components analysis' graphs it is important to note that a principle components analysis was not performed on the data.

In the process of conducting a principal components analysis the researcher would input ratings into the program and then on the basis on where elements were clustered on the graph the researcher would label the axes around which they were arranged. However, in this case axis label categories and values were pre-existing and the principal components analysis charts therefore only constitute another way of displaying this information. On these graphs elements are arranged around the axes of the constructs named by interviewees on the basis of their ratings. Axes on the graphs are positioned close together where elements have been rated

similarly and the distance of elements from the centre-point of the axes demonstrates the extremity of the ratings relating to that construct.

These graphs were analysed alongside the transcripts or notes taken from repertory grid interviews to create individual case studies for each participant. In addition to these profiles a qualitative analysis of the constructs themselves was undertaken. Constructs were entered into a database and striped of information regarding the participant who provided them. Constructs were then grouped into themed sections and reunited with their participant information. Interactions between construct themes and relationship status were then outlined.

Chapter 11. Study 3 Findings

11.1 Case studies

For each participant who took part in a repertory grid interview a case study was created. These include a brief description of the participant, outlining their relationship status, and a principal components analysis map displaying the constructs created by each interviewee in their repertory grid interviews and positioning the elements around these axes according to ratings. The diagrams are discussed in conjunction with extracts from interview transcripts or notes. Each case study is seen to present a snapshot depiction, using both repertory grid analysis and interview transcript or note extracts, of how participants constructed relationship status in their interviews.

Thirty-two case studies were written. Seven of these are to follow, selected on alphabetical position within each of 7 relationship status groups identified (single, relationship, cohabiting, engaged, married, separated, divorced). This method of selection was chosen as it was considered inappropriate to select cases on any qualitative criteria where all made valuable contributions to the study. The majority of repertory grid interviews were undertaken with 18 element cards, where interviewees, initially, sorted only 17 cards this is indicated. The construct titles provided by participants are typed in *italics* in order to distinguish them from the surrounding text. Following these case studies are a set of conclusions, drawn on the basis of all 32 cases.

1. Bob

Bob, age 20, is a student nurse and she is single. She lives with friends. The below principal components analysis map creates axes from the constructs proposed by Bob in her repertory grid interview. The elements are situated around these axes on the basis of Bob's ratings. The arrangement of the elements on these axes is to be discussed alongside and using illustrative extracts from the transcript of Bob's repertory grid interview.

PrinCom, Domain: Sing, Rel & Marr Study, User: Bob
Context: relationships, 18 elements, 8 constructs
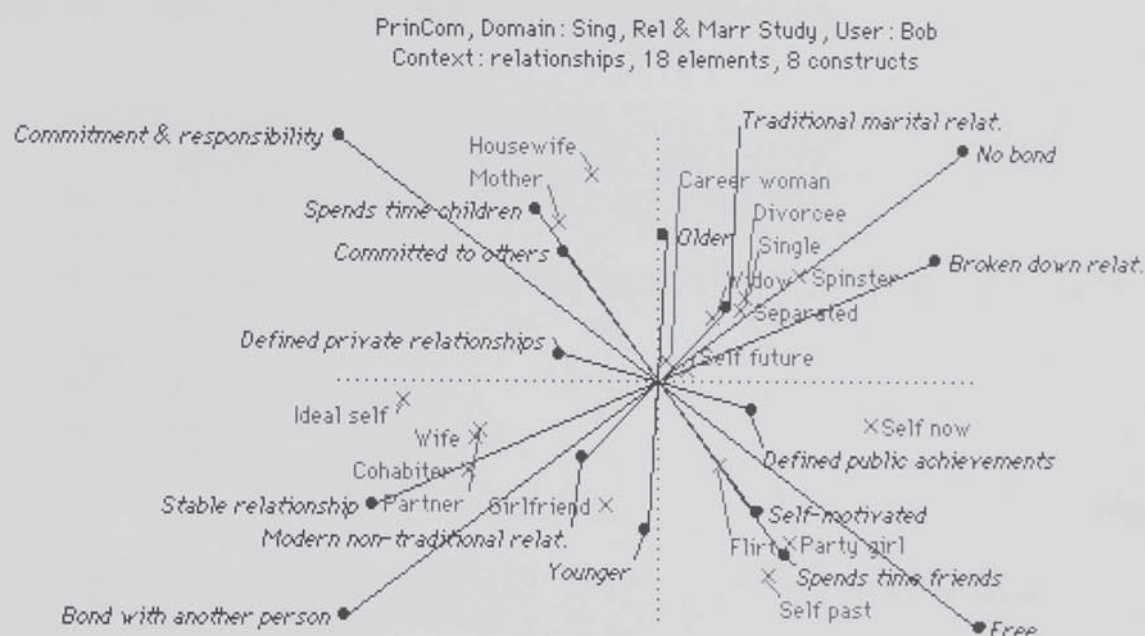
The elements Career woman, Widow, Divorce, Single, Spinster and Separated are all grouped tightly around the constructs *Older* and *Traditional marital relationship*, *No bond* and *Broken down relationship*. This associates these elements with situations in relation to marriage, having once had or not had this bond. Widow is situated between *Traditional marital relationship* and *Older* and Career woman at the base of *Older*. Separated and Spinster are located upon the axis *No bond*. Bob's future self is situated between *Broken down relationship* and *Defined public achievements* whereas her Self now is situated between *Defined public achievements* and *Free*, a distance from *Broken down relationship*. Here Bob associates definition through public achievements with being outside the marriage relationship.

> Anna: Ok. [Paper noises] xxx (91) Ok. Xxx similar thing about those two?
>   {Party girl and Girlfriend}
> Bob: Erm they're both images you'd associate with being younger and (.) more free.
> Anna: (2) Ok. (3) Ok and the Housewife?
> Bob: Involves more commitment and responsibility that's generally more associated with older people.

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Flirt, Self past and Party Girl are located upon the axes of *Spends time friends* and *Self-motivated*. These axes are placed in the same location suggesting that Bob rates elements similarly on these constructs. This is opposed to *Spends time children* and *Committed to others*, which are seen to be characteristic of Mothers and Housewives. This axis is between *Freedom* and *Younger* reinforcing the portrayal of young single women as free, rather than restricted by relationship-related responsibilities, and socially located.

> Anna: Xxx we shouldn't say that on tape xxx. (Bob laughs) (6) Ok. And the similar thing about those two? {Party Girl and Single}
> Bob: They're more likely to spend their time with friends.
> Anna: Ok.
> Bob: The Mother has more important things, children (.) people she has to put before herself.
> Anna: Ok.
> Bob: If she's a good mother.
> Anna: Mhm.
> Bob: In which case (laughs).

(256-264)

> Anna: Right, the similar thing about those two? {My ideal self and Mother}
> Bob: (1) Er I can't put this in two separate things.
> Anna: You can't?
> Bob: I have to put it in a sentence, the whole thing.
> Anna: Ok, alright.
> Bob: Maybe I could choose something else if you like.
> Anna: No, tell me about it.
> Bob: Ok. Erm I would like to be defined (.) by the people (.) that I love (.) rather than my job.
> Anna: Ok.
> Bob: Does that make sense?
> Anna: Yeah.

(316-323)

Bob groups the elements of Ideal self, Wife, Partner, Cohabiter and Girlfriend around the axes *Defined private relationship*, *Stable relationship*, *Bond with another person* and *Modern non-traditional relationship*. Girlfriend is positioned between *Younger* and *Modern non-traditional relationship*, an axis very close to *Bond with another person*. Cohabiter is situated between this and *Stable relationship*. The elements Wife and Partner are also close to *Stable relationship*, between this *Defined private relationships* and *Commitment & responsibility*. Bob's Ideal self is closer to *Defined private relationships*, between this *Stable relationship* and *Commitment & responsibility*. Bob views as ideal involvement in a stable committed

relationship and self-definition through this rather than through public achievements, as she views herself now.

> Anna: (5) Ok. So (coughs) would you see if your ideal self <u>wouldn't</u> be divorced what would your ideal self be?
>
> Bob: (4) Probably a cohabiter, I don't believe in marriage.
>
> Anna: (8) So would part of your ideal self be in contrast to being divorced would it be a stable relationship or a xxx relationship, would that be the difference? For example when you're saying you wouldn't want to end up divorced but you would rather end up in a relationship cohabiting?
>
> Bob: Yes.

<div align="right">(18-25)</div>

Adjacent to the construct committed to others are the axes *Spends time on children* and *Committed to others*. These axes occupy the same location demonstrating that Bob rated elements similarly on these constructs. Mother is situated upon *Spends time children* and *Committed to others*, with Housewife slightly further towards *Older* and *Traditional marital relationship*. These constructs are in opposition to *Self-motivated* and *Spends time friends*, associated with the unmarried.

Summary

Bob constructs a conflict between involvement in and definition through committed relationships and public achievements and social engagement. Her now and in the future are positioned as defined by public achievements and spending time with friends outside relationships, alongside previously married and single elements. This is in accord with her position as a single nurse in training cohabiting with her friends. However Bob sees as ideal definition through private relationships, drawing on interview and research discourse of women defining themselves relationally. She positions Partner identically to Wife in accordance with her stated preference not to marry. Involvement in a relationship is constructed as entailing commitment to others and responsibilities, in opposition to single freedom and self-motivation. Bob rates this involvement as desirable but does not associate it with her future self.

2. Caroline

Caroline, age 22, is a student. She has a boyfriend and lives with her friends. The below principal components analyses map uses the constructs created by Caroline in her repertory grid interview to as axes. The elements are positioned upon these axes upon the basis of the Caroline's ratings. This map is to be discussed in combination with interview transcript excerpts in order to explore Caroline's construction of relationships.

PrinCom, Domain: Sing, Rel & Marr Study, User: Caroline
Context: relationships, 18 elements, 8 constructs
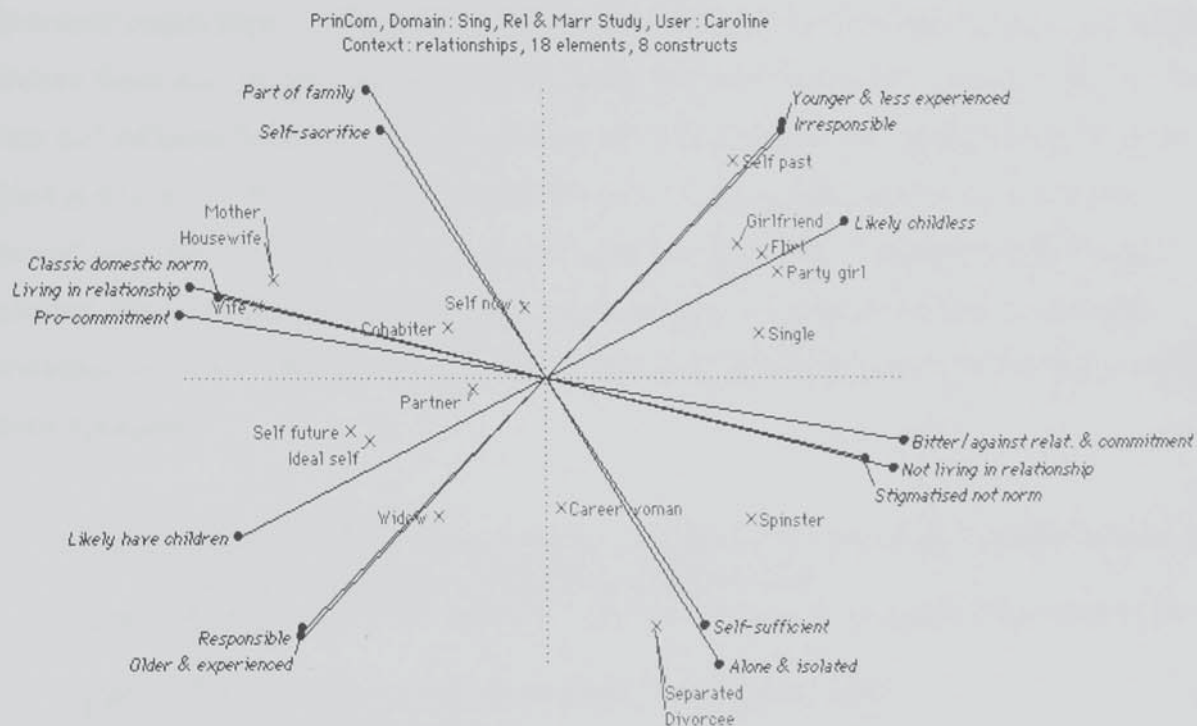
The elements Self future, Ideal self and Partner are positioned around *Likely to have children* and *Pro-commitment*. These constructs are in opposition to *Bitter against relationships & commitment* and *Not living in relationship*. *Pro-commitment* is situated very close to *Living in relationship* and *Classic domestic norm*, constructs that are positioned in the same location, demonstrating the consistency with which elements were rated similarly on these dimensions. Wife is situated upon the axis of *Classic domestic norm* and *Living in a relationship* with Housewife and Mother closer to these axes and Cohabiter between these and another two axes with almost identical ratings – *Self-sacrifice* and *Part of family*. Caroline has situated her Self now near to *Self-sacrifice* and *Part of family*, some distance from adjacent constructs *Younger less experience* and *Irresponsible*. She constructs her identity, now, in the future and ideally, around responsibility, motherhood and commitment.

> Anna: Ok, alright. (10) Ok (8) now the similar thing about those two? {Career woman and Party girl}
> Caro: Their independence.

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Anna: Ok. Independence (.) xxx a relationship?
Caro: Er:m.
Anna: Or maybe how would you describe this xxx?
Caro: I kind of think I suppose independence is (.) <u>self</u> (.) sufficiency (4) being
    your own first priority. (8) And then Wife is kind of self-sacrificing.

                (49-56)

Adjacent to the construct Likely to have children are the similarly placed axes *Responsible* and *Older and experienced*. Widow is positioned close to this construct. Opposite this axis are *Alone and isolated* and *Self-sufficient*. Separated and Divorcee and Career woman are situated between these axes suggesting previously married women and career women are likely to be alone and isolated. Spinster is positioned between *Self sufficient* and *Stigmatised not norm*, which is situated in the same place as *Not living in a relationship*. These constructs are situated very close to *Bitter/against relationships & commitment*. Through this grouping Caroline constructs previously married women, spinsters and career women, commonly presumed older than singles, as isolated from family relationships and as occupying a socially deviant position.

Caro: (7) Xxx no longer being in relationships they're really kind of [effects] them to
    almost being <u>against</u>. {Divorcee and Separated}.
Anna: (2) Right, those two people (.) are less likely to be interested in relationships
    or?
Caro: Let's say in favour of (.) relationships, long term. Xxx.
Anna: Mm. (13) Ok xxx try xxx.
Caro: The Wife would be in favour. (12) Xxx.
Anna: Pardon?
Caro: In reality they might well be both 'Yes marriage is wonderful.' (laughs).

                (346-353)

Anna: Ok. (51) Ok the similar thing about those two? {Divorcee and Widow}
Caro: They're seen as being older person.
Anna: (3) Ok.
Caro: (8) <u>More worldly</u>.
Anna: Mm. Xxx and the difference with that one? {Girlfriend}
Caro: Er a younger person. More inexperienced in terms of relationships.
Anna: Ok. And just out of interest xxx when you looked at those did you think of
    those as people that had been in relationships or just thinking=
Caro: =Yeah it's more a kind of (.) it's like having a left a long term relationship
    they're more (.) older. Xxx.
Anna: Yeah. Mm.
Caro: Yeah so at the end of a long term relationship and that's more at the start of a
    relationship.

                (249-261)

The elements Single and Party girl are positioned some distance from the axis *Likely childless*. On the other side of this axis, between *Likely childless* and *Irresponsible*, which is positioned with *Younger and less experienced*, are Flirt and Girlfriend. Self in the past is situated on these paired axes, *Irresponsible* and *Younger and less experienced*. Here singlehood and flirt and party girl, associated with social singlehood, and Caroline in the past are associated with freedom from responsibility and youthful inexperience. In the above extract she adds an aspect of social undesirability to this position, suggesting that Flirts and Party girls transgress acceptable female behaviour. This connects younger singles to portrayals of older spinster and single-again women who are depicted as isolated and also stigmatised.

> Caro: Ok these two people {Flirt and Party girl} are kind of stigmatised (2) by society.
> Anna: (5) Ok.
> Caro: I suppose it's being not an appropriate (.) way for a woman to behave.
> Anna: Ok. (10) And this one?
> Caro: Housewife well (.) the classic norm (.) what a woman should be.
> Anna: Ok. (11) Right this xxx some might find xxx difficult xxx but xxx. (18) Ok is there an opposite I've added the term 'domestic' here as er it I because I think or xxx the Housewife.
> Caro: Yeah I xxx that.
> Anna: So on this side would there be an equivalent other thing that you would associate with these two rather than a housewife?
> Caro: (10) They like having fun (.) xxx.
> Anna: (Laughs) An interesting xxx (Anna and Caro laugh). Mm.
> Caro: Xxx (Caro and Anna laugh).
> Anna: Ok, ok so would it be better to have a 'Fun' versus a 'Domestic' or a 'Stigmatised', that one.
> Caro: Yeah I think it's more the kind of yeah, deviant versus normal.
>
> (195-210)

Summary

Caroline depicts herself now, ideally and in the future as defined through a committed relationship, likely to have children and be part of a family. This role she associates with responsibility and making sacrifices for others, invoking discourse similar to that used in study 2 interviews valuing self-sacrifice over selfishness associated with singlehood. Women who remain or become unmarried are constructed as stigmatised, occupying a socially unacceptable position. Though all unmarried women are implicated in this construction of marriage and family as the most appropriate occupation for women, single-again and spinster women, often presumed older, are also constructed as bitter and against committed relationships. This draws on discourse of unmarried older women as bitter from being rejected

and left on the shelf, rather than choosing their situations. This depicts the only socially acceptable and desirable way for Caroline to mature is within a family.

3. Anthony

Anthony aged 22, is a postgraduate student. She shares a flat with her boyfriend, they are not married and have no children. Anthony was part of the earlier group who sorted 17 elements, before 'Separated' was introduced. The below principal components analysis map displays the constructs proposed by Anthony in her repertory grid interview as axes. The elements are situated around these axes according to the ratings Anthony provided. This display is to be discussed in combination with extracts of her interview transcript in order to examine the construction of relationships.

PrinCom, Domain: Sing, Rel & Marr Study, User: Anthony
Context: relationships, 17 elements, 8 constructs
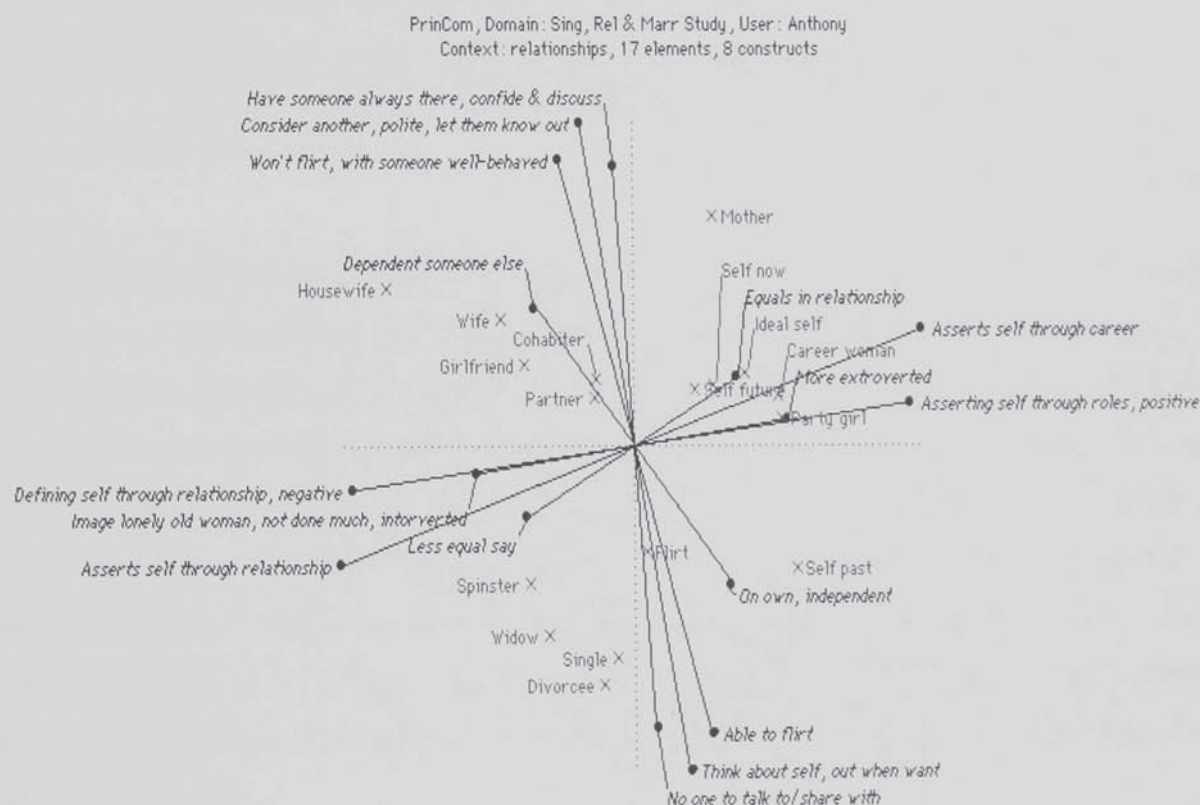
The elements Self now, Ideal self, Career woman, Party girl and Self future are grouped around the axes *Equals in relationship*, *Asserts self though career*, *Asserting self through roles positive* and *More extroverted*. Self now, Ideal Self and Self future were tightly grouped upon the axes of *Equals in relationship*, demonstrating Anthony's association between relationship equality and valued characteristics like extroversion. Career woman was located upon the axes of *Asserts self through career* whereas Party girl is situated upon the two overlapping axes *More extroverted* and *Asserting self through roles positive*. These elements demonstrate the extent to which Anthony sees the unmarried as actively defining their identity through the themes also employed in interview discourse, work and socialising. This grouping characterises Anthony herself, Career women and Party girls as active in constructing their identities – 'assertive' and 'extroverted', associating this with relationship equality.

Ant: (2) Ok when you're a single when people are single (.) you tend to associate them more with being able to flirt whereas if they're a girlfriend then (.) I'm not saying it's correct but then you tend to assume they should not do that since they are now with someone so therefore they should be well-behaved. Again I'd (1) this is just my views on the word 'girlfriend' xxx. Although that's weird because I will introduce (1) I will say 'I've got a boyfriend' but I wouldn't like to be introduced as erm 'the girlfriend'. Have you (.) er do you er (.) have you got a partner or er?

Anna: Yeah.

Ant: Just probably it's just me but if you notice that er (.) when someone (.) like this doesn't happen any more but when I was younger it always happened they used to say 'This is so-and-so and this is his girlfriend.'

Anna: Yeah.

Ant: So it used to be more 'Why does he get a name and I (.) [don't]' because my friends would never do that which makes girls generally don't.

Anna: Mhm.

(148-162)

The opposite pole of the axes *Equals in relationship* was *Less equal say*. Between this and the pole *No one to talk to/share with* were the elements Spinster, Widow, Single and Divorcee. This constructs these elements, all unmarried women, as likely to be unequal in relationships and as lacking what Anthony sees as important elements of relationships, as in interviews, the ability to confide in a partner and discuss things with them. *No one to talk to/share with* was closely associated with, and therefore situated close to, the axes *Think about self out when want* and *Able to flirt*. Flirt was situated between these two axes and Self in past was on the other side of *Able to flirt* between this and *On own independent*. This grouping demonstrates an associated Anthony has made between unmarried status, isolation and social freedom to behave flirtatiously.

Ant: Do you know I've probably xxx before but there we go. Right I've put Mother and Career woman in together because if she's a mother and if she's a ca a career woman she's actually (.) in these cards she's stating that she's got a role and she's (.) or she's working basically so she's a mother she's looking after children and if she's a career woman she's working but by stating she's a Wife (.) it's more stating (.) she's a partner to someone but it's not saying anything about whether she works. Oh sorry there it was! That's the card I was looking for.

Anna: Ok you can always change it if you want to.

Ant: Yeah sorry {Changes Wife card for Housewife}. Yeah well these two they're actually asserting that they've got a role being a Housewife has still got (.) not very nice connotations associated with it but being a househusband has surprisingly enough but that's another issue.

(6-16)

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Housewife, Wife, Cohabiter, Girlfriend, Partner were all positioned in-between *Defining self through relationship negative* and *Dependent someone else*. These elements were located closer to the axes of *Dependent someone else*, Cohabiter and Partner being closest. The element Cohabiter lies between *Dependent someone else* and *Won't flirt with someone*. This area coincides with interview discourse in suggesting that those who are married or committed to relationships might define themselves relationally and be prohibited from flirtatious behaviour. The axes *Won't flirt with someone* was close to *Consider another polite let them know out* and *Have someone always there confide and discuss*, near which Mother is located. These axes construct the advantage of access to a confidant in relationships alongside behavioural restrictions, invoking a moral sense of politeness and etiquette in informing a partner of their location. Anthony constructs this position as negative in preference to independent identity construction through career, partying or equality.

> Ant: Well yeah no I do remember that because er (.) my Dad's girlfriend who I call 'My Dad's girlfriend' because she likes being called my Dad's girlfriend was applying for a job and she was going to put the word 'partner' down and then she decided that she didn't want people to think she was (.) gay but she decided that she couldn't put 'girlfriend' down because she was how old now and you don't associate 'girlfriend' with old people she was in a dilemma then. But yeah so.
>
> Anna: So the 'Girlfriend' here (.) the association with the word is that it would be well would not engage in flirting whereas 'Single' person or 'Flirt' erm might.
>
> (175-182)

Anthony also engaged in using developmental discourses of relationship status in the above interview passage. Where she describes her father's partner's dilemma Anthony demonstrates awareness that the woman is too old to be a girlfriend and is therefore without a fitting title, as women are presumed to be, an enabled by language to be, either young unmarried couples or older married women. Here Anthony also invokes an infrequently addressed concern that older unmarried women may wish to defend themselves against possible identification as Gay or Lesbian. This issue was addressed in interviews, participants suggesting that 'other people' might suspect unmarried adults were gay. This is seen as offensive and threatening and infers that unmarried older women may be defending against such potential identities when they construct divisions based upon 'experience' of heterosexual relationships.

Summary

Anthony constructs herself as active and extroverted, associating this with Career women and Party girls. In this way women who define themselves through activities, employment or

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socialising, rather than relationships are depicted positively. Terms indicating marriage and relationships are associated with dependence and definition through relationships. Relationships were also associated with inability to engage in flirtatious behaviour and partners were cast as needing to know women's locations within a relationship. Marriage and relationships are depicted as primarily restrictive but offering an advantage in terms of talk, as detailed in interviews. In contrast unmarried statuses were constructed as lacking the advantage of relationship talk. However they were associated with the 'ability' to flirt and think about themselves. Anthony positions herself in the past as able to flirt and independent. This mirrors interview discourses of selfishness in the unmarried and underlines assumptions of freedom in singlehood versus restriction in relationships.

4. Betty

Betty, aged 20, is an undergraduate student. She is engaged and living with her boyfriend. The below principal components analysis displays the constructs created as part of Betty's repertory grid interview as axes and the elements are placed upon these axes as a consequence of her ratings. This display is to be discussed in conjunction with material from Betty's interview transcript in order to construct a fuller picture of how she herein constructs relationship status.

PrinCom, Domain: Sing., Rel. & Mar. Study , User: Betty
Context: relationships, 18 elements, 8 constructs
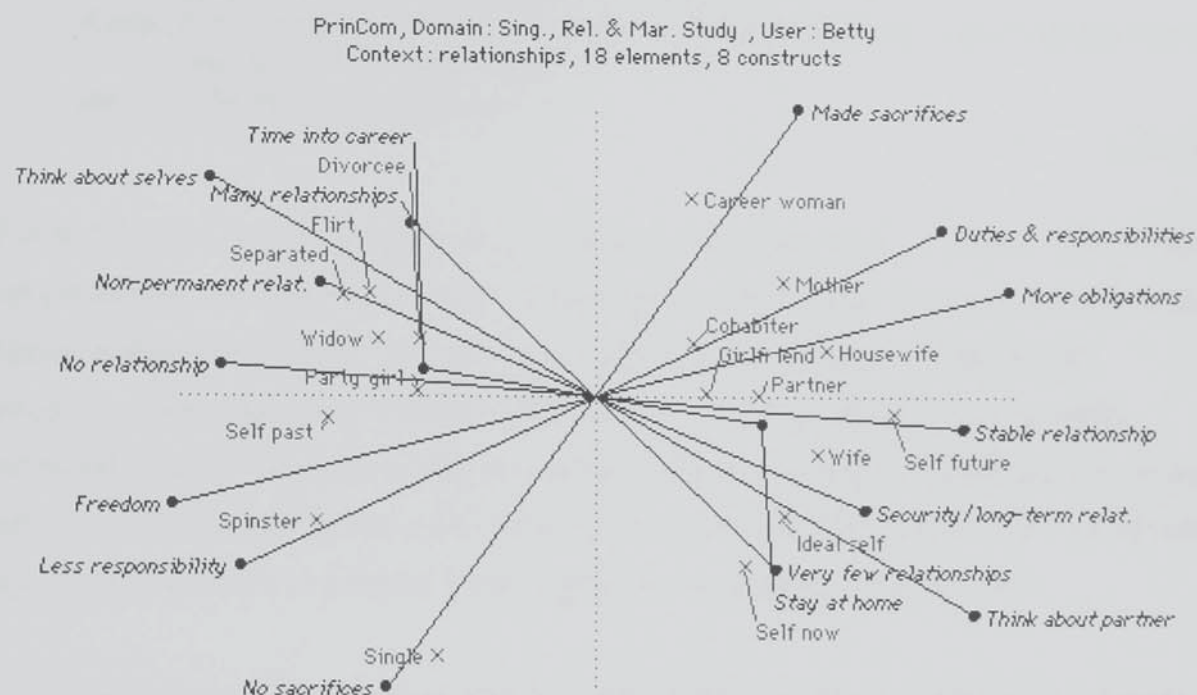
The elements Mother and Cohabiter are positioned around the axis *Duties and responsibilities* adjacent to *Makes sacrifices*. This construct is positioned close by *More obligations*, alone which are positioned the elements Girlfriend, Housewife and Partner. Adjacent to this axis is *Stable relationship* upon which Self future is situated. Both Ideal self and Self now are distanced from this cluster but in the same area of the map, with Self future and Wife surrounding the axes *Security/long-term relationships*, *Very few relationships*, *Stay at home* and *Think about partner*. Here Betty associates involvement in a relationship or marriage with duty, responsibility and making sacrifices positioning herself and her ideal self as engaged in a marriage, thinking about her partner, as opposed to *Think about self* a quality associated with the unmarried.

> Betty: I wonder well (laughs). (2) I have to say a Mother and a Housewife are similar.
> Anna: Ok.
> Betty: And then a Career woman.
> Anna: Ok I'll just note them down. (3) Ok the similar thing about these two?

Betty: (2) Er usually if you're a mother you're a housewife as well.
Anna: Ok.
Betty: (2) They stay at home. People want to stay at home with their children.
Anna: Ok.
Betty: And if you're a housewife you probably haven't got ooh I don't know! (laughs) You've probably not got (.) er high career ambitions.

(2-11)

Betty: Erm (.) you probably have (.) more to do when you're a wife looking after your husband because he's useless (Betty and Anna laugh) (.) probably jobs to do in the house (2) what d'you call it housework (laughs) xxx. Whereas single people (2) might not bothered xxx (laughs).
Anna: (5) Ok right (3) ok (1) so 'Freedom' on this side and what would be the kind of opposite of the single freedom?
Betty: Obligations, sorry (laughs).

(159-165)

Widow, Divorcee, Flirt and Separated are grouped around the constructs *Think about selves*, *Non-permanent relationship, Time into career* and *No relationship*. This portrays previously married women and Flirts as not involved in partnerships, concerned primarily with themselves rather than partners and involved in work. Party girl and Self past are both positioned near *No relationship*, Self past between this and *Freedom*. Unmarried women and Betty herself in the past are depicted as free, uninvolved with others and self-motivated rather than being responsible and dutiful within a relationship as Betty views her ideal.

Betty: My ideal self (.) is similar to a Wife in that I would like to have that security from a marriage. (8) And Separated is different because erm (.) the idea of being a wife is that (.) it's forever (2) so if you're separated then (1) is was only a short-term relationship. Xxx.
Anna: (36) Now ok there are two ways of doing this. Security and having a long-term relationship xxx whereas this end could say 'Relationship xxx' or could say (.) 'Relationship xxx' or 'Less security'?
Betty: Non-permanent.

(428-434)

Close to the axes *Less responsibility* and *No sacrifices* are the elements Spinster and Single, opposite to *Made sacrifices* and *Duties & responsibilities*, demonstrating Betty's above statement that unmarried women are free to follow their own desires. The elements Career woman is located upon *Made sacrifices* following the statements that for women to achieve career success they are likely to have forsaken relationships and family life. Mother, positioned nearby, is seen to have sacrificed career prospects for others. Betty creates a conflict between the work and family, necessitating sacrifice.

Betty: Ok a Housewife and a Career woman and then a Single person.
Anna: (4) Right. The similarity?
Betty: They're similar because they've both made sacrifices. A career woman has
probably sacrificed (.) some aspects of family life (.) whereas a housewife has
sacrificed a good career.
Anna: (18) And the Single person in contrast?
Betty: The single person wouldn't have had to make as many sacrifices. (2) By staying
single they can just do what they want.

(264-270)

Anna: Xxx (Betty and Anna laugh). Right so about the similar thing? {Career woman
and Mother}
Betty: Career woman and Mother are likely to be very busy (1) and they've got (.)
duties, things that they have to do, responsibilities.
Anna: Ok. (15) Xxx ok.
Betty: A Single person (.) doesn't have as many responsibilities (.) children to look
after (1) or a demanding job.

(211-217)

Summary

Betty associates herself, now, ideally and in the future with marriage. Marriage and
relationships are associated with duty and responsibility, staying in the home and making
sacrifices as well as with providing security. This corresponds to study 2 interview discourse
associating marriage with prioritising others and being located within the home. Also in
accord with interview discourse unmarried and previously married women are portrayed as
free, self-motivated and located in the workplace. Career women are seen to have made
sacrifices, making the work choice in a constructed conflict between work and family
priorities. Betty constructs family involvement as desirable for her and sacrifice and thinking
about a partner as part of this involvement.

5. Ange

Ange is fifty-three years old and married, for the third time. She has one daughter. Ange works as a paralegal (a legal worker employed by a solicitor). Since their marriage Ange and her husband have chosen to live in separate homes. The below principal components analysis map positions the repertory grid elements upon the axes of Ange's repertory grid constructs according to her ratings. The situation of elements will be discussed in combination with interview material in order to create a richer depiction of the way in Ange constructed aspects of relationship status.

PrinCom, Domain: Sing, Rel & Marr Study, User: Ange
Context: relationships, 18 elements, 8 constructs
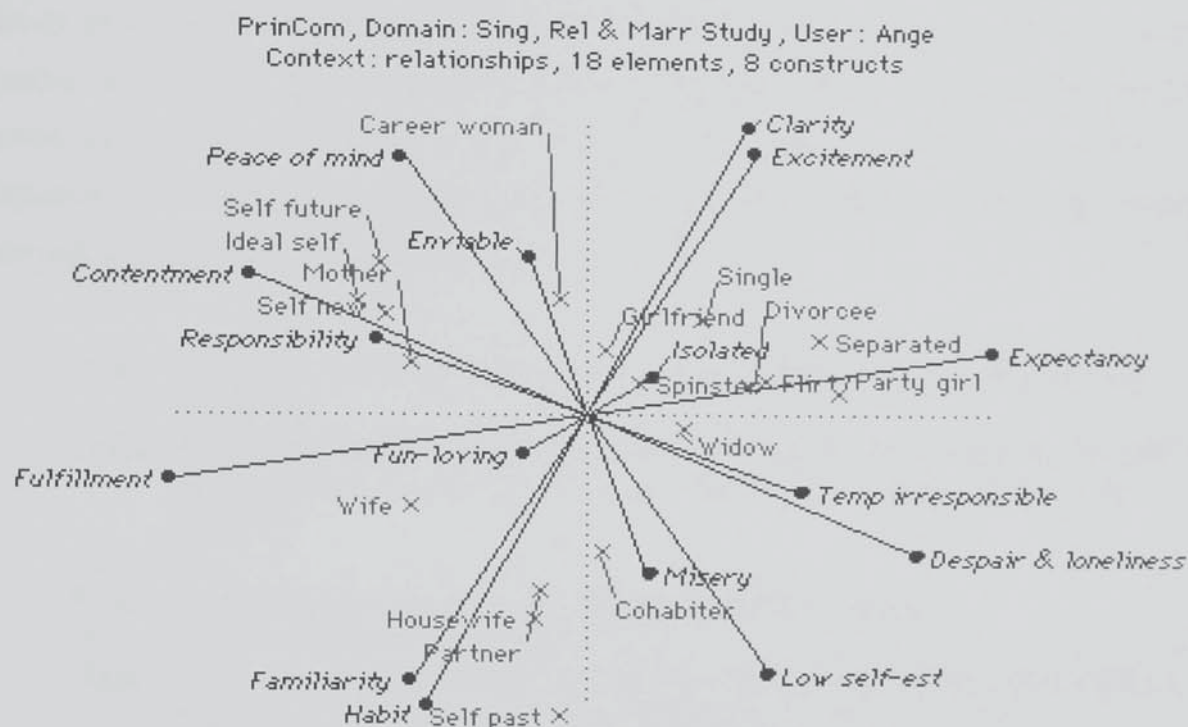
The tightest cluster of elements on the map is Self future, Ideal self, Self now and Mother, around the constructs *Contentment* and *Responsibility*, spreading towards *Peace of Mind* with the element Mother positioned on the side of *Fulfilment*. This grouping distances Ange's positive conception of herself now and in the future from the juxtaposed poles of *Temporary irresponsibility*, *Expectancy*, *Despair and Loneliness* and *Low self-esteem*. The only element positioned close to *Despair and Loneliness* is Widow, echoing Ange's description of fulfilment in her marriage and potential devastation at the prospect of being widowed.

> Ange: Because (.) I'm a wife for the <u>third</u> time and this is the <u>first time</u> it has felt that this is me (.) this is <u>right</u> for me, this {My ideal self and Wife} indicates happiness to me.
> Anna: Yeah. And this one? {Widow}
> Ange: Strangely this now, because I'm happy now this indicates to me <u>utter despair</u>

and loneliness. With my last husband it would have meant relief. Not xxx (.)
but that's true. Tragic (.) for a week or two (.) followed by (.) relief and
financial security <u>but no:w</u> I'd be devastated. So there's a bit of a mixed (.)
message there, so I'll do it as I am now Anna because that's what I am now.
Anna: Ok.

<div align="right">(159-167)</div>

This suggests that Ange sees herself both now and in the future as fulfilled and as having
achieved a permanent position in relation to her status. This is opposed to *Expectancy* and
Temporary irresponsibility, which are associated with unmarried statuses and correspond with
Ange's description of single people expecting marriage and occupying a temporary situation.
The grouping of herself now and in the future with her ideal self is clearly removed from the
situation of herself in the past, reinforcing the distinction between her past unhappiness and
present contentment. The closest element to these is Wife, which is positioned close to
Fulfilment and *Fun-loving*, opposing *Isolation* and *Expectancy*, adding to Ange's portrayal of
marriage as a positive accomplishment.

Anna: Ok. (8) Ok. (4) What was the similar thing about those two? {Partner and
    cohabiter}
Ange: Strangely, it sounds rather smug, but I tend to think that I put those {Partner
    and cohabiter} together <u>now</u> because I feel they're more temporary than
    marriage.
Anna: Ok.
Ange: (2) And I think they can be slightly <u>tenuous</u> relationships.
Anna: (22) Ok. This one? {Separated}
Ange: This to me is a clear-cut decision made. This is a bit of a calculated word (.)
    sort of erm (.) it's a sad word. (2) Isolation.
Anna: (4) Ok so is it, is it was the connection or the difference between those would
    that be that that was a decision and that was a (.) a less more of an in-between
    thing?
Ange: Could we put this {Partner and Cohabiter} down as 'Habit'.
Anna: Yeah, yeah.
Ange: Which is probably very cynical but I am, as you've probably recognised.

<div align="right">(239-251)</div>

Anna: Ok. (8) Ok, those two? {My ideal self and Myself in the future}
Ange: (3) More peace of mind.
Anna: 'Peace' as in P E A.
Ange: I E yeah sorry, 'Peace of mind' yeah sorry.
Anna: It's ok.
Ange: Utter contentment. I need you to put that [it covers everything really].
Anna: Mm.
Ange: (6) Self-esteem (.) <u>renewed</u>.
Anna: (2) Ok. This one? {Myself in the past}
Ange: Lack of confidence. (4) Play-acting life. (6) Duties as wife and mother, no don't
    put mother because I love [my daughter], duty as wife (.) <u>boredom</u>.

<div align="right">(560-570)</div>

Housewife, Partner, Cohabiter and Self in the past are clustered around the poles *Familiarity*, *Habit*, *Misery* and *Low self-esteem*. This strongly associates Ange's past situations with lack of choice and negative experience, in contrast to her future, ideal and present-self situations. Housewife and Cohabiter are located around *Familiarity* and *Habit*, opposing *Clarity* and *Excitement*. This coincides with Ange's description of choice and clarity as important in relationships and her depiction of a past marriage as embodying duty rather than a desired choice. Cohabiter is position close to *Misery*, in opposition to *Enviable*. This is also in accord with Ange's description of non-marital relationships as embodying habit rather than choice, an undesirable situation.

> Ange: (2) I think they {Party girl and Flirt} pretty much have the same meaning.
> Anna: Ok.
> Ange: (1) I like their irresponsibility. (8) Sort of grab life when you can, while you can because that this situation is <u>not</u> permanent. This is a <u>temporary</u> lifestyle.
> Anna: (9) Whereas this one? {Mother}
> Ange: This is (.) serious responsibility and commitment.
> Anna: Mm.
> Ange: (2) Lots of joy (10) but it means that it leaves these behind, it's serious stuff.
> (106-113)

Several additional elements are grouped closely around the axis of *Expectancy*, including Flirt, Divorcee, Separated and Party Girl. This pole is flanked on either side by *Excitement* and *Temporary irresponsibility*. This coincides with Ange's depiction of unmarried situations as presenting short-lived enjoyment. These elements are most closely associated with *Expectancy*, relating to Ange's description of the unmarried as desiring marriage. The association of Divorce and Separation with the same *Expectancy* depicts these situations as also temporary, as it has been in Ange's past. The situation of these elements with *Expectancy* and *Excitement* also demonstrates the association Ange refers to explicitly between being Divorced and being flirtatious and sociable, which she distances herself from both in this graphic and in her transcript.

> Anna: (8) Ok, the similar thing about those two? {Mother and Wife}
> Ange: I think that's a combination of (.) expected happiness (9) I think also I'd like to use the word 'fulfilment'. (3) I'd also like to use the word 'familiarity'.
> Anna: (3) Ok. Xxx {Single}.
> Ange: I think because when you're single there is the expectancy of ending up as those two (laughs). Expectancy (.) towards permanence. (.) And also (.) another cynical approach but that is <u>short (.) lived (.) fun</u>.
> Anna: (2) Ok, alright ok. So whereas this the 'permanence' would be this situation and

'short lived' on the other side, or erm.

Ange: In fact I think in a way 'expectancy' is quite a good description of that (.) in my well that's how I see it because people (.) all single people (.) seem to me to be looking towards when they're <u>not</u>.

(321-332)

Single is situated between *Excitement* and *Expectancy*, as described above, associating being unmarried with temporary enjoyment and the expectation of marriage. Single and Girlfriend are also located close to *Clarity*, denoting that these are unambiguous unmarried roles. In opposition to *Clarity* is *Habit*, which was associated with the duty of a Housewife and Ange's Self in the past. Single is also positioned close to *Isolation*, which appears between these poles. Spinster is positioned directly upon this pole and the other elements clustered around it include Single, Divorcee and Widow. The opposite of this is *Fun-loving*, which is close only to Wife. Here Ange is forging an association between unmarried states and isolation. This suggests that remaining unmarried allows temporary irresponsibility and excitement but that this is accompanied by future expectations of marriage and the threat of isolation, personified by Spinsterhood. This corresponds to earlier interview depictions of Spinsterhood as a threat to younger women and an involuntary state pitied by older married women.

Ange: Probably describing real sexy ravers actually (.) and I mean would you ever use that word? {Spinster}

Anna: Erm now but probably only because I've read [specifically about this.

Ange: [Because you're, yes. But I would say (.) 'She never married'.

Anna: Yes.

Ange: I would never say '[She] is a spinster' I would say 'I've never married but gosh I've had some good times.'

Anna: Mhm.

Ange: So there is (.) so we need to choose something for here don't we?

Anna: Yeah. But this part, this part, I am considering these ideas separately to this.

Ange: Oh are you.

Anna: So so that stuff will be.

Ange: Ok. I have to say it conjures up loneliness, I'm sorry Anna. Loneliness to me is what it <u>but that's ridiculous</u> because that doesn't conjure up loneliness and there's no difference.

Anna: Ok so would it be for this part of the task would it be 'Fun-loving' and or and 'Lonely and sad' here in which case you can=

Ange: =Can we do it can you put 'Isolated' in there can we do it that way?

Anna: Yes, yeah.

(429-446)

The element Career woman is also isolated, close to *Enviable*, which is alongside the *Peace of Mind* axis. The opposite of this, *Miserable* is also only associated with one element, Cohabiter. This draws Career woman close to the elements defining Ange positively fulfilled,

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now and in the future and depicts Career Women as potentially satisfying as well as enviable in contrast to the situation of a Cohabiter, which Ange depicts as temporary and formed through habit.

Summary

Ange defines herself now and in the future positively, through the elements Mother, Career Woman and Ideal self. Fulfilment is associated with motherhood, marriage and work, connecting positive selfhood with responsibility and private family relationships, as the construct sorts and theories of female identity as relational would suggest. This positive construction of selfhood is defined through contentment, responsibility, fulfilment and peace of mind, constructs that depict stillness rather than the 'excitement' she associates with the unmarried. This conception of marriage as a settled calm state corresponds with interview constructions.

Ange distances herself from her past, which she associated with low self-esteem, habit and familiarity, in accord with her description of being a bored housewife through duty, rather than her preferred active choice. Unmarried statuses are associated with temporary irresponsibility and excitement corresponding with age-related discourses of relationship status. Here single women are seen as expecting to and looking to marry, potentially becoming isolated and lonely, as the Spinster is. The status of Cohabiter is seen to be distinct from marriage and inferior as a temporary result of habit rather than choice. This conception of relationship status corresponds to Ange's positive self-construction as having achieved satisfaction in marriage, presented as the goal of others. These statuses, which Ange owned in the past, are distanced from her present satisfaction and improved self worth. The status of Widow presents a threat to this positive self-incarnation, demonstrated by the isolation of this element on the axis of *Despair* and *Loneliness*.

6. Beth

Beth, age 21, enjoys working a legal secretary. She is separated with one daughter. Beth expressed a preference not to have her repertory grid interview tape recorded so instead notes of her words were taken. The below principal components analysis map uses as axes the constructs produced by Beth in the repertory grid interview. The elements are placed upon these axes according to her ratings. The situation of these elements will be discussed in combination with noted responses from repertory grid sheets.

PrinCom, Domain : Sing., Rel & Marr Study , User : Beth
Context : relationships , 18 elements , 8 constructs
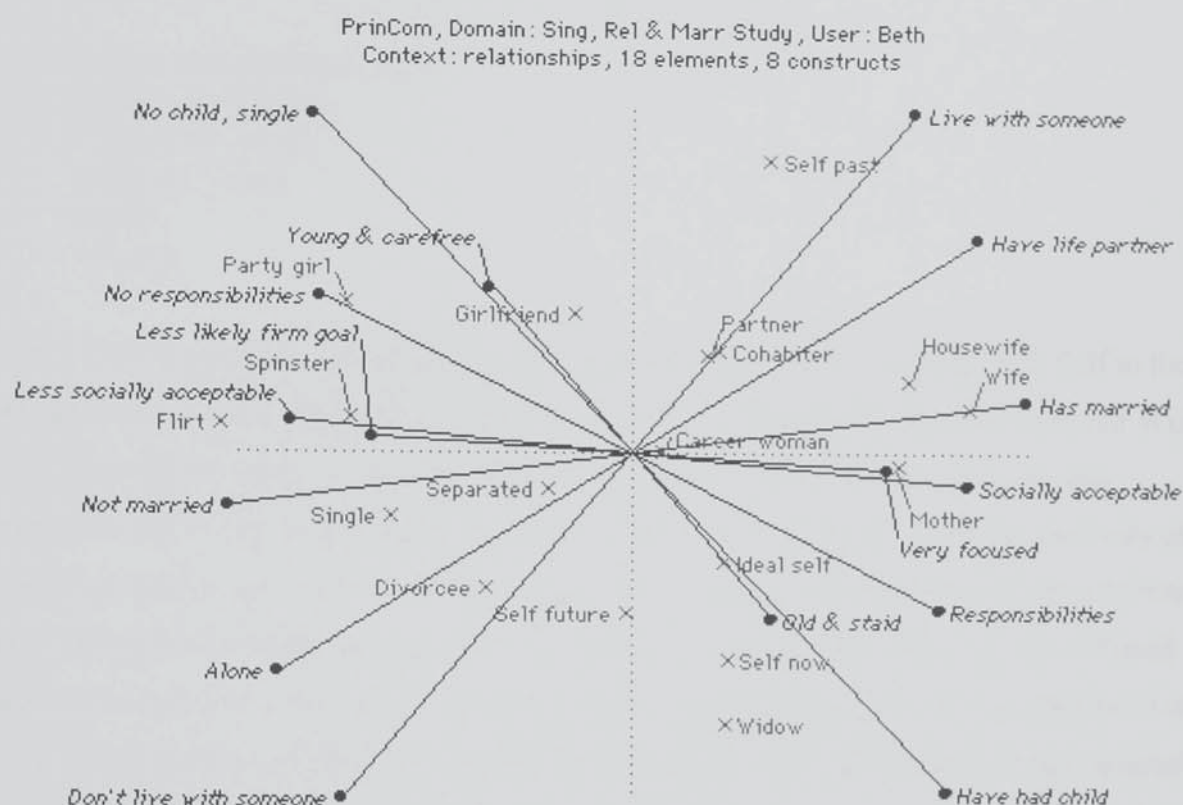
Beth positions the element Self now between *Have had a child* and *Don't live with someone* alongside Widow. Self future is positioned equidistant from the constructs *Have had child* and *Don't live with someone*. Very close to *Have had child* is the construct *Old & staid*, upon which Ideal self is situated. These constructs are positioned as opposite to *Young and carefree*, *No child single*. This grouping constructs having a child as defining and associates this with stable personality characteristics (staid) in comparison to the 'carefree' lifestyle of the single childless.

Pair 2: Party girl & Flirt
Young, carefree.
=Young & carefree.
Single 2: Housewife
Old and staid.

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=Old, staid.

Divorcee is positioned between the axes *Don't live with someone* and *Alone*. Between *Alone* and *Not married* are Single and Separated. These situations are positioned as opposite to *Live with someone* and *Have life partner*. Unmarried women are here associated with isolation and living alone. This defines the single, divorced and separated through their lack of a relationship and 'life partner' and associates them with being 'alone' generally perceived as an undesirable situation in contrast to *Have life partner*.

> Pair 5: Cohabiter & Partner
> Have a life partner.
> =Have life partner.
> Single 5: Single
> Alone.
> =Alone.

Partner and Cohabiter are positioned along the construct *Live with someone* with Self in the past close to this axis. This is close to *Have life partner*, between this and *Has married* Wife and Housewife are located. *Has married* is positioned close to the constructs *Socially acceptable* and *Very focused* which are almost identically positioned, denoting similarity of element ratings on these axes. Career woman is positioned towards the central point between these constructs demonstrating a less strong association. The element Mother is positioned between *Very focused*, *Socially acceptable* and *Has married*. Here marriage is associated with living with someone and denoted as a socially acceptable status. Mother and Career woman are roles Beth associates with the characteristic of being very focused, in opposition to *Less likely firm goal*.

> Pair 7: Party girl & Flirt
> Less likely to have a firm goal.
> =Less likely firm goal.
> Single 7: Career woman.
> Very focused.
> =Very focused.

The construct Not married is grouped closely with *Less likely firm goal*, *Less socially acceptable* and *No responsibilities*. Flirt and Spinster are positioned upon the axes *Less socially acceptable* and *Less likely firm goal* whereas Party girl is positioned on *No responsibilities*. This allies single statuses and spinsterhood with social unacceptability and less directed lifestyle. Girlfriend is situated some distance from *Socially unacceptable*, close

to *Young & carefree* and *No child single*. Here spinster, party girl and flirt are all positioned as irresponsible, less likely to have direction in their lives and less socially acceptable statuses. This associates marriage and motherhood with acceptance and achievement.

> Pair 6: Divorcee & Flirt
> Less socially acceptable.
> =Less socially acceptable.
> Single 6: Housewife
> Socially acceptable.
> =Socially acceptable.

Summary

Beth here defines herself, including her ideal self, through having a child and associates this with sedate characteristics by positioning herself close to Widow and the construct Old & staid, though she is aged 21. This responsibility and stability is contrasted with being single, childless and carefree. As in Beth's life, as a separated mother living alone, motherhood is not associated with living in a relationship, as marriage is. Marriage is constructed as accompanying social acceptability and denoting living with someone. In contrast unmarried status terms are grouped around being alone and living on their own, without a life partner. This associates remaining childless and unmarried with undesirable lack of meaningful relationships and an isolated living situation. Positioned close to Beth's Ideal self are Mother and Career woman, two roles which she sees as socially acceptable and embodying firm goals, in contrast to her ratings of single statuses. These signify key aspects of her life, her occupation and her daughter, which include responsibility and possess potential for Beth's future advancement.

7. Marjorie

Marjorie, aged 49, works in special needs education. She has two adult children and is divorced. The below components analysis map uses the constructs created by Marjorie in the repertory grid interview as axes and positions the elements around these in accordance with Marjorie's ratings. This display is to be examined in conjunction with extracts from her interview in order to assemble the fullest picture of how she constructed relationship status.

PrinCom, Domain: Sing, Rel & Marr Study, User: Marjorie
Context: relationships, 18 elements, 8 constructs
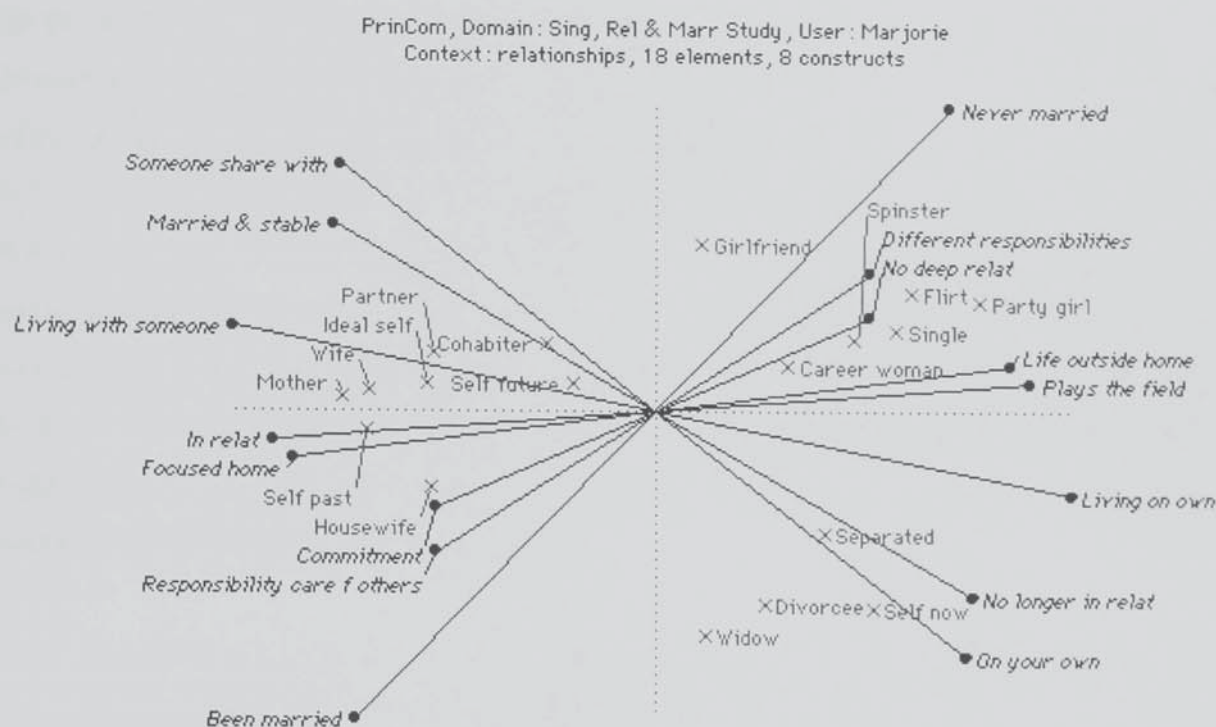
Self now is part of an isolated grouping of previously married terms. Adjacent to the axis *Living on own* is *No longer in relationship*. Between *No longer in relationship* and *On your own* is Separated. Self now, Divorcee and Widow are close to *On your own*, some distance from the adjacent axis *Been married*. Here Marjorie now and other previously married women are defined by their ended marriages and viewed as living on their own. However, in her repertory grid interview, as below, she discriminates between widowed and divorced women on the grounds that the latter are likely to have chosen to end their marriages. This adds an element of agency to defining previously married through their status.

> Anna: Um I don't think you have (.) no you haven't. (4) Ok the thing about those two? {Widow and Divorcee}
> Marj: Well they've both been married but one of them, at some time, for different reasons no longer are.
> Anna: Ok.
> Marj: But this one {Wife} still is married.
> Anna: Right have to find out a way of putting that that's different from these ones. See

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we've got 'No longer in a relationship' versus 'Married' and erm (.) we'll have to think of some more differences between them. Is there anything else that's different about when you think of those words? Any other xxx sort of associations with those?

Marj: Well I think the difference is in that erm (.) this one is no longer married (.) probably not of her own choosing whereas this one probably was you know wanted no longer to be married.

Anna: Mhm.

(390-403)

On the other side of *Been married* are the paired axes *Responsibility care for others* and *Commitment*. Housewife is between *Commitment* and *Focused home*. Close to this axis is *In relationship*. Marjorie positions Self in the past upon the axis *In relationship*, and Mother, Wife and Ideal self between *In relationship* and *Living with someone*. Between this and *Married & stable* are Self future and Partner. Cohabiter is positioned between *Married & stable* and *Someone to share with*. Marjorie constructs herself in the past and Housewife as committed, focused in the home and responsible for others. Her future and ideal selves are positioned close to constructs indicating living with someone, sharing with them and being married and stable. This presents Marjorie's ideal and future selves as involved in a stable married but with less domestic responsibility.

Anna: No, you can have it that's fine. (4) Ok, what was similar about those two? {Housewife and Wife}

Marj: (3) That they're both (.) running a home.

Anna: (2) Ok.

Marj: And they're different to that one {Myself now} because I'm running a home but I don't feel that I'm particularly housewifey and I'm certainly not a wife. So what can I add to (1) well I suppose I see a housewife and a wife as perhaps doing nothing apart from being a Housewife or a Wife.

Anna: Mm. (4) Whereas yourself?

Marj: Whereas I'm running a home but I'm not particularly housewife housewifey and I don't I have a life outside of the home.

Anna: (36) Would the opposite of having a a life a life outside the home be (.) being focused on the home or being or being [Dog barks, Anna laughs].

Marj: Focused on the home is alright, stop it [Dog barks 5 times, sound of door opening and closing].

(245-260)

The third distinctly positioned grouping of elements is situated around the axes *Never married, Different responsibilities, No deep relationship, Life outside home* and *Plays the field*. Between the widely spaced axes *Someone to share with* and *Never married* the element Girlfriend is positioned, close to *Never married*. Flirt and Party girl are positioned between *Different responsibilities, No deep relationship* and *Life outside home*. Single, Spinster and

Career women are positioned directly between the axes *No deep relationship* and *Life outside home*, which is paired with *Plays the field*. Adjacent and some distance from this axis is *Living on own*. Never married women are here constructed as socially active, potentially as having a multiplicity of partners (playing the field) but no deep relationships (like marriage), with lives outside the home and no deep relationships. Whereas married women are portrayed as having responsibilities to care for others never-married women are seen as having different responsibilities.

> Anna: So the similar thing about those two would be?
> Marj: That if you were someone's wife or some (.) that would be the same as being
>   someone's partner.
> Anna: That they're both involved?
> Marj: In a relationship yeah.
> Anna: Ok. (15) Whereas this person is different because? {Single}
> Marj: Well this person (.) is single.
> Anna: Yeah.
> Marj: I mean they may have a boyfriend or a girlfriend but I don't see it as a
>   particularly deep relationship which you would with a wife or partner.
> Anna: Yeah (30) Ok. (12) Xxx.

(8-18)

Summary

Marjorie constructs herself now as similar to other single-again women, living on their own and outside relationships, defined by their previous marriage. As divorce is associated also with choice, by Marjorie, this independent situation might be interpreted positively. Never-married women are portrayed as socially active, not engaged in deep relationships with others and not having responsibilities to care for others. They are situated as having lives outside the home. Marjorie portrays herself in the past as similar to Housewife, committed to a marriage with her life focused in the home and responsibilities to care for others.

Marjorie's ideal and future selves are associated with stable marriage relationships, living with someone and sharing with them, slightly distanced from the domestic responsibilities of her past. She portrays marriage as potentially positive, involving sharing and stability as well as potential responsibility for others. Never married status is seen to offer social activity, alternative priorities and freedom from responsibility whereas single-again women are located only on their own, located and constructed only through their lack of relationship, though Marjorie adds an element of choice to this situation.

11.2 Case study conclusions

The case studies form individual pictures of the way each participant constructed relationship status in their repertory grid interviews. These pictures have been examined across relationship status groups in order to identify any broader thematic patterns across or within status groups.

1. Single

: Collin, Bob, Egg, Jo, Kay, Piper.

Single participants associated marriage with responsibility for others, children, chores, and location within the home. All identified relationship involvement, most commonly marriage, as an ideal they desired for themselves. Single women were located outside the home with reduced responsibility and increased opportunity for career pursuit and socialising, in comparison to married women. Being single was associated with Flirt and Party girl elements, and defined as allowing a focus on the self rather than on family. Career pursuit was strongly linked to being unmarried and positioned as an alternative to family involvement. Work, particularly 'career' involvement, was commonly constructed as the preserve of young and unmarried women, like the single participants themselves, as an opposite to home and family-focus, preceding this situation which all participants aspired to.

Spinsters and single-again women were constructed as older, unhappy in comparison to the married, and serious in outlook, compared to carefree, sociable singles. The only exception to this was Piper's portrayal of single-again women and spinsters as enjoying partying. However she also distanced this group from never-married women, like herself, who she saw focusing on their careers. Singles were constructed as self-focused and involved in socialising and careers where married women were seen to focus on their families and were located within the home, providing each role with an appropriate place and activity. Spinsters and widows were defined primarily by their lack of relationship involvement rather than any positive role.

2. Relationship

: Caroline, Josephine.

Both participants who were involved in non-cohabiting, non-marital relationships constructed marriage and family as a future ideal. Marriage was portrayed as entailing responsibility, having children, involvement in deep relationships and happiness. In contrast, both participants viewed single-again and spinster women as unhappy. Caroline identified this

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position as socially unacceptable, as well identifying single-again and spinster women as bitter and anti-relationships. Josephine constructs single independence, socialising and focusing on work, as potentially producing happiness but as accompanying unsuccessful relationships and leading to unhappy spinsterhood. Both participants perceived ultimate fulfilment and contentment to be associated with marriage, having children and focusing on relationships within the home.

3. Cohabiting

: Anthony, Clare, Cleo, Jessie.

All cohabiting women, though rendering relationships central to their identities, distinguished their situations from marriage. Marriage was constructed as identity defining, involving location in the home and prioritising family over work. All cohabiting women described relationships as potentially restrictive, prohibiting flirtatious behaviour in contrast to single women, who were portrayed as extroverted, flirtatious and sociable. Single women were also constructed as work-orientated. The three younger never-married cohabiting women, Anthony, Clare and Cleo constructed careers as important to them whereas Jessie looked at career opportunities as precluded by her age. Cohabiting was associated with restricted social behaviour but extended opportunity for career pursuit, freedom from family responsibility and location in the home, associated with marriage.

Though younger participants expressed an interest in future marriage Jessie defined her past through marriage constructing her future in living alone, like a spinster or widow, which she associated with freedom and characteristic 'refinement'. To younger cohabitees single-again and spinster women presented an undesirable status associated with stigma and lack of relationships. Cohabitees constructed their position as prohibiting flirting and social behaviour but allowing similar levels of career commitment to those of single women. Cohabiting was not associated with staying in the home, as marriage was, and was not seen to entail as much responsibility for and involvement with others.

4. Engaged

: Betty, Cora, Luan.

All engaged participants defined themselves now, in the future and ideally as married and prioritising their relationships. Marriage was associated with location in the home, domestic responsibility, thinking about others and sacrificing desires. The unmarried were constructed as younger than the married, living outside relationships, free and self-motivated, rather than

having responsibility for others. Involvement in work was constructed as an alternative to marriage, chosen by those prioritising work over marriage and relationships. Marriage was associated with motherhood, prioritisation of home and family and location within the home, fulfilling a self-sacrificing role all engaged participants desired to occupy. In contrast spinsters were defined by their lack of relationships or social involvement associated with young singles. However Luan suggested that spinsters would have chosen their situation, potentially allowing for agency in definitions of spinsterhood.

5. Married

: Ange, Beryl, Bessie, Caliban, Eily, Freda, Jan, Jose, Lol, Pam, Rachel, Topsy.
All married participants constructed themselves now, in the future and ideally as married mothers. Marriage was associated, as before, with responsibility for others and location in the home but also with being settled, fulfilled and happy. Marriage was also connected to motherhood and responsibility for children. Only Jan portrayed herself in the future as moving away from this role towards increased freedom and reduced responsibility. Caliban and Eily both commented on the social position of marriage, Caliban describing marriage as an institution seen as boring and Eily seeing marriage as socially acceptable and married women perceived as safe. Both women construct marriage as occupying and offering a socially stable position, in opposition to unmarried excitement.

Single women were commonly constructed as younger, living outside relationships, more free and less responsible, enjoying more socialising, more involved in their careers and lacking meaningful relationships. Unmarried women were also seen as free to flirt and looking for men, desiring partnership rather than being contented with their situations. Cohabiting and partnership, non-marital relationships, were not grouped with marriage and were frequently associated with an unmarried lifestyle. Exceptionally, Caliban classified having a partner rather than marriage itself as part of the fulfilled female role, whereas Ange looked at non-marital relationships as temporary and formed through habit where marriage represents commitment and choice.

Spinsters, and single-again women were often depicted as alone and described using adjectives indicating unhappiness and isolation. Rather than allocating to them a role these women were defined through their lack of relationships and their responses to this situation, e.g., loneliness.

6. Separated

: Beth, Kat, Laura.

All separated women associated marriage with motherhood, responsibility and caring for others. However only Beth constructed herself as similarly responsible, rating herself as similar to a widow in being 'old & staid'. Beth's situation, caring for a young daughter, may have increased her sense of responsibility. In contrast Kat and Laura constructed themselves now and in the future as experiencing social enjoyment, reduced responsibility and increased freedom. Beth portrayed single women as carefree and childless, demonstrating the centrality of this construct, and herself in comparison as having firm goals, similar to a career woman. Though they positioned themselves closer to single freedom and lack of responsibility Kat and Laura also constructed themselves as similar to Career woman, accomplishing their achievements independently.

Beth associates motherhood and marriage with social acceptability, constructing Flirts and Spinsters as occupying contrasting, socially unacceptable positions. This connects to portrayals of marriage as a socially privileged situation in comparison to adult singlehood for women. Laura constructs spinsters and single-again women as lonely and lacking relationships. However, she also depicts single-again women as having access to career opportunities. This alternative and more positive portrayal of later single adulthood, embodying independence and roles outside the home, is endorsed by these women who are experiencing older singlehood. This constitutes a positive construction of women's roles outside and after marriage at odds with the portrayals from never-married and married interviewees and with popular images of the spinster and divorcee.

7. Divorced

: Marjorie.

The only divorced participant, Marjorie, constructed marriage, again, as entailing responsibility for others and location within the home. Marjorie also assigned to marriage the advantage of sharing, something which she desired in her future. Never-married women, including singles, career women and spinsters, were seen as more socially involved, less responsible, freer and having different priorities to married women. In comparison single-again women were also viewed as living outside relationships but were seen as having chosen their position. This adds a positive element of active choice to Marjorie's portrayal of single-again women, like herself, who are often presumed to be unhappy in the absence of marital

relationships. However Marjorie positioned herself in the future as ideally involved in a sharing relationship or marriage living with a partner. She portrays marriage positively and though allocating an element of choice to being single-again Marjorie constructs herself as desiring a marriage or equivalent relationship.

Summary

Marriage was universally associated with responsibility for others, family involvement, children and location in the home. It was constructed as restrictive in terms of socialising and married women were seen as unable to flirt. Married women were seen to sacrifice their own desires for those of family, where unmarried women might follow their desires, including prioritising family over career. Where married women were constructed as home-based and family-focused unmarried women were located in the workplace or socialising, focusing on themselves. However, this depiction of the unmarried applied specifically to younger and never-married single women.

Divorced and single-again women were depicted by most participants as lonely and unhappy and defined primarily through their lack of relationship and any emotional implications, without a place or role. This confirms study 1 interviewee suggestions that for single-again women it is difficult to socialise, with public entertainment directed towards young singles and married couples staying in their homes and socialising with other married women in these environments. Separated and divorced women occupied a position negatively constructed by other groups, associated with loneliness and unhappiness. This grouped included only four participants who interpreted their positions differently. Among their interpretations were constructions of continuing responsibility as a mother and increased freedom and opportunities to socialise.

Never-married participants, single and in relationships, saw themselves as experiencing increased freedom from responsibility and enjoying more social opportunities than married women. Also central to depictions of the unmarried was work. This relates to interview discourse and could be because work has come to occupy a similarly acceptable position to marriage as a priority in women's lives. Participants of all groups associated never-married women with career, suggesting that without family responsibilities a woman would be free to pursue employment. However this was constructed as a time-limited position. All never-married participants wished ideally to be in a marriage relationship, with only Bob wishing to be in a similar relationship but without getting married. For these women, single, in

relationships or cohabiting, pursuing their careers provided a preferred occupation for the moment with marriage and family priorities constituting a preferred future.

Cohabiting, engaged and separated women occupied marginal positions between status groups. Cohabiting participants allied themselves to single women in prioritising their careers and experiencing more freedom and less responsibility than married women. However they also constructed themselves as less involved in socialising and unable to flirt like single women. These women all saw marriage in their futures. Participants who were engaged, alternatively, associated themselves with marital responsibility and family involvement. They positioned themselves as prioritising family over work, as did married women, and wishing to occupy a self-sacrificing and mothering married role. Separated women occupied a situation that was interpreted more variously, as entailing continued responsibilities but also allowing increased social opportunities and independence. Separated participants constituted the only participants who did not identify marriage as an ideal future for them, concentrating on motherhood, career and social independence.

All participants who were married, never married, in relationships or cohabiting or divorced identified marriage relationships as offering an ideal future for themselves including family involvement, responsibility and location within the home. They constructed the only alternatives as an isolated unhappy existence as a spinster or single-again woman. This confirms socially available discourses of relationship status careers offering marriage as success for women and the only acceptable lifestyle for an older woman. Jessie, a cohabiting divorcee who desired to live alone, and separated women looking forward to independent futures, presented alternatives to this path.

11.3 Analysis of constructs overall

The constructs described by repertory grid interviewees were entered into a database, rendered anonymous and relationship status details were removed. They were then coded by hand into a set of categories, to be described below. After this process marital status information was returned to the constructs in order to identify any patterns in relationship status contribution of particular constructs. Pseudonyms were also reallocated to constructs in order to monitor whether particular participants provided the majority of constructs to any category. The categories identified include 95% of the total 256 constructs. The below table displays sort categories and the numbers of sorts contributed to each category by marital status groups: NM = never-married, Rel = relationship, CH = cohabiting, Eng = engaged, Mar = married, Sep = separated, Div = divorced. These contributions are totalled and their percentages are also displayed. The categories are then to be outlined and illustrative construct excerpts are to be included.

Category	NM	Rel	CH	Eng	Mar	Sep	Div	Total sorts in cat.	%
1. Lifestyle	9	3	7	6	18	4	2	49	19
2. Marital status	11	-	3	5	18	7	2	46	18
3. Quality	6	3	4	-	19	4	-	36	14
4. Priority	10	2	4	5	12	1	1	35	14
5. Place	6	1	4	1	7	1	1	21	8
6. Responsibility	3	2	1	3	7	2	1	19	7
7. Relationship permanence	1	1	4	2	7	-	1	16	6
8. Emotion	-	2	-	-	9	-	-	11	4
9. Miscellaneous	-	2	1	1	6	1	-	11	4
Total sorts by status	46	16	28	23	103	20	8	244	95
%	18	6	11	9	40	8	3	95	100

1. Lifestyle

Participants used constructs that differentiated on the basis of status-related lifestyle in 19% of sorts. Use of related constructs by participants of all relationship status situations suggests that lifestyle associations with status are a made by women of all statuses. Cohabiting women made a large contribution of lifestyle-related sorts, when compared to their contributions to other categories. This could be seen to indicate that lifestyle considerations are an issue particularly relevant to cohabiting women, potentially as a result of the negotiation of their

relatively undefined status roles and negotiation of lifestyles distinct from both single and married roles.

Unmarried interviewees commonly mentioned having or spending time with children as contrasting to not having children and spending time socialising. Married women did not mention children as distinguishing between relationship statuses but rather focused on more generic lifestyle qualities like business or familiarity. Unmarried interviewees also mentioned equality or inequality in relationships as well as traditional or non-traditional forms of relationship. These distinctions suggest that these participants consider relationships of varying merit and quality.

Participant	Status	Pole 1	Pole 2
Bob	Single	Spends time friends	Spends time children

Engaged, married and separated interviewees however, made distinctions between settled married life and fun in single life, mentioned in two single sorts. They depicted the unmarried as going out, flirting, partying and enjoying freedom whereas the alternative was seen as a settled, tied down life staying at home as a Mum. In comparison unmarried interviewees, including single and cohabiting women, included among their distinctions from married life the unmarried as having no bond with others, being alone and isolated, sad and having no one to talk to.

Participant	Status	Pole 1	Pole 2
Beryl	Married	Free & single	Settled

Participant	Status	Pole 1	Pole 2
Caroline	Single (Rel)	Part of family	Alone and isolated

This contrast between depictions of unmarried life demonstrates the disparity between status-groups, the married seeing some level of freedom and enjoyment in single life where the unmarried interpret this as a lonely and lacking situation. This could be interpreted as a consequence of the threatening nature of an unmarried future, potentially a 'failure', to single women. Additionally it is worth considering that within interviews a divide was created between statuses implying that married participants may be basing their impressions on their previous experiences of singlehood or popular impressions as they are unlikely to socialise with unmarried people.

2. Marital status

Eighteen percent of sorts were included marital status constructs. A particularly large contribution of constructs came from single (never-married) interviewees indicating the particular importance of marital status to these women. Participants of all statuses made these distinctions, using variations on the same in a relationship or marriage vs. not in a relationship or marriage construct. However, whether these distinctions were made on the criteria of married or not rather than in a relationship or not seemed to be related to participant marital status. Married and separated participants more frequently used married or not as a distinguishing construct whereas the single, cohabiting and engaged women were more likely to construct sorts on involvement in a non status-specific relationship or not. Whereas single interviewees used 'on their own' to describe the alternative to being in a relationship or marriage, separated and engaged participants frequently used 'alone', which is interpreted as having more negative emotional connotations.

Participant	Status	Pole 1	Pole 2
Jo	Single	In a relationship	On their own

Participant	Status	Pole 1	Pole 2
Caliban	Married	Together	Alone

This suggests that whereas to single interviewees involvement in a relationship is the alternative to being 'on their own' for those who have married, or are engaged, the state of marriage is more salient than relationship involvement. They depict alternatives to this as more extreme isolation. This illustrates differences in status construction, implying that those involved in marriage see their status as far removed from those in other relationships, whereas single participants do not consistently distinguish marriage from other relationships.

3. Quality

Constructs associating particular qualities with relationship status situations constituted 14% of sorts. Single interviewees invoked more images of negative singleness, frequently mentioning 'loneliness' and that unmarried women might be 'bitter' and 'angry'. This was contrasted to being happy in a lasting relationship or marriage. Cohabiting, married and separated women did not frequently construct remaining unmarried as resulting in loneliness as much as constituting a different quality of lifestyle, being married, a good mother and a home person versus being free, outgoing and career-orientated.

Participant	Status	Pole 1	Pole 2

Collin	Single	Lonely & unmarried	Outgoing

Participant	Status	Pole 1	Pole 2
Jose	Married	Look after family	Not family type of person

This reinforces earlier impressions of divisions constructed between the married and unmarried suggesting that they constitute different types of people as well as lifestyles. Married interviewees associated their status with caring, home-focused roles and being unmarried with the outgoing career-woman archetype. Remaining unmarried was seen as particularly negative by single interviewees, demonstrating their own awareness of the privileging of marriage. Unmarried status is associated with loneliness, career orientation and being socially outgoing whereas marriage is associated with mothering, caring roles and happiness. This distinction draws on images of the career woman and spinster as less fulfilled than married women.

4. Priority

Fourteen percent of sorts constructed a distinction on the criteria of priorities, relating to marital status. Never-married women made a relatively large contribution to this category, suggesting that relationship status may present more priority-related issues to single women. Participants of all statuses constructed the unmarried as selfish and self-motivated. They were seen as focused on themselves, their careers and socialising. In contrast married women were portrayed as family and home focused in life, as self-sacrificing and concerned about others. They were seen as committed to others and prioritising their home-lives.

Participant	Status	Pole 1	Pole 2
Anthony	Cohabiting	Thinks of self, no responsibility, progress career	Stays in home, looks after home, family & kids

Participants occupying all relationship situations constructed this division, drawing on images, again, of the outgoing career woman in contrast to the mother, who is portrayed as home-focused and prioritising family wellbeing. In addition to this a division was created along the lines of location, situating married women within the home, focusing on personal relationships, and locating unmarried women outside the home, socialising or tackling career roles. This perpetuated constructions, identified in earlier interviews, associating marriage with home-making and private relationships and linking remaining unmarried with public roles, through exclusion from discourses of home or extended access to public discourse. All

statuses constructed a home vs. career conflict which women were seen to choose between, those marrying making a choice to live home-centred lifestyles. The greater contribution of single interviewees might suggest that this particular archetypal conflict is more meaningful to them.

5. Place

Participants invoked place in 8% of sorts. The relatively large contribution of unmarried participants suggests that this distinction may also be more salient to them than to married interviewees. All participants contributed to constructing the lives of unmarried people as living on their own, going out socialising and going to work, whereas married women and those in relationships were seen as living with somebody, being home-focused 'homemakers', spending time on domestic chores and with children. This confirms images of the domestic woman in a relationship whose life is focused upon private relationships and home related activities in contrast to the unmarried person who lives on their own and would engage in social and work roles outside of their living situation. This reinforces the association of 'home' and family with marriage, depicting the unmarried as potentially isolated and lacking these relationships.

Participant	Status	Pole 1	Pole 2
Jess	Cohabiting	Partying & going out	Homemaker

6. Responsibility

Sorts concerning responsibility constituted 7% of sorts. All participants constructed marriage and relationships as entailing additional responsibility, including responsibility for family and children. However unmarried participants contrasted responsibility to care for others in a relationship with freedom and irresponsibility. Married participants, alternatively, constructed the opposite of responsibility as not having responsibility, a less positive depiction of alternatives to responsible family life. This suggests that participants concur that relationship involvement and marriage are associated with responsibility (for other people). Alternatively single women are portrayed without this responsibility, conforming to images of single people as childless and without meaningful relationships, defined by lack.

Participant	Status	Pole 1	Pole 2
Collin	Single	Free	Commitment & responsibility

Participant	Status	Pole 1	Pole 2
Freda	Married	Not responsible	Responsible

7. Relationship permanence

Constructs building relationship permanence made up 6% of repertory grid sorts. Larger contributions were made to this category by cohabiting and married women, implying that relationship permanence is a more salient issue for those involved in sustaining relationships. All participants associated relationship and marriage involvement with stability and being settled. Single and cohabiting participants juxtapose such involvement to going out, life outside the home and not being tied down. However engaged and married participants constructed lack of relationship or short-term relationships as opposite to involvement in a permanent relationship. Married interviewees repeatedly constructed their situation as committed and contrasted this to the less committed and permanent relationships of the unmarried.

Participant	Status	Pole 1	Pole 2
Cleo	Cohabiting	Stable & settled	Free & single not tied down

Participant	Status	Pole 1	Pole 2
Rachel	Married	Not involved stable relationship	Involved stable relationship

Whereas married, and soon to be married, participants constructed unmarried life as lacking relationships, unmarried women viewed a more public life of flirting, going out, and freedom as the alternative to marriage and relationships. This implies that, unsurprisingly, those who have made commitments to relationship permanence in marriage see this as a dimension which distinguishes them from the unmarried, who are not seen to be committed or stable. The unmarried constructed more varied alternative choices to married life moving definitions of unmarried womanhood away from comparative lack of marital advantages.

8. Emotion

Connections between emotional state and relationship status were made in 4% of sorts. Nine married participants contributed to this category, and 2 women in relationships, suggesting that this distinction is only important to those involved in relationships. Both constructs proposed by those in relationships associate lack of relationship involvement with independence and happiness. However married women associate happiness and contentment with relationships. This, again, associates marriage with happiness, involvement with and

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responsibility for others. It might be the case that these women are responding to social pressure towards depicting marriage as happy and fulfilling thereby justifying their investments in marriage. Unmarried women constructed by the married as alone, seeking and expecting to become involved in a relationship in the future. Again the unmarried are seen as defined by a lack of relationship.

Participant	Status	Pole 1	Pole 2
Pam	Married	No partner, alone, lonely need family	Have partner, happy not lonely

9. Miscellaneous: Relationship in/experience & Social position

A further 4% of sorts construct two small categories, relationships and social position and relationship in/experience. Six sorts drew attention to relationship experience or 'had a relationship' versus relationship inexperience or being less experienced. All six women invoking this construct were involved in relationships, potentially implying that involvement in a marriage or relationship might lead to the potential significance of relationship experience as criteria for making distinctions between people. This could be related to the experience of both sides of this distinction participants involved in relationships may have had or the broader cultural pressure toward relationship involvement which encourages such distinction.

Participant	Status	Pole 1	Pole 2
Caliban	Married	Relationship experience	Relationship inexperience

Five women, three of them married, commented on social responses to images of unmarried versus married people. These constructs depicted the unmarried woman as stigmatised, predatory and regarded with suspicion. In contrast married women were seen as safe and socially acceptable. These sorts, made by women involved in relationships or marriages, acknowledge the social approval of married women and discouragement of women remaining unmarried.

Participant	Status	Pole 1	Pole 2
Eily	Married	Not single, not regarded as threat or odd	Single, derogatory, regarded suspicion

Conclusions

Distinctions between marriage, relationships and being single were seen to be more salient to those involved in relationships and marriages. Only those involved in relationships and marriages produced sorts distinguishing between people with experience of relationships and without. Additionally those who were married saw this status as distinct from other relationships whereas others saw involvement in a relationship of any kind as the opposite of being single. These sorts contribute to an impression that those in relationships and marriage see this as distinguishing them from the unmarried, in a way the unmarried do not. It is possible that as a result of making relationships central to their lives the married and involved see this distinction as more important than single women do.

All participants constructed the unmarried lifestyle and person in a variety of images, including the bitter spinster and the outgoing career woman. However, depictions of the married were constructed consistently, depicting married women as living home-centred lives and prioritising the care of their families. Single participants portrayed the unmarried as bitter, lonely and angry, in contrast to images of the fulfilled and settled married woman. It is suggested that the image of the bitter spinster might be more salient to the unmarried woman who is more likely to be aware of the spectre of their potential spinsterhood.

Single participants also portrayed the unmarried as alone and isolated, contrasting to married women's depiction of single life as incorporating increased freedom and social opportunity. Unmarried participants constructed unmarried women as isolated, lacking meaningful relationships and possessing negative characteristics, e.g. selfishness. This suggests that unmarried women either consider their status inferior to marriage, or they are aware of the wider devaluation of single life. Married women's construction of the social acceptability of marriage and the social stigmatisation of single women mirrored this negative approach to singleness.

All participants constructed married women as having increased responsibilities, particularly for family. They were seem to have home-focused lives, to prioritise the needs of their families and to be settled and happy. In comparison the unmarried were seen to be selfish, self-motivated, outgoing and situated outside the home socialising and working. This image excludes the unmarried woman from depictions of the home, domestic life and family relationships, which are central to the married woman. Whereas unmarried woman constructed the alternative to marriage and settled relationships as social opportunity and not

being 'tied down' married women viewed this as a lack of a marital relationship. They depicted the unmarried as alone and seeking relationships. This conforms to images of the domestic and home-situated wife in comparison to the career woman, seen as successful outside the home but lacking personal success in a relationship. However unmarried participants depicted singlehood as an opportunity for socialising and working, resisting this image.

Sort constructs echoed interview talk, employing images of the unhappy spinster or outgoing career woman in opposition to the married woman. They perpetuated ideas privileging marriage, constructing it as a site of responsibility, priority, happiness and fulfilment. Relationship status was depicted as locating women in the home, in the case of marriage, or in public social or occupational positions, if unmarried. This mirrored interview depictions of the wife as privately situated and relationally located and defined, where unmarried women are positioned outside this archetypal norm.

11.4 Study 3 reflexivity

Undertaking research that employed word cards and forms, structuring the interview around a task and spending time teaching the participants about the task were new experiences for me. The mutual focus of interviews moved from the exchange of talk and the construction of narratives by the respondent and myself to the cards, their arrangement and the meanings that could be created using them. Some women actively enjoyed the exercise and approached it as a form of creative play. For others it stood as a puzzle, a process that they worked out where thinking of the pairings constituted a challenge. In some ways this gave me a more powerful role. I was the person who knew 'how it worked' and in some cases women assumed that I was finding out something about them then-and-there, deducing something crucial from the way they positioned the word cards. I assured them that I was not. I attempted to assist women in clarifying their ideas verbally where this appeared necessary and I gave them unlimited 'thinking time' and breaks, which had never been required in previous interviews.

My initial unease about working with a 'task' was reduced when I saw how women made creative use of the cards and the rating task and how interesting their conclusions were. I realised that my reticence was connected to a concern about 'selling out' my own identity as a qualitative researcher, a concern that if I employed numbers in my research and 'did' anything other than talk with participants I was invoking a positivist experimental paradigm which would invalidate my findings. I began to recognise that something different was happening in

the talk here, that people were showing me things I wouldn't have seen before, because I hadn't known to ask the questions. Literature and my own instincts had not led me to aspects of relationship and identity construction that, with the cards, interviewees elucidated.

Having a participant withdraw from the study was a singular and significant experience. Throughout previous studies I had been conscious that I wanted interviewees to feel empowered to not answer questions or close interviews if they wished to and had informed them of these choices, also outlined in the research contracts. However I had not considered how interaction would proceed if such an incident occurred. After discussing Mim's wish to withdraw her involvement respectfully and assuring her that her decision was 'fine' I hastily bundled up my paraphernalia and left the scene in a state of disbelief and incredulity.

The interviewee, gladly, did not appear to have experienced any kind of distress after deciding she could not do the task. Upon leaving I was full of new questions and doubts about how others perceived my research and myself (rejection of my research felt like rejection of me, I had devised the study and thought it a good idea). I discussed this experience with academic colleagues, friends and family who were all reassuring, and correct in their assurance that I had to accept the decision of this woman (which I had) and focus on the next interview which they were sure would be completed. I exercised increased caution when presenting the task in future interviews, inviting questions and for some time partly expecting further withdrawals, which did not occur.

Putting together the case studies presented another challenging new experience for me. I was suspicious of the ratings because they were written as numbers and of the Web Grid II analysis program. I initially mistrusted Web Grid II on the grounds that I could not be sure of what happened between inputting the information and the production of the resulting display. This was connected to the belief that output produced by a computer was inherently less valuable than that created by hand. Through experimentation I became confident that the program did not 'do' anything untoward when creating the graphs, it merely using the ratings I inputted to create a visual display. Writing alongside and about graphs also seemed difficult to accept as valid. However in the process of producing my first case study and comparing the graph and the transcript I became aware that it was a valuable exercise offering different findings.

Learning to do research a different way forced me to alter my thinking. I had to develop new skills to present the task, and to analyse the results. I am convinced that doing this has added value to the project. Reading through the cases I began to realise that women were telling me different things. For instance, women associated their ideal selves with marriage, staying in the home, not socialising—what basically amounted to being 'housewives'. I do not use this term as an insult or to mock these aspirations, though they differ from my own and from what I had expected. However I am identifying them as a site of contrast with what was said in study 1. In those interviews women talked of their careers and travelling and other more acceptable emblems of positive womanhood. I am not claiming that women of study 1 harboured secret domestic aspirations (though this is possible), it was not their secret desires but their spoken accounts I pursued, however it is my interpretation that the use of ratings and sort cards allowed study 3 participants to encode their responses, through a structured response format which allowed them to avoid confronting any unfashionable or contradictory ideas. Interviewees were freed to 'say' things that they may have feared would have led to criticism in a conversation.

Chapter 12. Discussion

It was the aim of this study to examine the construction of relationship status and identity, particularly focusing on the position of unmarried women. This developed into a wider interest in how women occupying different relationship situations constructed their positions, from socially available discursive resources. Women of different relationship statuses and ages provided interview accounts that demonstrated how they constructed both identities and statuses across changes and how their situations were positioned in relation to other status groups. Constructions of relationship status were reciprocally related to women's portrayals of other status groups. These portrayals provided discursive opportunities through which women could establish independent, sometimes opposing, identities. To follow is a discussion of the findings in response to each of the research questions posed in the introduction to the study.

12.1 Research questions

1. Do women construct identity through accounts of relationship status?

Younger women from study 1 interviews saw their possession of selfhood as inextricably linked to their relationship situations. However older interviewees associated such rhetoric with younger women and criticised this. Whereas for younger single women relationships involved to some extent losing and compromising themselves, older married women positively constructed the development of relational identity. This may be connected to the discursive access of each group, i.e. younger women are expected to be single and positive interpretations of this situation entail constructing independent selfhood. All women constructing relationship and identity accounts are actively working around their choices and present and future prospects, older women are unlikely to change relationship situations and thereby gain access to discourses of independent selfhood.

Identity rhetoric was also employed when accounting for the selection of titles and surname choices at marriage. Younger single women used 'Miss' to construct independent single selfhood whereas those in relationships opted for ambiguity, in 'Ms', a form of identification resolving the dilemma of age-related disqualification from 'Miss' and allowing those in relationships to avoid relational identification through male partners. In this way, as in repertory grid interviews, women cohabiting and in relationships chose to distinguish themselves from the married. However older women and married women, with one exception, adopted their husband's names and the title 'Mrs', accepting with pride in many cases,

traditional relational identity practices. Those who were divorced maintained their husband's names and often the title 'Mrs'.

Several older married participants disparaged the discourses of independent identity as compromised in marriage, criticising the use of 'Ms' as many single women did also. Older married women used expressions of concern for the welfare of children as the innocent victims of women pursuing independent identities, associating negative consequences with unconventional naming choices and resistance to relational identity. This is viewed as an essentially anti-feminist stance, demonstrating the power of romantic and traditional discourse of marriage to discourage female independence. Though younger single women suggested they would not adopt husband's surnames at marriage, the rate at which this choice is made and the conflicts described by women presently negotiating this choice suggests they may face significant resistance from others in their environments. As with women in the study by Kline et al (1996) this can result in relinquishing initial principled objections to traditional naming practices.

The majority of participants constructed marriage as desirable, as strongly indicated by ideal and future-self positionings in repertory grid interviews. Single interviewees saw marriage as a source of compromise and restriction, in terms of work and social freedom also offering stability and the opportunities to establish a home and prioritise family relationships. Single sociability and activity was contrasted to married steadiness and privatisation of social life. Older interviewees also saw marriage as the most desirable state, among its advantages being founding a home and talking. Talk was constructed as an important feature of marriage, as a pleasure and a problem-solving device, depicted as defending against divorce. With the exception of Jessie, who wished to live alone, and three separated participants (still legally married), all of whom had been married, all repertory grid participants saw their ideal selves as married. Though rates of marriage in the population may be decreasing, the evidence here contained would suggest that there is no reduction in desire for or expectation of marriage.

2. How do women construct the implications of their relationship status?

Where unmarried women were constructed through a plurality of images, namely the unhappy spinster and the independent career woman, married women were consistently depicted through responsibility for others, prioritising relationships over other concerns and with stability and happiness. Marriage was also associated with not flirting, going out socially or having a career but rather with staying at home and nurturing family relationships. Being

married was linked to multiple roles including relationship- and house-management tasks, such as caring for others, prioritising the needs of others and undertaking domestic chores. Conversely unmarried women were largely associated with roles outside the home, including work and socialising. This might indicate increased access to the public sphere, traditionally the male domain. However it could be seen as a consequence of necessity – unmarried women occupying a situation outside the home-based socialising of married couples, being financially independent and likely engaged in social relationships outside the family.

Married women were seen, by themselves and by unmarried women, to prioritise family relationships over work. They were seen as characteristically self-sacrificing and as fulfilling the desires of others (husbands and children) before their own. In comparison, participants in other situations constructed single women as selfish and self-motivated, an association some single women acknowledged as an undesirable possible truth. Single women were constructed as selfish, an undesirable quality associated with lack of responsibility for others and the pursuit of career ambitions and socialising rather than nurturing a family. Virtue was ascribed to married women's subjugation of their own desires, something inherently anti-feminist in its devaluation of women's independent aspirations, beyond marriage and motherhood. This connects to traditional ideas of the wife and mother as carer for a family and 'Relationship manager' rather than individual (Maushart, 2001) and implies that to be married is to take a supportive and private rather than active and public role in life. The ascription of different and unattractive qualities to women with extra-familial ambitions echoes anti-spinster criticism that portrayed independent women as negatively different.

Unmarried women were portrayed as having greater opportunity to socialise and being more involved with their careers than married women. Here the role of the unmarried woman was constructed as active and involving social interaction outside the home. However this role is associated with youthful excitement rather than long-term fulfilment. Older unmarried roles, such as spinster, widow and divorcee are associated with living outside a relationship, loneliness and isolation. In these cases older unmarried women are associated only with a lack of relationships rather than with a positive role, again associating unmarried adulthood with negative difference and devaluing relationships and lifestyles outside the married mother archetype.

3. **Does relationship status affect women's social relationships?**

Women of all relationship status groups contributed inter-group statements about the social appropriateness and practicality of socialising with women and men of other relationship status groups. Married women were frequently seen as occupying the most advantaged and desirable positions and criticised by a minority of participants. Fred, a single woman interviewed for study 1, suggested that her married friends had different priorities and preferred different (domestic) topics of conversation. However several married women suggested that they preferred to socialise with other married people, suggesting it would be socially inappropriate to socialise with singles. Many married women suggested that they knew no single people. Frequently married women described how they began to socialise more exclusively with other couples at marriage, Sylvia detailed how socialising with married couples acted to reinforce her marriage. Older single and single-again women described difficulties maintaining friendships with married women who spent the majority of their time with husbands and children, Maggie describing how married friends only wanted to discuss their children.

These accounts constructed marriage as providing entry to an exclusive reinforcing social environment. This is interpreted as reflecting the privileged position of married people within this society, where marriage is promoted by the government and through the media and, as demonstrated by repertory grid results, the majority of women wish to marry. This position is reinforced by research findings looking to compare the married to an amorphous unmarried group and asserting their improved well being. Married women freely criticised the divorced, asserted the inappropriateness of spending time with single people and compared themselves favourably to spinsters and childless women. Other groups did not make equivalent assertions about those of different relationship status, demonstrating the relatively powerful position of married women to positively differentiate themselves. This could alternatively be interpreted as betraying the precariousness of marriage, suggesting that whereas those occupying a culturally devalued unmarried situation could not occupy a less esteemed position the married could be seen as at risk from becoming single-again.

4. Do age-related relationship status expectations impact on women's accounts?

An age-defined path of relationship status was constructed throughout interview accounts and in many repertory grid interviews, impacting particularly on the accounts of older unmarried women. Younger single women reported work and socialising as the focus of their lives, expecting to marry and have children later in adulthood and identifying this as an ideal outcome. Where married women described having decided to marry when young they also

reported criticism from family members and friends encouraging them to remain single. It was constructed, through repertory grid results as appropriate for young women to be single, have jobs, socialise and not to commit themselves to relationships.

However older unmarried women were ostracised, with the single social scene inaccessible to them and without access to the home-focused social sphere of the married. The difficulty of this situation is encapsulated in the problematic title choices of older unmarried women who reported being too old to use 'Miss' and so encountering the opposition of others when using the mistrusted 'Ms'. In this situation there was no socially acceptable title for unmarried women to adopt, this lack of linguistic tools to name older unmarried women mirroring the lack of social opportunity for women in this marginalised position to construct socially acceptable identities. Elderly unmarried and childless women were pitied and seen as occupying the most undesirable status situation, their lives described as narrow and unfulfilled, in contrast to married women.

Age was also seen as important in terms of the age-difference between women and men involved in intimate relationships. Where there was a big age-gap between partners or where the woman were older than their male partners family and friends discouraged women from continuing their relationships. Though in the described cases couples overcame this resistance and either were accepted or interviewees became resigned to accepting others, these instances may have been recounted because they constituted memorable relationship success stories. Other relationships may not have withstood such pressure or may not have been initiated on the grounds of transgressing such accepted norms. These instances demonstrate the dominance of the 'standard female life path' an age-related status path that ostracises those who deviate from this sequence by remaining unmarried, forming unconventional alliances with younger men or becoming single-again.

5. How do women account for instances of relationship dissolution?
The majority of participants, particularly the married and single-again, addressed relationship-dissolution and adult singlehood through accounts of divorce. Married women constructed divorce frequently as a rhetorical device to demonstrate the comparative strength of their marriages and others' lack of skill in relationship management. Those who got divorced were narrated as not trying hard enough to stay together, not talking enough, entering marriage without enduring commitment and giving up upon reaching relationship obstacles. In this way married women, outside the divorced group, employed the rhetoric of fault and blame

employed by researchers accounting for women remaining unmarried and rendering single-again people responsible for their situations. Through these details married women constructed themselves as different from the divorced, able to see the faults in others and more skilled in relationship management – a female-defined and defining skill. This additionally enabled married women to cast themselves as comparatively *in*vulnerable to divorce, a conviction that might be essential to maintaining a marriage in a divorce-prone society.

Divorced women described being the recipient of accusations of fault but resisted accepting the blame for marital dissolution. Instead they indicated that relationships and processes had broken-down, diverting responsibility from themselves to external relationship factors, and depicted their lives since as improved. Blaming other women's divorces on their lack of investments allows married women to separate themselves from divorced women and vulnerability to divorce. This commonly employed discourse may also act to remove the divorced person from the social circle they inhabited when married. Divorced women described making new friends in similar situations upon divorcing and losing other friends, just as married interviewees mentioned losing touch with members of divorced couples. This acts to remove the divorced woman from the private social circle of the married and thereby removes reminders of marital fragility and possible threats to this status quo, from the sphere of the married.

Divorced women located themselves within in a form of social purgatory, being unable to go out alone, too old to go out with and occupy places designed for young singles and no longer part of the private social circles of the married. In repertory grid interviews single-again women were grouped with spinsters, portrayed as lonely, living alone and without social, career of family roles. However in interview accounts it becomes clear that divorced women are unlikely to be in a position to become reclusive and spinsterly. Divorced women are likely to be more dependent upon and therefore increasingly involved in their careers, in order to maintain homes and dependants, and to enjoy their status, despite restrictions and future visions of partnership.

6. Do women today construct and relate to the spinster?

Though many, particularly older, women could not cite an instance of hearing or using the term 'spinster' it is suggested that the concept is still discursively present, functioning as a warning against remaining unmarried. The construction of spinsterhood occurred throughout

the accounts of women of different relationship situations. With two exceptions, participants depicted spinsterhood as undesirable, associating late-adult singlehood with loneliness and unhappiness. Spinsters were almost universally seen as lacking choice in their situation and portrayed as unfortunate women who had waited to be chosen by husbands (Prince Charming) but failed to lure them. Nowhere was it countenanced that women might choose to remain unmarried into old age.

Single interviewees described awareness of spinsterhood presenting a potential unhappy ending to their lives, suggesting that others had warned them of this. Spinsterhood was portrayed as an ending, associated with elderly women who die without marrying or experiencing meaningful relationships. In this context spinsterhood or single late adulthood constituted a threat to unmarried women, demonstrating the misfortune that might befall them if they remained unmarried and thereby encouraging single women to see marriage as a happy refuge from a lonely end.

The majority of married and older interviewees portrayed spinsters as pitiable eccentrics who led narrow lives, lacking families and the richness husbands and children were seen to have brought to their own lives. Older women portrayed spinsters and childless women of their acquaintance as sorrowful and regretful, reinforcing their culturally dominant privileged positions as married mothers and associating this position with fulfilment. This discourse suggests that women's lives can only be fulfilling if they are married and have children, something reinforced by repertory grid constructions of the married as happy in the family home and spinsters as allied with single-again women as living alone, lonely and lacking relationships.

7. **Do work and financial resources remain key to constructions of single womanhood?**
A strong association was constructed between being unmarried and working. This is reflected in media images of 'career women', outgoing and successful unmarried women who prioritise occupational success over relationships, often regretting this choice. Popular portrayals commonly underline the error of such a choice, confirming that the appropriate and most fulfilling place for women is in the home, within a family. In many repertory grid sorts career women were positioned opposite married mothers, located outside the home and with priorities other than relationships. Career women were often positioned closer to single never-married women who were also positioned outside the home, working and socialising. This is

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seen to form part of the association between young single women and the pre-marital pursuit of career.

Career was seen as opposite to marriage and career women were positioned as such in many repertory grid sorts. Occupational success was portrayed as available to or achieved by the unmarried, exclusively. As the majority of unmarried participants wished to marry it seems that their career aspirations were limited to the present and that later they would be compromised in the interests of a prioritised marriage relationship. The association of career success with young single women excluded older married women from this position and suggested that occupational and marital success are exclusive. Younger interviews acknowledged their greater freedom to pursue work, in comparison to married women, as several married women described restrictions. However young single interviewees did wish to marry, suggesting that women willingly sacrifice occupational success for a more female-defined success in marriage.

Cohabiting women, in repertory grid interviews, constructed themselves as similar to single women in prioritising their careers rather than relationships. With the exception of separated women, all participants who were or had been married constructed relationships as more important. It is possible that women are increasingly opting to live in cohabiting relationships as they provide an opportunity for the more varied role negotiation than marriage, pursuing work rather than primarily occupying the position of relationship manager.

Work was talked of as the only acceptable alternative to marriage and the only other choice women might make. It was frequently implied in repertory grid interviews that women might choose a career instead of marriage but nowhere that they might choose to pursue something else (such as parenting, a lesbian relationship or an interest) or choose not to marry, without substituting an alternative activity. This is interpreted as positive in acknowledging that women might choose not to marry. However, it perpetuates the image of the characteristically different career woman that doesn't value personal relationships and also obscures a myriad of other lifestyle decisions women make. In conversation it was noted that the researcher herself used work as a justification for not having marriage plans. This elucidated another role of career woman discourse, replacing anti-marriage rhetoric – where explaining an anti-marriage standpoint may have been ill received, citing career interests proved an acceptable replacement.

Many of the married women interviewed had worked or did work, though in repertory grid interviews they commonly distinguished themselves from career women, who were portrayed as pursuing occupational success rather than relationships. Married interviews frequently described having increased access to financial resources and therefore relying less on their own incomes. As a consequence some women chose to reduce their work involvement. Additionally married women described, using discourses of romantic unity, how money was shared between themselves and their husbands, rather than maintaining individual bank accounts. Such arrangements were depicted as an indication of commitment, demonstrating a lack of need for what Sylvia termed 'running away money' and thereby condemning desire for financial independence in marriage.

The possible consequences of such arrangements can be seen in the financial difficulties of divorced women upon marital dissolution. Single-again women invested more importance in their employment from financial necessity as well as, possibly, from increased freedom to do so. The historic association between unmarried women, spinsters, and work is founded on the necessity for women to work in order to avoid marriage, or as constructed here, as an alternative to marriage. It is suggested that it would be healthier, that is to say less restrictive of and more inclusive of alternative choices, to construe life as offering women a broader spectrum of choices than only a career *or* a marriage (or a career when young exchanged for a marriage when older). Today the majority of women work and an increasing minority of women remain unmarried or become single-again and would benefit for the re-conceptualisation of this situation.

Conclusion

The findings of this study reflect the power and prevalence of conventional relationship and marital expectations. These patterns were explicit in the majority of women's expectations, encapsulating their aspirations, and garnering the support of their families and friends. Women whose lives contradicted these patterns were cast as deviant and potentially at fault, part of groups 'different' in character. The most valued positions in women's lives were wife and mother, with work seen as an alternative choice appropriate for young women. Spinsters and single-again women were seen to suffer loneliness and unhappiness from their lack of marital relationships whereas marriage was seen to provide happiness and fulfilment. However those women who were unmarried and single-again in adulthood did not report such unhappiness though they describe awareness of their marginalised positions and lack of social opportunities.

It is suggested that following the traditional life course, particularly upon reaching the married state, women have access to dominant discourses of selfhood, as wife and mother, relationships and success, in terms of fulfilment. Alternatively those outside this pattern are likely to encounter social restrictions and negative responses from others in their environments. Nevertheless these women constructed positive identities through independence, work, interests and non-marital relationships. It is concluded that although population relationship patterns may be changing such changes are not reflected in the discourses of life course and identity available to women. These discourses reflect popular folk wisdom and psychological findings suggesting that marriage is always the preferred outcome, associated with happiness, and portraying unmarried women as romantic failures, unhappy as a result.

Implications

From a feminist perspective, the social conventions surrounding relationships and the discourses used to construct relationship status support a patriarchal model of women's lives. Women are seen to find fulfilment only through their (marriage) relationships with men, forgoing independence and occupational success which are seen as comparatively empty rewards suited to young women. Findings suggest that women of various relationship situations view marriage as an ideal and romanticise the associated role expecting to find, and reporting, fulfilment in the roles of wife and mother. Though unmarried women described the positions of wife and mother as restrictive, compromising and necessitating self-sacrifice these roles constituted their ideal selves, connected also to happiness and fulfilment. The expectation that one relationship, in marriage, will lead to personal fulfilment is a great and perhaps unrealistic expectation.

Marriage is seen to involve women taking responsibility for others, prioritising others needs over their own and remaining in the home rather than in the workplace or going out socialising. These images glorify domesticity and encourage the invisibility of women. In what sounds like a stereotypical description of a housewife from the nineteen-fifties, women delineate the position of the married woman as a carer, confined to the home, involved in domestic chores and tending the needs of others. This woman would not socialise and would not flirt, she would not retain her own surname at marriage or have any independent funds and she would not be committed to her career or other pursuits outside the home. Though in interview accounts many women described vividly career and travel experiences for older

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women these were enjoyed before marriage. Younger women reported that their work progress was impeded by marriage. All women reported altered socialising practises at marriage, moving towards socialising exclusively with other married couples. Women are constructed as exchanging their public social and work roles for private support roles at marriage.

The association of marriage with women prioritising husbands and children over their own needs differentiates them from 'selfish' single women and connects a marriage, which the majority of women experience and aspire to, to women's subjugation of self. This associated self-sacrifice also renders it likely that women's investments in marital relationships are unequal in terms of relationship management and caring work (with husband and children's needs being prioritised). Though wifehood and motherhood bring reported happiness to many women it is suggested that portraying unmarried life as less fulfilling, less happy and more lonely, functions to obscure other ways of living chosen by women. These dominant discourses of wifehood serve a patriarchal agenda, discouraging independence and public achievement among married women and contributing to the difficulties of women attempting to achieve equality within marriage (Blaisure & Allen, 1995).

Considering these associations it seems surprising that women aspire to marry at all, however marriage is also associated with companionship, happiness and fulfilment. Also, it has to be considered that though women may associate marriage per se with such depictions it is possible that they might envision their own marriage relationships differently. However the social and institutional power of marriage and the surrounding environmental support for relationship conventions may well overwhelm individual intentions, perpetuating the inequitable roles and investments in marriage which constitute married women's 'guilty secret' (Maushart, 2001, Dryden, 1999).

Unmarried women are portrayed as comparatively selfish and destined for lonely unhappiness, their lives labelled 'narrow' for their lack of marriage. Older unmarried women described a process of marginalisation associated with being an adult single woman, including a decline in social opportunities, financial problems and difficulties establishing a home. Spinsterhood functions as a spectre, threatening young unmarried women with the unfortunate fate of a desolate and unfulfilled later life. Older single women are seen to have failed to ensnare a husband, failing to acknowledge that this situation might arise as the consequence of a positive decision. The difficulties of being an older single woman and accompanying

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negative imagery reinforce conventional age-related expectations of marriage, implying that not to experience wifehood and motherhood is to lack meaningful experiences. Older married women described pitying spinsters, portraying them as alone and lonely with restricted lives, again defining unmarried women through their lack of the most prized of social roles through which female fulfilment is designated, those of wife and mother.

Though it is positive that women, the majority of whom do marry, speak most positively of their experiences there has to be acknowledgement that women can and do make other choices. Rigid and traditional age-related relationship expectations render many women and many relationships deviant, encouraging not only marriage but marriage by a particular age to a man who is only slightly older. Women are aware of these expectations, reinforced by interactions with families and friends, which encourage conformity and warn women of the negative consequences of spinsterhood (loneliness and unhappiness). However this model does not encompass the life paths of all women - many women get married later in their lives and many become single-again, through choice or circumstance. Women also choose to be celibate, live in non-intimate relationships and live within non-marital relationships with men and with women. These situations do not preclude fulfilment and nor do they necessarily result in loneliness or unhappiness. They constitute choices available to women outside marriage and their public acknowledgement and validation would benefit many women.

12.2 Unexpected findings

The results proved surprising in terms of the popularity of marriage. Repertory grid interviews, in particular, provided a clear depiction of the great extent to which interviewees saw their ideal and future selves in terms of marriage and motherhood. This illuminates the importance of researching women's experiences of and involvement in relationships, as they constitute a valued and central experience. However, here it is worth considering the limitations of the task. Interviewees were asked to position themselves in relation to relationship status positions, without the opportunity to place themselves in a group representing their interests beyond family, work or socialising. Nevertheless it would have been possible to add interests in the form of constructs and it would also be possible to distance themselves from relationship status cards, if their ideal or future selves were not envisaged in these terms. The prevalence of expectations of marriage reinforces traditional conceptions of the female life path.

This idealisation of marriage was accompanied by an, also unexpected, devaluation of adult singlehood. Though remaining single was associated with career success it was conceptualised as inferior to marriage, once past young singlehood, by the majority of women in all relationship status groups, mirroring media images of the unsatisfied single career woman. Women, including those who had previously been married, depicted single adulthood as lonely and undesirable. Fear of 'ending up' alone provided a clear impetus for single women to change their status and only two women in the study expressed an interest in remaining unmarried. This uniformity of aspiration was extremely surprising, as was the similarity of constructions of unmarried life.

The association of remaining unmarried with being selfish, an undesired quality and negative interpretation of female independence, perpetuated patriarchal conceptions of marriage as most desirable and the married as the most aspirational women. Even in the frequently debated area of title-selection women, including those who demonstrated awareness of surrounding arguments, on the whole rejected feminist rhetoric of self-identity and supported conventional naming practices. The acceptance of traditional marital aspirations and the accompanying life plot among women of different ages and backgrounds reinforces the importance of feminist and psychological enquiry into the realities of these relationships, particularly considering potential consequences for wellbeing.

The importance of participant age to the study was also unanticipated. Having intended to interview women of marriageable age it became clear that the study would be enriched by the responses of women with greater experience of relationship status changes and their implications. The experience of interviewing older women altered the approach to interviewing for the remainder of the study, in terms of location and sampling method. Older women also employed discourses of relationship status from a different location to younger women, demonstrating access to different discourses of relationship status.

12.3 Reflecting on findings

This study represents a unique contribution to the body of research into relationship status in its representation of relationship status and identity as a discursive construction and the inclusion of women of different status and age groups. Qualitative studies of the implications of relationship status commonly focus on people from one status group commenting on that status, for example Anderson and Stewart (1995) and Gordon (1994) ask single women about being single. By adding the talk of women of other status groups to this picture it is suggested

that this study contributes to the wider picture of how relationship status and identity is constructed socially and how these concepts are synergistic with other status group implications.

For example, single women demonstrated awareness of an ascription of the characteristic 'selfishness' to them. In conjunction with married women's accounts it was possible to see how marital responsibility for others was correspondingly valorised and how connections between female selfishness and divorce were also made. The centrality of marriage to locating other statuses and women's repertory grid discourses of positive selfhood was confirmed throughout the study. This underlines the importance of feminist and social research into the implications of being married and not being married. Becoming single-again and living in one-person households are increasingly common experiences, which were almost universally criticised and disparaged by the women interviewed. Though single-again women found ways of constructing positive identities it is suggested that they experienced self-doubt and social isolation. There is a need to re-conceptualise single womanhood in light of population trends and these accounts.

Additionally the findings demonstrate how identities are constructed fluidly and the different discourse available to women in different situations. Where women labelled themselves 'single' and went on to describe relationships that they were engaged in it is possible to glimpse the more subtle distinctions around status groups than previous research may have suggested. This example demonstrates that where single women are compared to other groups and presumed by researchers to lack partners such comparisons may not be valid.

12.3.1 Reflecting on methods

Interviews have previously been employed to examine relationship status, by Chasteen (1994), Anderson and Stewart (1995) and Gordon (1994) to look at the experiences of single women, Waehler (1997) studying bachelors, Lindsay (2000) examining cohabitation relationships and Dryden (1999) and Lawes (1999) looking at constructions of marriage. Among these Lawes (1999) employed a specifically discourse analytic approach. However the vast majority of psychology research that is interested in examining personal relationships is experimental and involves using questionnaires and laboratory observation (Dryden, 1999).

This study additionally employed repertory grids, demonstrating the advantages of employing multiple techniques in qualitative discourse research in order to create the fullest picture

possible of what is being studied, an approach employed by Celia Kitzinger in her study of lesbian identity (1987). The research reported here also builds upon previous studies by interviewing women of a wide range of ages, including elderly women. It is suggested that the involvement of this group in psychology research is normatively confined to research about being elderly in the field of 'adult development'. This means that the voices of persons from the largest population sector in our society are not regularly written into research. From the experience of this research older women have a lot to add to social research in terms of accounts of experience and perspectives on social change.

This study constitutes a discursive and qualitative investigation into relationship status, a form of investigation that is seen as most appropriate in allowing the exploration of this area through talk, the medium by which relationships are constructed and their stories regularly told. By using different methods the study has gained in terms of richness of portrayal, the area of interpersonal relationships is by definition complex and this is reflected in the findings presented here.

12.3.2 Reflecting on my approach

Social constructionism permeates the analysis in the way that identities are seen as constructed through discourses that are differently infused with power and social validation. Here higher status is communicated through discourses of womanhood as married, involved in the care of others and living a home based existence. Positive identities were constructed from alternative social locations but the accessibility of these discourses was restricted by age, which constituted a major impact on the feasibility of women constructing positive identities outside marriage. The similarity of marital aspirations demonstrates the pervasive and powerful nature of marital discourse for women and the corresponding need to talk in new ways and develop positive older unmarried female identities, identities that women will increasingly have to negotiate that are currently associated with undesirable characteristics, emotions and lifestyle.

From a feminist perspective the most significant findings are seen to be the way in which marriage rhetoric remains central to women's ways of defining themselves and each other. Women interviewed for this study aspired to get or remain married, be mothers and lead private and home-based lives, distancing themselves from 'career women' and singe status. However in today's society women must work and are equally as likely to 'end up' single as they are to stay married. This distinction presents potential difficulties for women themselves

and contradiction feminism has to work to understand and resolve. However it demonstrates the importance of reflecting these concerns in research and the gains yet to be made in validating independent female lifestyles. From a feminist perspective the findings here highlight the need to find and promote ways of women living happy, contented lives outside traditional conceptions of marriage.

12.4 Future directions

It is suggested that the construction, experience and social implications of divorce and spinsterhood are worthy of further investigation. Interviews with spinsters, absent from this study, would build upon the findings reported by further illuminating the implications and experiences of living outside marriage. The negotiation of unmarried adult identity and social roles occurs outside dominant discourses of adulthood and specifically, womanhood. However these marginalised groups constitute an increasing segment of the population. Whereas at present those women living outside the married mother role occupy a marginalised position, it is possible that increased acknowledgement and validation of these positions might result in increased cultural support for these marriage-independent lifestyles.

Comparative research, like the majority of well being research concerning relationship status, is not encouraged. It is suggested that the meanings of marriage and other status situations is negotiated through accounts and thereby complex and actively constructed, rather than being encapsulated by married or unmarried categories. As has been seen, unmarried women do not all occupy similar social situations or have access to the same discursive resources through which to construct their identities, but these are affected, as throughout history, by age, income, and past and future access to marriage and intimate relationships. Lesbian women were absent from the sample, by snowballing rather than by researcher selection. It is suggested that examining how Lesbian identities are, accordingly, implicated in relationships would be a valuable field of study. Comparative research between relationship status groups is condemned as masking differences between the many lifestyle and relationship groups women may occupy.

Psychologists have previously examined the advantages of involvement in marital relationships. Reverberations of this focus are reflected in the accounts of all women, discussing their relationship statuses and differentiating them from others primarily around constructions of marriage. It is suggested that expanding research interest to include this other relationships which are important to women's lives would benefit psychological

understanding and divert psychological interest from focusing on, reinforcing and validating the culturally central position of marriage. Interviewees discussed important relationships with non-marital partners, children and friends, which are recommended as equally worthy of concern.

From a therapeutic direction it is suggested that research citing causes for being unmarried and discussing blame attribution serves only to mirror and reinforce discourse portraying unmarried women as flawed and suffering a misfortune in not being married. Though some women might experience their situations in this way, the unmarried women interviewed only constructed a concern with blaming as coming from others in their environments. It is suggested that the 'invention' of marital phobia does not constitute a useful response to the choices of those who wish to remain unmarried. However it is suggested that concern about the wellbeing of those in peripheral social situations may be justified and that those outside dominant social circles may experience their isolation negatively. This might be avoided as single-again and unmarried women become a larger population segment.

The role of men in supporting traditional role expectations of marriage and relationships is considered a topic worthy of feminist attention. Men played a central role in women's constructions of their identities, future and ideal selves in this study. Women talked of conflicts with partners wishes in terms of naming and titles at marriage, and also discussed their social lives changing to accommodate other married couples where men got on with others' male partners. It is suggested that male partners are instrumental to affecting marriage-related changes.

Psychological research would posit relational identification and relationship management as the sphere of females, however it would not be possible to occupy these roles without the support of others. It is suggested that reciprocal male roles within marital and non-marital relationships would be a valuable accompanying area of study, alongside studies of identity construction among men, including single-again men and bachelors. This would not only provide additional information regarding how women's relationships are constructed but allow observation of the respective power inherent in situations. It would be interesting to examine whether career and/or personal relationships constitute key elements of male selfhood and how men's conceptions of themselves are negotiated around private and public roles.

It is also recommended that further exploration of the experiences of unmarried older women, single women (or spinsters), cohabiting and single-again women is undertaken. These women represent forerunners of a growing population group who presently occupy a marginalised and peripheral social situation. It would be interesting to examine whether the experience of women who are never married and single-again now in their middle years experience this as a less negative situation than older spinster women. It is suggested that today's unmarried women, who are often occupationally successful, are likely to have more access to income and pensions and therefore to be equipped to choose to live alone comfortably than past generations. It is hoped that this will increasingly be the case in future generations, de-stigmatising spinsterhood, as, regardless of their traditional visions, women may increasingly find themselves occupying this position, which they construct as undesirable. From a feminist perspective, an improvement on this position would constitute a step forward in the position of women. Increasing economic power and the validation of lifestyle choice would offers women increased choice in terms of whether to remain unmarried or negotiate marital roles from a more equal position.

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Request to Place Research Posters in Surgery

Dear Sir or Madam

I am currently conducting research looking at the ways people think about marriage and relationships, and how this influences their perceptions of themselves and others. This will involve contacting women, and talking to them about their experiences and opinions.

I need to reach a wide range of women from different social class and ethnic backgrounds, and have identified GP surgeries as one place in which women are likely to be waiting, and have a few minutes to notice my 'call for participants'. These take the form of a *poster*, for display on a notice board, and some *'flyers'*, which women who are interested can take away and read later.

I have attached a copy of the poster and some flyers, and would be grateful if you would consider displaying these in the waiting area of your surgery. I am happy to provide more copies as required, and to answer any questions you may have about the study. If you feel unable to display the materials, please discard them, or return them to me at the at address below.

This project will form the basis of my doctoral thesis in psychology, and is supervised by Dr Carol Percy, at Aston University.

Yours sincerely

Anna Sandfield
Psychology Department
South Wing Floor 6
Aston University
Aston Triangle
Birmingham
B4 7EE

Tel.   0121 359 3611 ext. 4720
E-mail: sandfiav@aston.ac.uk

Interview Brief Description Record Sheet
Anonymous details to be included in study

Date..

Pseudonym...

Brief Description

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Address Record Sheet

I would like a record of your name and address in order to be able to post to you a follow-up enquiry and transcript of the interview. These details will not be kept with the details of your interview or made available to anyone other than myself. My record of this information will be destroyed once you have received your transcript. If you do not wish to receive any communication through the post your wishes will be respected.

Name

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Address

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Research Contract for Relationships Study

Researcher's Briefing and Undertaking

This interview will involve us talking about your experience of and/or views on marriage, relationships and being single. There will be scope for us to move onto other related topics if you feel it is appropriate. You have the right to end the interview at any point and to choose not to answer questions.

The interview will be tape-recorded, typed up and analysed afterwards as part of a larger study. The recording will be destroyed after a copy has been typed up in order to preserve your anonymity. If you wish to withdraw your interview from the study, the transcript will also be destroyed.

In order to make sense of the interviews, when I write up the findings of the study I will need to include a brief description of the participants. I will post you a copy of the typed interview script, together with a copy of this description once these have been typed up [usually within six weeks]. You will be a given a pseudonym and your real name will not be used, neither will any other names or personal details mentioned during the interview.

I am not deceiving you in any way about the purposes of this research, and am happy to answer any questions you have about the project.

As a postgraduate research student, I agree to abide by the British Psychological Society's Code of Conduct and Ethical Guidelines for Research with Human Participants.

Signed: Researcher   Date:

Participant's Briefing and Undertaking

I have agreed to take part in this study, on the basis of the written briefing made available to me by Anna Sandfield. I agree to the interview being tape recorded and transcribed as outlined above.

I understand the purpose of the study and give my informed consent to be interviewed. I understand that I have a right to withdraw at any stage of the interview process, and to withdraw the data I have provided, up to the point at which I am given the opportunity to view and veto (withdraw) the transcript.

I accept that a brief description of myself will be used in papers written up for research, on the basis that this description will be agreed with me, as outlined above, and that my name or identity will not be revealed.

Signed: Participant   Date:

A signed copy of this agreement to be kept by (i) the researcher and (ii) the participant. Only a *blank* copy of the agreement may be inserted in any papers or research reports.

Interview Schedule

Personal relationship status

1. How would you describe your relationship status?
2. How long have you been single/in that relationship/married?
3. Do you feel, you made a choice or did you just 'end up' single/in relationship/married?
4. At the moment are you contented with being in this situation?
5. Can you think of any ways that it makes a difference to your work/social life/family life... what you do/where you go etc.?

Titles

1. When you are filling in forms or introducing yourself do you call yourself
2. Miss/Ms/Mrs?
3. Did you ever address yourself differently?
4. If yes, why?
5. If marriage reason:
- Did you change your surname?
- If yes, did you consider keeping your maiden name?
6. Did you consider using Ms?
7. If changed title:
- How did you feel when you first started using your new title?
- Did it take a while to get used to?
- Do you think other people might have treated you differently?

Experiences of relationship status change
1. Do you remember a time when your relationship status was different (if applic.)?
2. Do you remember when your relationship status last changed?
3. What was that like for you?
4. Did you feel different when your relationship status changed? Happier/different before/after.
- Did you do different things then, see different people?
5. Did it have other implications for your social/familial life?
6. How did others react, your friends and family, your parents?

Constructing alternatives
1. Are your friends, mostly married/single?
2. Does this make their social/family/work life different to yours in any way?
3. Does their being married/single make any difference to how you relate to them?
4. Do you think their relationship status will change?
   Can you see them staying married/single or things changing for them?

Evaluating current relationship status
1. Would you say there are advantages, for you, being married/single?
2. Do you think that people in other situations, married/single, are missing out in any way?
3. Would you say there are disadvantages, for you, being married/single?
4. Do you feel that being in/not being in a relationship changes you/the way you feel (about yourself)? In what way?
5. Do you do different things/see different people inside/outside a relationship? Please give some examples.
6. Do you get on with others differently when you are inside/outside a relationship?

Future relationship status
1. Would you like to see your relationship status change in the future?
   How/when?
2. Why? What differences do you think this might make/would you like this to make to your life?
3. If single: Do you have a particular idea about the sort of person/relationship that you are looking for? Could you describe them/it.
4. Do you do anything now that might help bring about this change/find this sort of person?

Personal Reflection
1. Do you remember particular times when being in a relationship or not really made a difference to you/was good or bad?
2. Do you generally consider that you've been happy/happier when you have been in/out of personal relationships?
3. Do you talk about your experience of relationships in the past with friends/family or with your current partner?
- Have you discussed your future expectations with friends/family?
4. Could you describe any ways you can think of that they've affected/changed/been of advantage to you.

Terminology
1. When was the last time that you used, or heard someone else use, the word 'spinster'/'bachelor'?
- Who was saying the word?

- Who were they/you describing, in what context?
- What does the word mean to you?
2. Do you hear people use/use the word 'single' often? Do you remember one of the last times you heard it?
- Who was saying the word?
- Who were they/you describing, in what context?
- What does the word mean to you?
3. Do you often hear people use the words: 'wife' and 'husband', 'partner'?
- Who was saying the word?
- Who were they/you describing, in what context?
- What does the word mean to you?
4. Have you ever/do you use any of these words to describe yourself (if not part of previous answers)?

Interview Reflection
1. Has talking about these issues brought up any particular thoughts or feelings?
2. Were any parts of the interview particularly interesting/enjoyable for you?
3. Is there anything you wanted to talk about/expected to talk about that we have not mentioned?

Post-interview Contact Information

Thank you very much for participating in this project. Your contribution will be both useful and valuable and, hopefully, the interview process will have been interesting for you also. The tape of your interview will be typed out and analysed and form part of my ongoing research, which will continue for another two years.

If you have agreed to provide a postal address you will receive further communication giving you a chance to tell me about any thoughts or feelings you have in response to the interview later on. You will then receive a typed script of the interview to keep, giving you further opportunity to review its content.

Don't hesitate to contact me further if you have any concerns or queries regarding your participation in this project at some point in the future, my contact details are included below.

Thank you
Anna Sandfield

Psychology Department
South Wing, Floor 6
Aston University
Aston Triangle
Birmingham
B4 7EE

Phone: 0121 359 3611 Extension No. 4720
E-mail: sandfiav@aston.ac.uk

Tuesday, June 12, 2001

Singleness, Relationships & Marriage Study

Dear *Participant,*

Thank you again for taking part in the study. Enclosed is your typed-out copy of the interview. For purposes of confidentiality your name has been replaced by the name '*pseudonym*' and the names of others you may have mentioned have been replaced by bracketed descriptions of their roles, e.g., 'Sandra' might be replaced by '(my sister)'. In addition to this the script is dotted with symbols which indicate features of speech: pauses [**(.)** or **(1)** number of seconds paused], emphasis [underlining], extended sounds ['oh:' is equivalent to 'ohhh'] or overlap and interruption of speech ['you said=' '=I said' shows interruption and 'you [said' '[I said' shows speaking over each other].

If you have no wish to contribute further please discard the attached response sheet and use the envelope for your own purpose. However, if you wish to make further comment or would like to contribute anything further to my study please return the response sheet in the stamped envelope provided.

The study on singleness, relationships and marriage will continue till October, 2002. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely,

Anna Sandfield
Psychology Group
South Wing Floor 5
Aston University
Aston Triangle
Birmingham
B4 7ET

Phone: 0121 3593611 Extension No. 4356
E-mail: sandfiav@aston.ac.uk

Singleness, Relationships & Marriage Study
-Interview Feedback-

If you would like to make any comments in response to your transcript or contribute any further information to the study please take this opportunity to write below and then post this sheet in the envelope provided to: Anna Sandfield, Psychology Group, South Wing Floor 5, Aston University, Aston Triangle, Birmingham B4 7ET.
If you would like a response please include your name.

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Transcript Notation Key

(.)	Unmeasurable pause
(2)	Measurable pause
=	Interruption
:	Extended sound
[	Speech overlap
(laugh)	Non-verbal utterance or word replaced (e.g. confidential name)
underline	Emphasis
xxx	Untranscribable
[laugh]	Doubtful transcription
(*italics*)	External interruption

DAVE

2   Anna: How would you describe (.) your relationship status?

3   Dave: Single (.) technically (laughs). <u>No</u> I'm actually going to London tonight to see someone

4   who I've been (.) in contact with for the last two months on-and-off (.) but (.) but I'm

5   single now.

6   Anna: You would call yourself single?

7   Dave: Yeah.

8   Anna: Right okay. So how long have you been single?

9   Dave: (sighs) Good point. Er: six months?

10   Anna: Right. Did you make a planned choice about being single or did you end up being single?

11   Dave: (1) I ended up being single er:m I (.) finished (.) the last (.) relationship the I was in so

12   that was my choice <u>but</u> (.) er:m I enjoy the single bits between (.) seeing people and I

13   enjoy that aspect and having my independence and having a social life and not having to

14   think about <u>it's nice having someone there</u> but when there's no one there I appreciate

15   having the space and that I can do what I want I don't I'm not obliged to (.) give up any of

16   my time.

17   Anna: Mm yeah. So do you feel that <u>at the moment</u> you're making a choice to remain single?

18   Dave: Erm (1) I have and there's a very good example of (.) why I have met a few people like

19   this year (.) and like I went on a few dates with someone recently but it just wasn't (.) for

20   me and (.) I have been single for six months but I'm not one of these people that erm (.)

21   thinks I'm gonna go out with the next person that comes along to stay with them so that I

22   (.) so that I can avoid being alone. If it's not for me then being single is more important at

23   the time being so.

24   Anna: Right.

25   Dave: But yeah this (.) this guy I went on a few dates with I just knew it wasn't for me and it

26   wasn't worth pursuing just for the sake of (.) not being alone and it wasn't worth wasting

27   his time (.) so I gave him the bad news.

28   Anna: At the moment are you contented with being single?

29   Dave: <u>No</u>! (laughs) I'm (.) getting a bit (.) <u>bo:red</u> I was getting bored until about (.) a month ago.

30   Anna: Right.

31   Dave: But erm (.) there are times when I am and there are times when I'm not and I and I think

32   it's more recently I've just been thinking that I could do with someone but it's not <u>to have</u>

33   <u>a companion</u> that but that could lead to more than just companionship (.) if that makes

34   sense.

35   Anna: Yeah.

36   Dave: But er: (1) erm I'm content with my status but yeah as I say it could change (laughs)

37   unfortunate in the next few days I'm not sure.

38   Anna: Does making does being single make a noticeable difference to you to the amount of time

39   you spend on your work or your social life or your (.) family?

40   Dave: (2) <u>Er::m</u> I think it's more of a difference makes more of an impact on my social life <u>and</u>

41   my work life. Family aspect of it well I've always got time for my family because they're

42   not too far for me I always make time for them if they want me to go to them I have done

43   I've dropped everything but they've been understanding when I've been seeing someone

44   though so that's not a problem. But social life yeah I think I love being with my friends

45   and I love seeing (.) my friends and going out and doing what I want (.) and when I have

46   been dating people it has kind of (.) <u>restricted that</u> but I've not minded but I have noticed

47   then.

48   Anna: Right.

49	Dave:	Being single I've got more time to fit people in I think with me people feel (.) <u>I don't</u>
50		<u>know why</u> but when I don't (.) have not been able to get in contact with someone they
51		feel <u>left out</u> say why I haven't contacted them so I feel like I'm (.) giving a bit to
52		everyone.
53	Anna:	Mm.
54	Dave:	And being single allows me to do that. (1) Don't like putting people out even though
55		sometimes I <u>put myself out</u> by being with them.
56	Anna:	Does it make any difference to the time you spend on your work?
57	Dave:	I think so <u>yeah</u> 'cause when I do have time to myself I think I may not be practically
58		doing things like writing notes and being actively doing work but I think about things and
59		think what I want to do and think how I want to structure my time rather than starting the
60		next day (.) and just <u>launching</u> myself in to something for the sake of (.) being like I'm (.)
61		doing work. It gives me more time to just to structure what I want to do next with my
62		work.
63	Anna:	Yeah.
64	Dave:	I've noticed that about myself but only (.) I'd say in the last year when I've really had to
65		think about (.) it's only the last year I've had to really think about structuring (.) what I
66		want to do in the time-scale I want to achieve it. I'm quite xxx being by myself allowed
67		me to do that.
68	Anna:	When you're filling in forms or introducing yourself do you use Miss, Ms or Mrs? If
69		you're required.
70	Dave:	Er:m it's only on forms that would apply to (.) er:m very formal but I always say 'Miss'.
71	Anna:	Right. Have you always used Miss?
72	Dave:	Yea:h (.) I'm not sure I know people use 'Ms' (.) erm I don't (.) I don't know if people are
73		trying to hide what (laughs) if they're single or not by using 'Ms' is very ambiguous.
74	Anna:	Mm.
75	Dave:	But I (.) just always think of myself as 'Miss'. It's just me it's my title. I (.) I haven't
76		really thought too much about it it's kind of more automatic now just (.) put 'Miss' or tick
77		'Miss'=
78	Anna:	=Yeah=
79	Dave:	=on a form. I don't know why I use that just always have.
80	Anna:	(1) Have you changed your surname ever?
81	Dave:	No.
82	Anna:	Now you've already mentioned erm that erm (.) if you were to get married you might
83		change your name would you see yourself changing your surname and your (.) Miss to
84		Mrs?
85	Dave:	Yeah I'd definitely use the Mrs title (.) I don't know about changing my name I don't
86		know I like my name but I suppose it depends on the person who I marry (.) I <u>probably</u>
87		<u>would</u> change it (.) to their surname.
88	Anna:	Right.
89	Dave:	Er:m (2) just probably yeah of 'cause it's probably traditional (laughs) or it's the <u>thing to</u>
90		<u>do</u> the right thing to do to change your name. But yeah I'd definitely call myself Mrs
91		there's no doubt that I'd change it then <u>because again</u> it's another it's not ambiguous then
92		that you're attached to someone and married to them and (1) that's the title that goes with
93		it.
94	Anna:	And would that be important to you? To have the title. To have all the changes use a
95		different name (.) a difference.
96	Dave:	I don't about <u>I don't know how</u> much the surname change would make a difference what
97		to me?

98	Anna:	Mm.
99	Dave:	To my life?
100	Anna:	Well no, to how you feel.
101	Dave:	To how I feel? I'm not (.) I'm not sure it would make a difference to me (1) I mean the ti
102		Mrs sounds so I mean I'm twenty-four but Mrs sounds so grown up to me (Dave and
103		Anna laugh) well maybe I don't feel grown up! But I don't know maybe it's just my
104		perception of there's a certain amount of (.) I don't know maturity and responsibility
105		attached to 'Mrs' (.) the whole title thing so that would probably I'd probably already be
106		you know make me feel different about myself. That I'd have to be more responsible I've
107		got another person to think of.
108	Anna:	Right. So d'you think that would be a good thing?
109	Dave:	(Laughs) I don't know er:m probably yeah. Again I think it's it's kind of er (.) probably a
110		word that summarises changing of roles when you go into marriage.
111	Anna:	Yeah okay. Do you remember the time when you became (.) single?
112	Dave:	(1) Any specific time?
113	Anna:	Well you could (.) you could think about the last time you became single or any time it
114		was (.) if there was a point that was more that was more=
115	Dave:	=Prominent.
116	Anna:	=yeah but I was thinking about whether if you think about times where you've changed
117		from either being single to being in a relationship or being in a relationship to being single
118		whether the kind of adjustments you had to make?
119	Dave:	Er:m quite a few times when that's changed er:m I'll try and think of an example and
120		describe what I went through. Is that the type of thing you want? Erm (1) I broke up with
121		someone at the beginning of (.) March I think it was last year (.) and it was my decision to
122		end it (.) and erm (.) when I finished it I (.) you get used to having this person around and
123		they're part of your life and he was a big part of my life I used to spend a lot of time with
124		him (.) but things were going slowly wrong and it was a case of (.) save the relationship or
125		save myself (.) things were going quite badly wrong and I decided to finish it and I don't
126		think I quite bargained for the feelings that I would experience after it was kind of (.) I felt
127		like (.) half of me was relieved I thought right I can try and get my life back on track I
128		was really ill at the time as well I'd come down with that some virus and [just
129		emotionally a lot of things had been taken out of me I felt it hindered my recovery
130		somewhat and I just had to try I was ill for like two months so I thought got no choice
131		I've got to do this for me and he wasn't exactly helping either. Well half of it was relief
132		then I was able I felt like I can get on with just getting myself better but (.) I I was very
133		tearful about it (.) even though it was my decision I felt felt (.) lost I felt I kind of
134		questioned whether I could have really saved it? Whether I could have done anything
135		more or whether I'd done (.) enough. He was going through a rough patch as well he was
136		pretty much stressed out and I was thinking 'Was I a good girlfriend? Did I run away?'
137		er:m 'Oh God I'm gotta be alone! No more seeing him.' No more (.) having that person
138		there suddenly like they're gone.
139	Anna:	[Yeah.
140		Yeah.
141	Dave:	Just like that! In an instant. And it was difficult because I saw him quite a few times (.)
142		after that quite a number of times erm (.) at (location) and I kind of (.) I was resolute that I
143		wasn't going to get things back together rekindling anything but he wanted to and I ended
144		up having to cut contact which was sad because (.) we did get on and (.) he was s good to
145		me and he was sweet to me and I hope he finds someone else to make him happy it's just
146		I'm not that person but (.) I was more lost (.) than anything. I knew I had to readjust my

147		life and (.) try and find something to take (.) my time up suddenly all this time had been
148		freed up all these evenings.
149	Anna:	Yeah.
150	Dave:	That I didn't have before. Evenings that were just automatically gone when he used to
151		come and see me or when we used to meet up or we'd go for like a lot of Sundays we'd
152		go for tea (.) things like that suddenly (.) got these gaps (.) time. And I think (2) I could
153		have been (.) it could've been more daunting having all this time to myself but because I
154		was getting better I was erm (.) I was trying to put my efforts into that and trying to (.) put
155		some weight back on! (laughs) 'Cause I'd lost a stone.
156	Anna:	Right.
157	Dave:	And though and I became anaemic as well I had a blood test just after we broke up and I
158		and it turned out I was anaemic as well and that didn't help. So I had to change a lot of (.)
159		it just like happened that time I had to change a lot of things in my life (.) the way I
160		looked after myself I had to eat (.) a lot better (.) so (.) it was good for me but it was good
161		it meant it dealt with that time that I would've been sitting there thinking (.) 'Haven't got
162		anything to do,' or I'm thinking 'I wonder what he's doing.' Yeah I came out of it alright
163		I think it took me about a month.
164	Anna:	Mhm.
165	Dave:	To sort myself out get my head round what I'd done accept my (.) I think I it's all very
166		well making that decision to finish it but I had to accept (.) that I'd done it as well.
167	Anna:	Yeah.
168	Dave:	I had to (.) sort it out in my mind that I had done the right thing and (.) accept what I did
169		take the consequences that come along with it (.) but yea:h there was a lot of re-
170		adjustment. No one to take me to football matches! (Dave and Anna laugh) He used to
171		take me to erm I support (football team) he used to take me he took me to my first game
172		so I found myself thinking about the matches and thinking 'Oh: if he was there.'
173	Anna:	Yeah.
174	Dave:	But no: I think I came out of it alright. Probably better than he did! (laughs)
175	Anna:	That wore off?
176	Dave:	Mm. Gradually yeah.
177	Anna:	(2) How did other people react when you became single? How did your friends=
178	Dave:	=At that point? Er:m I mean my parents (.) my Mum knows a lot of what's going on (.)
179		my Dad doesn't say much but he's very protective of me so it's not that I hide things I
180		just don't talk to him about that aspect of my life unless things are going well and I feel I
181		can tell him it's stable. Mum I think at that particular point was (.) felt sorry that it didn't
182		work out (.) she didn't (.) I had to explain to her why I was doing though because I think
183		she felt 'Was there no chance you could save it?' because she could see (.) she'd met this
184		guy when things were going well so she wanted to know what had gone so badly wrong
185		but I felt I just wanted out (.) so erm (.) I've lost myself now could you repeat the
186		question? How did other people react to it? I think my flatmates were great they knew that
187		I was really (.) cut up but in fact my flatmates have been great like I've seen someone last
188		summer and they've been supportive friends have been supportive (.) but I'm one of these
189		people I think when things do go wrong (.) especially things like that whether it's my
190		fault or not I take it personally I take it on board and (.) er: kind of feeling sorry for
191		myself I only feel short space of time but I've always had (.) I've got a (.) a substantial
192		social network and they've always been there to help and they've always listened and let
193		me ramble on but I do that with other people and I listen to them as well when people
194		have problems so it's good I've got people there who've been understanding. (1) I think
195		me I just like to yap about my situation I don't necessarily want advice 'cause I kind of

196	work things out as I'm going on I need a listener and I've had quite a few of them erm
197	and I think the decisions I've made regarding whether it's working things are working out
198	or not in a relationship-sense people haven't (.) told me that I'm doing something wrong
199	or I'm doing it right people have said 'I can see your point of view,' they've been
200	supportive then (.) I think they've reacted pretty much okay.
201	Anna: Mhm.
202	Dave: <u>Well they've reacted the way I want them to</u> I can't say no that anyone's tuned their back
203	on me that they just don't want to know. No people have been there (.) I'm lucky I think.
204	Anna: Do you think that er: relationships that have been important to you that you've changed (.)
205	through them?
206	Dave: (1) Yeah I've (.) this answer that (.) I've think (2) think you learn things about yourself
207	when you're single but you don't necessarily know it but I've noticed when I've been in
208	relationships I've noticed things about myself that have changed. Er:m a lot more
209	compromising (.) thinking (.) directly of someone else <u>I've learnt</u> (.) I think (.) I've learnt
210	about (.) me as how I can behave to someone that's close to me that sounds a bit strange
211	but (.) don't know how to express it better. I do notice little things about me when I'm
212	with (.) someone that I'm close to (.) a boyfriend. Er:m yeah I'm I I I don't know. (1) I
213	can't think of anything specific that I can think just <u>changed</u>. (1) But I always come out of
214	a relationship with lots of new information I think 'Right I won't do that next time' but
215	they I think I think 'I know not what to do next time I go into a,' or 'I know what to do or
216	what might be better,' so I come out of it thinking 'Yes well I've got all this experience
217	now, the next one will <u>work</u>.' (laughs).
218	Anna: Do you think that your friends or your family will have seen changes in you (.) through
219	say when you're in a relationship and when you're single [do you think that they'd see
220	changes?
221	Dave: [My family probably wouldn't.
222	Again because by the time my Dad's on the scene it's going okay or I just don't tell him
223	at all. Erm no probably not so much I think Mum's just relieved that (.) I do tell her things
224	so she doesn't necessarily notice any changes in me she's just happy that I'm keeping her
225	informed that I (.) think well enough of her to tell her 'Well I've met this person,' like she
226	knows I'm going to London tonight but er:m I think yeah 'cause 'cause I left h I think
227	things stem from when I left home with that the family aspect (.) and I think my Dad
228	thought I was having this new independent life and he was trying to keep away and (.)
229	slowly he's come back to the idea he <u>does</u> want to know what's going on she's <u>not</u>
230	abandoned the family and my Mum I think in that respect is the same she just appreciates
231	it (.) when I tell her (.) things are going on (.) keeping her informed erm. Friends (1) I
232	don't know if they notice any change in me (.) I think (.) like specific examples like my
233	<u>good friends</u> know when I'm happy or sad about a relationship or they know when
234	something's going wrong or they can tell like there's been times when like I've seen one
235	particular person like (.) t he one I broke up with in March last year people knew when I
236	was happy I remember somebody telling me you know 'I've you bouncing about and you
237	always talk about him with a smile on your face,' so people I think notice not so much
238	changes but (.) my state of mind.
239	Anna: Yeah.
240	Dave: My present state of mind people are able to tell that in relationship to the relationship that
241	I'm in (.) but I don't know about specific changes in the person. No I think that's about it.
242	Anna: Okay. Are your friends mostly married or single or in relationships?
243	Dave: It's a mixture. Only one of them's married. Well two of them they're married two each
244	other, two of my ex-housemates and they only got m they got married (.) just under a year

245		ago but they're the first out of my lot. As for relationships (.) erm it's a mixed bag quite a
246		few are single (.) actually yeah they're either single or they've been in long-term
247		relationships there's no in-between.
248	Anna:	Right.
249	Dave:	They're either single or yeah or it's been like they've been going out with this person for
250		three years or something (.) quite a few of them have been going out with their like blokes
251		for years.
252	Anna:	Does that do you are there differences that you can see in your relationships with the
253		people that are in relationships [or married.
254	Dave:	[Definitely.
255		Definitely. I think (1) single I think (.) the friends that are in relationships when you talk
256		to them well it is a big part of their lives because they've been with this person in intimate
257		contact for years or what-have-you they tend to talk about that (.) and not much else
258		(laughs).
259	Anna:	Right.
260	Dave:	They tend to talk about just that really and I feel like (.) someone in my position who's
261		single I mean because I'm single there's no one person who's a big focus a big part of my
262		life lots of things are important lots of things that might be trivial to them are important to
263		me because I think (.) 'cause I've got there are more things that take up my time not just
264		one person but many people and many things.
265	Anna:	Yeah.
266	Dave:	Erm and like with my single friends I can chat about (.) those type of things but I think I
267		do find myself in a different type of conversation when I'm with my friends who have
268		been in relationships for years 'cause two of my close friends have both been in
269		relationships for like three years, both of them and like one's living with her (.) partner
270		and the other one's about to move in so it's lots of like (.) I guess (.) it's issues that are
271		called like married issues things around the flat and house and what with furniture and
272		things that I'm probably not gonna do for quite some time. So I think I yeah type of
273		conversation's different.
274	Anna:	Okay. Would you say that there are advantages for you in being single?
275	Dave:	(2) Yea:h there are advantages to being in a relationship as well but as far as single's be
276		(.) is concerned (.) 'cause I'm someone who used who is used to having people around me
277		I like when I went to university I sudden like before I went university I'll have to go into
278		this for it to make sense but I mean (.) I was I wouldn't say I was popular at school but I
279		was one of the square people I think I was classed as so when I got to university and this
280		instant group of friends who liked me for being me I've kind of lived on that (.) since
281		about eighteen and I'm used to having this group of people so being single allows me to
282		keep that maintain that type of contact with lots of people and that's what I love about my
283		life at the moment. Erm I mean obviously there are things that I like about being in a
284		relationship but being single I think it's (.) it's kind of xxx my social network I can have
285		access to it I'm not letting anybody down. If someone rings me up and they want to go
286		out I'm like 'Yeah! Go out!' or you can just yap to them on the phone it's having lots of
287		people there.
288	Anna:	Do you think that people who are married or in relationships miss out on some of the
289		things that they would have if they were single?
290	Dave:	(2) I'd say yes but it depends on (3) oh it depends on they're missing out on things from
291		my point of view but not necessarily from their point of view they might be happy as a
292		twosome and (.) but it's just that I know friends I;ve just again using examples from my
293		life like the two that have got married (.) the two ex-housemates (.) when (.) they were

294		seeing each other for about four years they like started going out at the beginning of (.)
295		university when we all went like (.) in a particular group in (location). <u>The girl</u> out of
296		those two was very good friends with me and another girls and she kind of cut us off (.) I
297		don't think she realised she was doing it though but she did she cut us off and erm (.)
298		things went a bit pear-shaped. Everything's alright now but I think that sometimes people
299		like that they <u>cut off</u> their social networks and sometimes it's an outside kind of like outlet
300		that people need even if it's now and again just to maintain some kind of sanity. I mean
301		one friend admitted recently erm (1) that she has cut off all her friends (.) and she says
302		somet like her boyfriend and her have lots of up and down ups and downs like a roller-
303		coaster ride and (.) she said there's times when she just needs friends and she hasn't got
304		any now apart from me and a few others 'cause she's cut the lot off without me and the
305		other two she's with her boyfriend like <u>all the time</u> and that's yeah I just think it's (.) it's
306		more of an outlet (.) <u>healthy</u> if you like to have something else outside the relationship
307		else you just end up being totally dependent. But it's good you can have someone you can
308		be dependent on in a relationship (.) at least it's stable then. But there again it's something
309		that's (.) having outlets.
310	Anna:	What would you say are the disadvantages for you about being single?
311	Dave:	(2) Er:m (.) I think the disadvantages <u>for me</u> sometimes (.) it's not in terms of self-esteem
312		I sometimes think I wonder why why aren't I going out with somebody is there something
313		<u>wrong</u> with me? Y'know is it my <u>appearance</u> is it what something that I <u>do</u> (.) I'm a nice
314		person why? It's I only think this this is only now and again but erm (.) it does cross my
315		mind I think 'What's the matter with me?' I take it as a reflection upon myself that I'm
316		single (.) sometimes. Er:m it's it's intimate contact as well I <u>do like it</u> when I'm with
317		someone like the holding hands and everything that goes along with it and (.) being
318		physically close to someone I miss that as well. Now and again it crosses my mind that
319		'Yea:h it would be nice.' Physical close physical contact again (.) to put it in a (.) a nice
320		way (laughs).
321	Anna:	Okay.
322	Dave:	Yeah it's having someone you can have that type of contact with. (1) And being s yeah
323		and being able to be <u>that close</u> to someone who's not (.) just a friend it's being a <u>bit more</u>
324		<u>than that</u>.
325	Anna:	Okay. Would you like to see your relationship status change in the future?
326	Dave:	Mhm (drinking noise) yeah I'm bored of being single! (laughs) I've got to the point where
327		I'm bored I just need a man. But er:m having said that o:h <u>it's weird</u> it's like waiting for
328		men's like waiting for (.) buses you wait for ages and then like two or three turn up at the
329		same time (.) unfortunately that's the situation I'm in at the moment like two of them
330		have turned up on the scene and I'm trying to decide well I've already dealt with one
331		(laughs) didn't get on the bus (laughs). But I might be getting on the other bus. But no it's
332		something that I'd like to change I think (2) you can only take (.) being single for so long
333		(.) maybe it's just the society we live in or it's the particular (.) group that I'm with (.)
334		people are either single or they've had this (.) not short term things but they've had
335		something established that they've worked at and I think I do want to be in something like
336		that again that I can put some effort into.
337	Anna:	Right.
338	Dave:	I feel I'm at the point in my life where (.) I could do with something stable like that. Fed
339		up with the dating game. So yes I'd like (.) I'd like it to change yeah.
340	Anna:	(1) Maybe you've given me some of them but what kind of differences do you think that
341		would make? If things changed for you.

342	Dave:	(Laughs) Er:m (4) boost the self-esteem for a start I don't know I do (.) get attention like
343		people beeping at me in cars and things but I guess it's not the same as somebody actually
344		talking to you wanting to know about you. A bloke doing that wanting to know about you
345		and what makes you tick I don't know I think that's nice. They wanna take the time to get
346		to know you and they wanna be your companion and (2) they can see you being a big part
347		of (.) their lives it's nice that I could mean that to someone.
348	Anna:	Mhm, yeah.
349	Dave:	Yea:h. It is (.) nice (.) but what will it change? Er:m (2) I don't know it's probably my
350		temperament there are times when I like being single and then I like being in relationships
351		as well (.) I like both. (1) But I suppose at some point the ultimate goal is to find a partner
352		for life I guess (laughs) and then (.) yea:h I think that's probably it the ultimate thing it's
353		not so much I don't think there's such a thing as Mr. Right but it's searching for someone.
354	Anna:	Right.
355	Dave:	Searching for that someone. And like lots of my frie like people talk about marriage at our
356		age now (.) which never used to be the thing normal people are getting married younger
357		and younger. Not necessarily that I want to get married now there's lots that I want to do
358		with my life and having a long-term person might restrict that but I don't know (.) can't
359		see it. Mm. (1) Yea:h I just happen to be in the temperament where I do want someone (.)
360		that could change but at the moment.
361	Anna:	So you probably do have particular ideas about what kind of thing you want?
362	Dave:	Yea:h (laughs). Do you want me to elaborate on that? Mm type of things that I'm looking
363		for (2) [they're all.
364	Anna:	[Are
365		you.
366	Dave:	Sorry.
367	Anna:	I was just going to say is it a er a relationship that you were thinking of that you could
368		have with another person or did you do you specifically that you want to get married?
369	Dave:	No I don't want to get married just yet. I think I need to be dating someone for quite a
370		while before I think I could go into marriage and know it was stable enough but what type
371		of things that I'm looking for. I don't know erm (.) everyone talks about compatibility but
372		I'm not sure about that opposites can attract (.) I've found that in the past opposites can
373		attract I don't know someone that I get on with there's no awkward silences we can talk
374		about everything enjoy the same types of things someone that I'm able to go out with and
375		(.) I'm not going out to what they want to do just to please them or they'd not do things
376		just to please me maybe that's too idealistic. But erm (3) yea:h a companion.
377	Anna:	Do you (.) do anything now that might bring about that kind of change? Not necessarily
378		directly looking for but do you feel that for example when you are dating people do you
379		look for that kind of long-term things or.
380	Dave:	No er: (.) I can tell if something I think is going to work for me or not (.) not necessarily
381		long-term capability just whether it's going to work or not I tend to act on that and er:m
382		it's not necessarily it can take quite a few dates and meetings because I've found with me
383		it might not necessarily click it can take a few meetings. I've clicked with people after
384		like weeks suddenly something's there for me and I've acted on it but (.) did you say is
385		there anything I can do now that might [bring about that change?
386	Anna:	[Is there anything that you (.) do or think about or at the moment.
387	Dave:	That would change my status? (1) I think one thing that worried me I don't know if it's
388		relevant but one thing that worried me at one point was that at my last university I had
389		quite a lot of male friends but coming here (.) it's a lot of females and I had a lot of
390		trouble getting used to that 'cause I'm used to having not just male friends but (.) there's

391		been times when like m male friends something potential could happen or something
392		potential has happened taken place and I feel like when I came to (location) I didn't have
393		those opportunities erm (.) I think it's meeting people. I guess as well I like having (.) that
394		what I said about my social network 'cause it's not just yeah I like having a mixture of
395		people in there but I think like to meet someone (.) I can't just sit at home it's gonna
396		happen (.) keep thinking that I have to be out there.
397	Anna:	Right.
398	Dave:	Not necessarily looking but if I'm not out there then there's no chance (.) of my status
399		changing?
400	Anna:	Yeah.
401	Dave:	Being out there and just even going out down the pub or something like that and going to
402		a club (.) it's like for me it's keeping myself out and about.
403	Anna:	Can you think of any particular times or incidents when being in a relationship has been
404		particularly good or bad for you? Illustrative.
405	Dave	Good or bad (2) er: bad points I think the main one is thinking that you feel you're
406		compromising and doing all the running around the other person isn't doing anything (.)
407		and I've felt that like (.) a couple of times the last person I was like seeing for a few
408		months last year (.) I felt that I was running around (.) doing all the work trying to (.)
409		make quality time not that we were seeing each other heaps but erm (1) yeah I just felt
410		that I was banging my head up against a brick wall I didn't so I just decided to finish it.
411	Anna:	Right.
412	Dave:	Er:m bad points yeah I think bad points is the compromising thing making two of you
413		making sure the two of you are doing things it's not not that's not necessarily always the
414		case.
415	Anna:	No.
416	Dave:	Er:m good points (.) guess just having a laugh going out and being able to have a laugh
417		with no stress about it I think that leads back to (.) bad point I think like some someone
418		that I've dated in the past (.) he wasn't so much jealous (.) when (.) like other men were
419		eyeing me up and stuff but he did think about it quite a bit I suppose you would but he
420		didn't take too kindly to it he was the type of person who could react badly.
421	Anna:	Mhm.
422	Dave:	And I didn't like that (.) but then I can't blame him (.) but. A good point then is that being
423		able to go out and have a laugh with someone and enjoy their company and not feel that
424		stress that treading-on-eggshells or anything.
425	Anna:	Do you generally feel that you've been happier in relationships or out of relationships or
426		does it depend?
427	Dave:	It depe:nds it does depend it depends on my mood and it (.) I couldn't say one way or the
428		other because I enjoy being single but when I'm in a relationship when I'm single I
429		appreciate being single and all the space the goes along with but when I've been with
430		people I enjoy it (.) as well so I think it's a mixture (.) it's balanced (.) and it does depend
431		on how well the relationship is going.
432	Anna:	Yeah.
433	Dave:	In that when it's going well then yeah I love it.
434	Anna:	Do you talk about your past experience or future expectations with your friends and
435		family?
436	Dave:	I don't really talk about future expectations with either it's more either like groups it's
437		more kind of (.) what's going on at the present rather than long term future or 'I want to
438		be married by this,' something like that I don't think like that I just talk about what's
439		going on at the moment but (.) families (2) er:m I certainly don't discuss any past

440		experiences with my family but I think it's kind of been and gone and they still think like
441		especially my Dad still thinks I'm his little girl so the less said about my past the better!
442		But erm Mum no I talk about the present what's going on at the moment if there is
443		somebody I talk to her about it but I don't (.) live in the past I think (.) friends (.) I don't
444		necessarily talk about past experiences as such I refer to them if like their talking about
445		something and I say 'Yeah yeah that happened to me,' and they're 'Here's a story about
446		this one aspect of this funny aspect of this relationship I was in.' I kind of refer to
447		incidents and things when it's appropriate.
448	Anna:	Yeah. When was the last time that you used or heard someone else use the word
449		'spinster'?
450	Dave:	(Sighs) Not for a long time. I think probably (.) the person was me (.) in relations to my
451		(.) last (.) when you say the it's like when you say the word 'spinster' I orig I
452		automatically think of my headmistress from my school.
453	Anna:	Right.
454	Dave:	She's a spinster! (laughs) No I don't think it's commonly used at all but I can well (.) just
455		imagine it was me that used it in relation to this headmistress when I've been talking to
456		school friends.
457	Anna:	Right.
458	Dave:	That's the only time I can think of.
459	Anna:	Can you think of what context you used it in?
460	Dave:	Er when I'm with one particular school friend we're kind of we always reminisce about
461		school (.) and the teachers and things and when this happened and when that person and
462		'Ooh did you remember when this person did that?' and (.) amongst that is my
463		headmistress this (1) she (.) is quite high-profile she always likes to in the news she
464		popped up in the news in the grammar school debates recently she's always there as
465		something so she always gets a mention in our conversations in relation to something and
466		I don't know er I think spinster I think her because she's kind of this (.) headmistress of
467		this all-girls school and there's no men in her life and she has two cats (.) this big house
468		(.) and that's when I think spinster. And the fact I don't wanna end up as one! (laughs).
469	Anna:	How about 'bachelor'?
470	Dave:	(1) Now this is strange I (1) there's an age thing that goes along with it I mean I think
471		'spinster' and I think of this old biddy sitting in a house in an old peoples home (.) which
472		is not a very nice way of putting it but when I think 'bachelor' it's like any young (.)
473		eligible man (.) and this is it could be a young person. 'Bachelor pad' with all these like
474		young men living in a flat 'bachelor pad' but yeah I think it's an age thing. Definitely so I
475		think of like (.) young single men who are like quite happy to be single and like (.) all the
476		fun that goes along with it (.) is my impression of a bachelor.
477	Anna:	Okay.
478	Dave:	All the fun and all the girls but not necessarily sticking to one girls kind of just enjoying
479		life to the fullest.
480	Anna:	Right.
481	Dave:	Parties and drinks and (.) football (laughs).
482	Anna:	Do you hear people use the word 'single' about themselves and other people?
483	Dave:	Can you repeat that sorry.
484	Anna:	The word 'single'.
485	Dave:	Yeah.
486	Anna:	Do people say it often about themselves or other people?
487	Dave:	(2) I think people say it about themselves (.) I don't think they comment on other (.)w ell
488		from my experience they don't er I don't really say 'Oh she'd single,' or 'He's single' it's

489		more you use it in terms of yourself describe your status to make known 'This is my
490		status (.) single.' Yeah it's definitely a self-description.
491	Anna:	Okay. How about the words 'wife' and 'husband' do you hear people use these to each
492		other or (.) about themselves?
493	Dave:	(") I think this is not a self-description this is someth terms that people use to describe
494		other people (.) obviously in a marriage. Like 'His wife,' especially I think it's used in the
495		context of if you're talking about a person they know and he's like he's married they say
496		'Mr. Oh Robert whatever and his wife.' Or vice versa 'What's-her-name and her
497		husband.' I think that type of context it comes up.
498	Anna:	How about 'partner'?
499	Dave:	(2) Er:m I think (.) you can use it to describe your st your own situation your per your
500		other person in your life I think 'partner' seems to be the more commonly used term as
501		opposed to 'boyfriend'. I don't know why I've just noticed that like 'partner' kind of
502		comes into conversations more than 'boyfriend' 'other half' I think people use it to
503		describe (.) it can be used across any age as well I think (.) like we've got this family
504		friend who's like you know must be late forties I'm not s she's split up she's been split up
505		for about five years from her husband and she's been dating someone for like a year or
506		two now and refer to him as her partner. So it's like it's (.) across all ages.
507	Anna:	Right. Do you use (.) any of these words to describe yourself or have you used them?
508	Dave:	(2) 'Single' (1) and (.) no I wouldn't say I don't know why I haven't I use the word
509		'partner' I don't know why. 'Single'.
510	Anna:	Okay have any of the things you've said been particularly (.) interesting particularly=
511	Dave:	=What things?
512	Anna:	Are any of these particular issues?
513	Dave:	O:h (2) yea:h I think (.) it's interesting for me why I think I'm happy being single why I
514		think I'm happy in a relationship and (.) the difference between that you know the
515		differences within me when I'm in either state. Think that's been thought-provoking
516		because it is temperament because sometimes I think 'Well I like being single I like this I
517		like my space,' but like recently I've been like 'I want a bloke I want a bloke, I'm bored
518		I'm bored I want a bloke.' I don't know why I just suddenly think these things I just feel
519		like it (.) at the moment. But yeah definitely the difference between the two states states
520		(.) has been thought provoking for me.
521	Anna:	Okay. Er are there any things that erm you wanted to talk about or expected me to talk
522		about that I haven't mentioned?
523	Dave:	(2) No: but I didn't know what to expect (.) I knew it was about relationships but.
524	Anna:	Okay. Right erm do you have anything additional you can think of? That might be
525		interesting.
526	Dave:	Did you have anything in mind? Anything that I haven't mentioned?
527	Anna:	No.
528	Dave:	No.
529	Anna:	Okay. That's okay that's all the questions that I have.
530	Dave:	Okay.
531	Anna:	Thank you.
532		

1		
2	Anna:	Right, the first question is (.) how would you describe your relationships status?
3	Eva:	In what sense?
4	Anna:	Are you married?
5	Eva:	Ah no, no (laughs).
6	Anna:	Do you have a boyfriend?
7	Eva:	Yes, I have a boyfriend but I'm not married.
8	Anna:	Okay.
9	Eva:	Not yet (.) someday (.) I hope.
10	Anna:	Really?
11	Eva:	I hope (laughs).
12	Anna:	How long have you been in your relationship?
13	Eva:	Three years, in a while.
14	Anna:	Do you feel that you made a planned choice about being in that relationship or did you
15		just end up in that relationship, did it just happen?
16	Eva:	It just happened. I didn't actually want to plan anything bu:t (.) now it is time to plan
17		something because if not our lives are going to be very different so.
18	Anna:	Right.
19	Eva:	Because I want to stay here and he's there.
20	Anna:	Right.
21	Eva:	In Spain, so now we have to plan something because if not (.) there's no point to keep
22		going.
23	Anna:	So it just happened at the time but now you feel you have to=
24	Eva:	=Yes, not because I want but I want that at the moment. The circumstances, didn't (.)
25		make us plan anything because our life was in a sense very easy always.
26	Anna:	Yes.
27	Eva:	We all get on very well and we were very [respect/spent] together and now things are
28		getting more complicated because I am here and I want to stay here longer and if we don't
29		make a plan.
30	Anna:	Mhm, yeah.
31	Eva:	There's no way (.) we can see each other.
32	Anna:	So at the moment are you contented with how things are?
33	Eva:	Yes, yes, yes, yes because we make a plan.
34	Anna:	Mhm.
35	Eva:	Because if not, no.
36	Anna:	Does it make a difference to your (.) daily life, do you think your life is different because
37		you are in a relationship?
38	Eva:	Yes: well, not really now because I cannot feel this, in a sense yes because you are always
39		thinking about the other person.
40	Anna:	Yeah.
41	Eva:	You know (.) but (.) just a little bit now because I am always waiting for his phone call
42		and this is (.) the difference that he makes me now.
43	Anna:	Right.
44	Eva:	To to to be with someone (.) anyway in fact it makes difference because I'm thinking
45		about looking for a job for him somewhere with him so yes, yes (.) yes, yes.
46	Anna:	Does it make any difference to your social life, the things you do? The people you see?
47		(2) Do you think your life would be much different if you were single?
48	Eva:	(1) Not really, not really, no. I am doing (.)perhaps I spend more time with him, with him,
49		but I still have the same friends and we have common friends so it's not a problem.

50	Anna:	Right, okay. When you are filling in forms (Eva coughing) or introducing yourself do
51		you call yourself Miss, Mrs or Ms?
52	Eva:	Mrs?
53	Anna:	Do these things mean the same to you?
54	Eva:	Which ones? Ah these, well I like this.
55	Anna:	You go for Miss?
56	Eva:	Yes.
57	Anna:	Yeah. Have you always used this? Now I don't know if this is a fair question because do
58		those, do you have the same equivalent for the three in Spain, in Spanish?
59	Eva:	Mm: no. They didn't ask never, they just ask us in questionnaires or something if you are
60		married or not, you don't have to write anything.
61	Anna:	Okay.
62	Eva:	But in case, even in Spain, I use Miss.
63	Anna:	Have you always used Miss?
64	Eva:	Yes.
65	Anna:	Have you ever considered using Ms?
66	Eva:	No (laughs), in the future yes but not now. No.
67	Anna:	Do you have, I don't know, I don't if this is a fair question, some people use Ms whether
68		they are married or unmarried, and use Mrs if they are married (.) um but you use Miss.
69	Eva:	Yes, yes.
70	Anna:	Would you change it to Mrs if you got married?
71	Eva:	(2) Mm, perhaps, yes.
72	Anna:	Would you change your surname?
73	Eva:	Mm: no, I don't want to.
74	Anna:	Why not?
75	Eva:	(Cup noise) Because I want to be (2) I have my personality I'm, I'm my personality erm
76		in a sense, perhaps it is not correct to say this but is related with my name my surname as
77		well so I don't want to change it. I won't change it.
78	Anna:	But you would take the first part, the marriage first part, the change from Miss to Mrs?
79	Eva:	Yes (.) but just because (.) I want (.) I want to let know people that I'm not (.) as you
80		know I used to be in a sense, a little bit older.
81	Anna:	Right, so if you change it to Mrs then, that would be, that would tell people that you were
82		married and would tell people something about you?
83	Eva:	Yes, but I don't want them to know a lot about me (laughs) so I am not going to put I
84		wish I don't have to, to take my (.) my boyfriend's name, surname. So (.) I just want to
85		give an idea of (.) I am older, I am (.) nothing else.
86	Anna:	Right, I see. Do you think that's a good thing? Do you think people, if they think that
87		you're married and that you're older (Eva coughs) do you think that would (Eva coughs)
88		change the way that you xxx?
89	Eva:	Mm probably (.) probably (.) yes (.) yes. I think that people (.) some I er 'cause have I
90		this feeling always I think that young people are not well-considered in the society so
91		when you get married or something it means that you are a little bit older (.) you are going
92		to be more (.) considered in the society.
93	Anna:	Yeah, I see. Do you remember (.) the last time you were single, when you weren't in a
94		relationship?
95	Eva:	The last time I was single? Yes.
96	Anna:	Was it a lot different? Do you remember how you (.) was your life at all different or were
97		you (.) less happy? Were you.

98	Eva:	No I was very happy. Actually I I didn't want to have (.) any relation after my last one
99		and I was very happy alone. Er:m (.) but he appear and I could not do anything (Eva and
100		Anna laugh) I was not looking for nothing, but er I didn't want er nobody near, close to
101		me, well a relationship. I was with my friends, my life, my things and I didn't need
102		nobody.
103	Anna:	So <u>what</u> was it like, did it make a big difference when you started seeing your boyfriend?
104	Eva:	(1) Yes (.) in the both cases I was very happy (.) bu:t because I, perhaps we didn't start (.)
105		in a very strong way I mean because I was, it was in summer okay and I was going
106		abroad.
107	Anna:	Mhm.
108	Eva:	So we start and we knew that perhaps (.) that I was going abroad and then perhaps
109		afterwards we were we didn't we would not see each other again because just we were
110		together just a few weeks so perhaps (.) that's why perhaps it was (.) it didn't make a lot
111		of difference with my happiness, it was not very different (.) with my happiness because I
112		didn't think it was forever.
113	Anna:	Yeah.
114	Eva:	In that time, I didn't want anything (.) important. After that month, all was very strong
115		(laughs) and we couldn't split up (1) so (.) the question was?
116	Anna:	The question was: what kind of difference did it make? Do you remember having to (.)
117		did you have to make any adjustments, changes to your life when you started seeing your
118		boyfriend?
119	Eva:	No because, like I told you.
120	Anna:	Yeah.
121	Eva:	Perhaps sometimes again perhaps the way we are make us (.) yes, perhaps the way we see
122		things and the way I talk and the way he talks needs some adjustments because (.) I talk a
123		lot and he (.) didn't used to talk a lot and I need somebody who talks a lot so in that sense
124		yes.
125	Anna:	Right (1) what did your friends and family think when you started seeing your boyfriend?
126	Eva:	They were very happy, <u>yes</u> (.) yes.
127	Anna:	Have you talked about, do you talk about your relationship with your boyfriend to them?
128		Do they like your boyfriend?
129	Eva:	Ye:s.
130	Anna:	Mhm. Do you think <u>they</u> would see you differently? Do you think that, when they knew
131		you when you were single and now they know you and you've got a boyfriend do you
132		think they would see any difference?
133	Eva:	My friends and my family?
134	Anna:	Mhm.
135	Eva:	(3) Well, one friend of mine yes (.) because he was always (.) he was always <u>with me</u> and
136		now he cannot be always with me.
137	Anna:	Right.
138	Eva:	He was always, we were very close (.) we were like sister and brother we were very close
139		and (.) now we are not (.) that close. But <u>we are</u> still friends I mean.
140	Anna:	Yes.
141	Eva:	For me (.) doesn't (.) it didn't, it hasn't, oh! It didn't change anything, the fact that we are
142		not that close because for me it's like, he is still my best friend but (.) he suffered a lot (.)
143		he was very sad with me.
144	Anna:	Ah. I'm going to ask you a bit more about this a bit later in the interview but you did say
145		that maybe you want to get married in the future some time.
146	Eva:	Yes.

147	Anna:	Er, have you spoken to your friends and family about that, do they expect you (.) to get
148		married?
149	Eva:	Yes.
150	Anna:	They do?
151	Eva:	Yes sometime yes.
152	Anna:	Do they think that would be a good thing?
153	Eva:	Well, not all (laughs) well my family yes, my friends say that er:m well perhaps you are
154		going to ask me this afterwards I don't know but my friends are not really agreeing with
155		me. They think that I have to live with my (.) boyfriend first.
156	Anna:	Right. Oh. What do you think?
157	Eva:	No (laughs) I don't think so. Well, perhaps we are going to live but not because I want I
158		mean, not because I plan 'Okay, before getting married we have to live together,' I don't
159		want that, I don't want to think about that but because of circumstances which as this,
160		perhaps I am going to live with him. I don't really want to. You know what I mean
161		(laughs).
162	Anna:	Are your friends erm er (.) mostly single or married, do they mostly have partners,
163		boyfriends or girlfriends?
164	Eva:	Er:m (1) it depends.
165	Anna:	Mm.
166	Eva:	Half-and-half, no they are not (.) just two are married and um one one is divorced, the
167		other is (.) married just for a month (.) or less, and the others have couple and the others
168		have (.) most of the my friends that are boys (.) are alone.
169	Anna:	Right.
170	Eva:	Are single.
171	Anna:	Do you think that it makes much difference to people's lives (Eva coughs) have you seen
172		your friends like, your friends that have got married (Eva coughs) has it made their (.) has
173		it changed them at all? Or your friends that are single?
174	Eva:	Er:m, the one who is divorced (.) yes a lot (.) because that is not is not very xxx her life is
175		very complicated and the other well yes, a little bit, we were very (.) we were very close
176		and we used to think (.) very closely and now (.) she's in the life, another life plan (.)
177		another way of thinking.
178	Anna:	Right.
179	Eva:	Because her life is completely different, because they are married, because they are
180		divorced because of these things. Perhaps I don't understand most of the things (.) and the
181		other I don't know because I haven't see her because I was here so I don't know. I I think
182		so, I think so.
183	Anna:	Mm. Can you see the people you know who are single getting married or do you think
184		that people, do the people you know want to be in relationships or want to be married?
185	Eva:	Yes. But not with (1) well (.) the boys yes (.) but the girls no. The boys that are single,
186		they want somebody not marriage perhaps but they want somebody. But (.) my girl well
187		my girls who are friends of mine no, they are not looking for nothing. If somebody comes
188		it's okay but (.) he has to be very good.
189	Anna:	Mhm.
190	Eva:	So xxx and this is a very wide trend tend, you know that, yes I can see that.
191	Anna:	What would you say are the advantages for you in having a boyfriend?
192	Eva:	Advantages?
193	Anna:	Mm.
194	Eva:	(3) Well you have, first of all that you have (.) a very good friend close to you (.) this is
195		the (.) [delicate part] that you have somebody (.) that you can trust with (.) you can trust

196		with him and (.) and that, is nice also too with a friend you can do the same okay but (.)
197		sometimes with a boyfriend I don't know why <u>but</u> you think more with the both and I
198		think that is nice to think for two people (.) more than for one when you cook you cook
199		<u>for two</u> when you think about going to the cinema it means you are two (.) it's nice. You
200		can do the friend but sometimes is more don't know why is it difficult is more difficult.
201	Anna:	Yeah. Do you think that people who don't have a partner miss out on some of those
202		things? (1) If you think of the people you know who are single do they have.
203	Eva:	In fact yes but they have a another things. I mean (cup moise) I think that the both
204		situations are very good (.) if you are happy so if you are single and you are happy and
205		you are with a (.) and you are with a couple and you are happy (.) you don't really miss
206		anything from each other because you are happy.
207	Anna:	Right.
208	Eva:	So perhaps they miss that but they have another things.
209	Anna:	Okay. Do you think that you have changed (.) yourself since you've been in a
210		relationship? Do you think it's done good things for you [the way you see yourself.
211	Eva:	[Yes.
212		I have changed a little bit (.) because no:w (1) mm let me think (.) no because I am very
213		(.) when something happen to me I am very I can blow up very quickly I am very (.)
214		perhaps if I am angry I can be very angry very quickly bu:t he is very calm and he makes
215		me realise things carefully and he makes me think when I am angry so I can analyse
216		things properly now <u>but I used to as well</u> (.) even if I was not with him but now I notice
217		that I improve this part of me and this I know. As you know when you are very angry and
218		you say things and you do things and you never think about that (.) I think he makes me
219		feel 'What have you done? Why do you feel this?' You know, so, yes in a sense this is my
220		big change I think.
221	Anna:	Right.
222	Eva:	<u>Even with the</u> in the way I speak I am more calm than before.
223	Anna:	Right.
224	Eva:	I used to speak very quickly and I used to (.) and now because he is very calm (.) I need to
225		speak slowly.
226	Anna:	Mhm.
227	Eva:	It is good because now understand me better no? (Eva and Anna laugh).
228	Anna:	Er would you like to see things change in the future? Which would (.) be like (.) would
229		you want to get married?
230	Eva:	Ah yes. I want to see (.) if I could see that in the in the in the whole of the world you
231		know like imagine that we have a [thing] that will make us [see my future I would like.
232	Anna:	[Yeah.
233		When would you like that to happen?
234	Eva:	Mm (.) well erm (.) now because I twenty-four, twenty-eight, twenty-nine.
235	Anna:	Mm, so not, not a long way into the future.
236	Eva:	Mm, well no, it depends how you see that long, is a little bit in the future four year, three
237		years, ah well, four years. I don't want to be [that hurrying] these things.
238	Anna:	No, right. What differences do you think it might make (Eva coughs) to you in your life if
239		you got married?
240	Eva:	(coughs) Hm (4) I don't know. Not really. I think that when you are married is one step
241		more (2) it could mean that perhaps you are not as free as you are now in the sense that (.)
242		you because after you're married <u>there are children sometimes</u> so you have to, you have
243		to think that the children are closer if you are married so you don't have to think of two
244		people you have to think (.) in more people if you have children, you have to make plans

245		with more people involved so in this sense my life is going to change because I will have
246		to think (.) harder and with more people and sometimes you cannot do. When you are
247		two, no problem, you can go, you can travel you can move to one country and another but
248		when you (.) if you are more than two you have to think more carefully than this so (.) if
249		the marriage imply children, it can be a big difference in my life.
250	Anna:	Mhm.
251	Eva:	A big difference. If not, no. But because after a marriage there are always children it will
252		be.
253	Anna:	And you want to have children?
254	Eva:	Yes (.) three (Eva and Anna laugh).
255	Anna:	Is that one of the reasons you want to get married?
256	Eva:	N:o I don't (.) no. No. I want to get married because (.) I want to get married (.) I I do you
257		want to explain you why I want to (laugh) because I think that (2) is like er:m okay,
258		here's a contract, a:nd is like a contract that can save you from a difficult situation in your
259		couple. If you don't have this contract is very easy to say one day 'I am bored of you (.)
260		leave.'
261	Anna:	Mhm.
262	Eva:	If you have that contract (.) er:m I think that all the couples have bad (.) bad times and bad
263		(.) periods and bad things a:nd with that contract because it imply lots of things is
264		complicated to to destroy this contract you think more careful (.) more carefully 'What am
265		I going to do with my future?' so perhaps you are going to be bored, imagine <u>one year</u> but
266		perhaps the the flame of the love or whatever is going to reappear and then it would be a
267		pity, you know.
268	Anna:	Yeah.
269	Eva:	I don't know how to explain this (.) but xxx.
270	Anna:	No I do yeah, no. (1) Do you have to (Eva coughs) do you think about it now, do you
271		think that you have to (.) if you, you said that you would like to get married in the future
272		do you think about, you said that now you have to arrange your life and you had to be
273		active about arranging your life so you could stay in a couple. Do you think that erm, let
274		me start again if you were single I would ask, and you said you wanted to get married, I
275		would ask have you made any, do you make any changes to your life to make that
276		happen, so do you think you will have to make any changes in your life to make to get
277		married if you want to?
278	Eva:	Now yes, as I told you, because he is there and I am here (.) if in the future I want to stay
279		with him next year we have to live together or we have to stay together at least (.)
280		somewhere.
281	Anna:	Yeah.
282	Eva:	Otherwise (.) because if I want to work here it will take, I don't know how long I am
283		going to work here but I want to go to Ireland. But if I want to go to Ireland I don't know
284		how long it will take for me to work there I cannot say to a company 'Okay I am leaving
285		(.) next year,' because they are not going to hire me so (.) now I am doing these changes
286		in my life we are planning something because we are we want to stay together and we
287		don't really plan to get married but (.) if we don't have this plan now, for sure we are not
288		going to be married because I don't know how long I am going to stay in Ireland.
289	Anna:	Yeah.
290	Eva:	So (.) is a kind of plan (.) connected to it.
291	Anna:	Yeah. Can you remember any particular times when being in a relationship was very good
292		for you or very bad? When it either made you really happy or it caused you a lot of
293		problems?

294	Eva:	Very, very happy (1) always. Well not always no. I don't remember (.) before coming
295		here very very happy always.
296	Anna:	Right.
297	Eva:	Afterwards it was difficult for us (.) every time we see each other after a while, it's (.) I'm
298		not sad anyway but it is difficult to (.) to be as close as we used to be because of these
299		times so a little bit of bad times.
300	Anna:	Yeah.
301	Eva:	Exist since I'm here but afterward we are still close and when we have to leave, I have to
302		come here or he has to go there, is very sad so (.) and then it is difficult to (.) to match
303		again but afterwards we are very close.
304	Anna:	Do you talk about your relationship with your boyfriend with your friends or with your
305		family? And do you discuss (Eva coughs) the things you might want in the future, do you
306		have to discuss them with your boyfriend?
307	Eva:	If I t I didn't understand the question.
308	Anna:	Well the first part of the question was about whether you often talk about your
309		relationship (.) with your boyfriend (.) if you talk about it with your family or with your
310		friends (.) maybe you discuss it.
311	Eva:	Er I used er of course I speak with my (.) er with my family I don't want them (.) I speak
312		with them about my relation but I don't really like (.) I don't want to go very deep with
313		my parents because (2) er: I had a break up with my previous relationship and (.) my
314		parents: (1) when we spl split erm (2) er my parents were very sad, in a sense.
315	Anna:	Yes.
316	Eva:	A:nd I don't want them (.) to know a lot of my feelings and my things because (.) they
317		know already my boyfriend and I don't want them to know more about him.
318	Anna:	Yes.
319	Eva:	Just in case something happened and then you know, because they suffer (.) they have
320		suffered a little bit in my previous relations so I don't want them to suffer again jus=
321	Anna:	=Right.
322	Eva:	If we speak I hope not just in case I want to have a (.) distance with my parents. And with
323		my friends yeah we talk about, but I didn't I prefer talking with my boyfriend rather than
324		with my friends because my friends cannot do anything (.) I mean if I have problems with
325		my boyfriend my boyfriend, my boyfriend is the one who's going to sort my problem for
326		me and (.) because I have lot of friends and everybody is going to tell me something
327		different so, probably.
328	Anna:	I see. Right, I have some more questions about words. (Clears throat, cup noise) Sorry, do
329		you know the word 'spinster'? No? Okay.
330	Eva:	(Laughs) Oh, we will have problems here!
331	Anna:	Well that's okay um, it's a word we have for old unmarried women, women who don't
332		get married.
333	Eva:	Who are married?
334	Anna:	Who are not married.
335	Eva:	Okay.
336	Anna:	Who never get married. It's generally used for old women who have never been married.
337		Do you have an equivalent word?
338	Eva:	We we call single. But I I have a (.) I have a vision in my head (.) it's kind of [women
339		old].
340	Anna:	So you haven't heard this word before probably?
341	Eva:	No.
342	Anna:	What about 'bachelor'?

343	Eva:	I heard that but I don't know in this context (.) is something to do with studies or
344		something.
345	Anna:	Uhuh, okay. It's also used to mean a <u>man</u> who has never got married.
346	Eva:	Ah.
347	Anna:	Do you hear the word 'single' often? Is it something you hear people call themselves?
348	Eva:	(3) Here perhaps yes. Here everybody is asking you if you are single? Well not
349		everybody.
350	Anna:	Yeah.
351	Eva:	In the interviews or (.) or in application forms (.) in Spain is not that usual.
352	Anna:	Right.
353	Eva:	Is not (2) no, no if you don't <u>ask</u> (.) they don't tell you.
354	Anna:	Right.
355	Eva:	Here is more (.) I don't know (.) I have never think about I mean sometimes I don't know
356		when when I was trying to find things I was looking at the word like 'I don't know, why
357		are they asking me that?' it was strange for me but I am now used to it back in Spain they
358		don't use this.
359	Anna:	They don't have it on forms.
360	Eva:	<u>Well yes</u>, perhaps yes but (.) not as us <u>here everybody</u> is asking you if you are single or
361		not there is not (.) as usual as here.
362	Anna:	Do you have you got any thoughts about why?
363	Eva:	(2) Yes (.) I have I have had some thoughts about why they were asking me that (.) yes,
364		specially (.) specially when I am applying.
365	Anna:	Right.
366	Eva:	Well okay in Spain (.) you have to put in your C.V. if you are single or not.
367	Anna:	Right.
368	Eva:	Is the same (.) bu:t here (.) I don't know (.) when I am applying and they ask me if I am
369		married or single or something I'm like (1) 'Why do you mind? Why do mind that I am
370		single or not?'
371	Anna:	Mhm, yes.
372	Eva:	Sometimes I don't want to put er my (.) my marital status or however you say, how do
373		you say (.) marital status.
374	Anna:	Yes.
375	Eva:	Is not (.) their concern what I.
376	Anna:	No that's true. Why do you think more people here are interested?
377	Eva:	(1) I don't know because another thing (.) perhaps is not really this but it can (.) perhaps
378		you can think about that because they will say 'We don't have any any problem with
379		different ki kinds of nationalities, race races and genders.
380	Anna:	Mhm.
381	Eva:	<u>Which gender are you</u>? (Eva and Anna laugh) Which? Are you White, Black, Caribbean?
382		<u>So</u>: they say that they don't have any problem but (.) if they don't have any problem they
383		wouldn't ask me all these things so perhaps (.) they have problems with that (.) in in the
384		bit (.) in a little way (.) they are really really interested in all these things (.) even if they
385		say no.
386	Anna:	Yeah. Do you hear people using the words 'wife' and 'husband'?
387	Eva:	Yes.
388	Anna:	People call each other or call themselves that?
389	Eva:	Yes, it was very difficult, difficult erm (.) when my friends, from my (.) same age used to
390		say 'Ah my husband,' and it was like 'Oh <u>your husband</u>' (laughs) '<u>You are not that old!</u>
391		<u>You are like me!</u>' (Eva and Anna laugh) xxx like that 'my husband.'

392	Anna:	Okay, have you used any of these words to describe yourself (.) or your boyfriend (.) or
393		your partner?
394	Eva:	Which words?
395	Anna:	What sort of words do you use well when you say (.) do you say that you are 'in a
396		relationship' or that you have a 'partner' or that you have a 'boyfriend'? How do you
397		describe that?
398	Eva:	(1) I used to say 'the boy who's going out with me.'
399	Anna:	Right, that's different (Anna and Eva laugh).
400	Eva:	I have (.) well I say also 'my boyfriend' but with people that I'm (.) very close (1) well
401		with people that I know I probably say the name bu:t (.) with people that are not that close
402		but a little bit close 'my boyfriend' and then with people that are not (.) very important for
403		me 'the person who is going out with me' or with family as well because (.) is a
404		confrontation I think that if you say my boyfriend to my (.) to my f my father yes (.)
405		relatives (.) if you say to your Grandmother or your Grandfather you have a 'boyfriend'
406		for her (.) this is very important and if you say to her 'the boy who is going out with me'
407		(.) is not that important.
408	Anna:	Yes, yes, I see.
409	Eva:	Is like that, with people that I don't know or with my relatives xxx.
410	Anna:	Okay, right, erm (.) can you think of anything that I haven't asked you about that I might
411		be interested in, anything related?
412	Eva:	(7) No. No but (.) I don't know what exactly are you studying but if you can tell me (.)
413		why people I'm not (.) I don't know I'm not obsessed on this topic but (.) I'm always I'm
414		the person who's always talking around everyone (.) about (.) to be: to live your (.) your
415		partner before getting married or no so if one day you will study something related to this
416		why people are always telling you that they have to live with the partner before they be
417		married (.) tell me something because (.) I don't understand people! (laughs) I am like the
418		only person who don't want to do that! I think that it depends on that situation anyway
419		you know, if for a long time you know your boyfriend I think that is not (.) you don't
420		need to live with him, if you just knew him then you have to work and you have to live
421		flat by fl flat I know to [rent] you pay less a lot but in my situation in the situation of
422		knowing a boy for a long time and going out with him for a long time why you have to
423		get marr to live with him before getting married? And how long? Because tell me 'Ye:s,
424		for a while,' 'How long?' 'Oh I don't know you'll see,' 'How long?' (Eva and Anna
425		laugh) so if you have these answers sometime tell me 'cause.
426	Anna:	Okay.
427	Eva:	I have to know something about that just to say to my friends 'Look, because of this…'.
428	Anna:	Okay. Um, is there anything that you've expected me to ask you that I haven't or that you
429		thought I might talk about? No? Okay, are there (Eva coughs) anything else, any parts of
430		the interview that were particularly bad or good or anything like that?
431	Eva:	Well yes but it was a matter of (.) because I am Spanish erm yes [all that were related
432		with the words but.
433		But in a way is nice because they are different we don't have these words we have just a
434		single word for this the one that I told you 'single' we don't specify.
435	Anna:	[Oh, the terms, yes.
436		You don't specify people are like (.) old and not married.
437	Eva:	Yes, we don't have.
438	Anna:	You don't have a special word. That's very interesting.
439	Eva:	Yes, yes yes is very interesting.
440	Anna:	It does suggest that we are interested in finding it out.

441   Eva: I told you! (Eva and Anna laugh) I told you.
442   Anna: You did tell me. You were obviously right. That's all the questions I've got. Did you want
443   to say anything else that will go on the tape?
444   Eva: No.
445   Anna: Okay, thank you very much.

1		
2	Anna:	Okay, the first question is how would you describe your relationship status?
3	Sue:	(2) I have a partner, partnered.
4	Anna:	Okay=
5	Sue:	=Is that okay?
6	Anna:	Yeah that's fine. How long have you been in that relationship?
7	Sue:	Erm (3) three-and-a-half years.
8	Anna:	(1) Do you feel that you made a planned choice to get into the relationship, before you
9		were in that relationship did you want to be in a relationship? (1) Or did it (.) just happen?
10	Sue:	It happened, I was already in a relationship (.) with someone else and (.) pretty complex,
11		it happened it wasn't certainly by design.
12	Anna:	Right. So at the moment are you (.) contented with=
13	Sue:	=Very=
14	Anna:	=being in a relationship?
15	Sue:	Very.
16	Anna:	Right. Can you think of any ways in which being (.) in a relationship er: makes a
17		difference to your life? In comparison to how it would be if you weren't.
18	Sue:	Erm (1) well there's a whole range of things I mean we (.) this particular relationship I'm
19		in we we share a lot of the same values so (.) erm kind of life choices are very easy
20		because we're on the same wavelength er:m there's a lot of emotional support for each
21		other (.) I don't (.) I have female and other male friends but it's a kind of much closer
22		emotional support. Er:m (1) I'm pretty good on my own but I also like [the other side is
23		to] stave off loneliness and usual things that people do er:m as well as sharing very
24		similar values we share not similar backgrounds at all but interests in terms of education,
25		working with people so that's er (.) it has a great spin off for with my working life as well
26		which really means a lot (.) and that's it.
27	Anna:	Has it changed your social life?
28	Sue:	Yes it has changed my social life. Erm: (1) it's extended it (.) because we have quite
29		different backgrounds and quite different subject areas in terms of the way we've come
30		through and I mean academic studies an and vocational [practice] it's extended social life
31		I think for him and for me, yes.
32	Anna:	On to titles.
33	Sue:	Mm.
34	Anna:	When you are filling in forms or introducing yourself do you use do you prefer to use
35		Miss, Ms or Mrs?
36	Sue:	Er:m I don't like any of them, I don't really like titles but should it be an official form or
37		should anybody call me Mrs or Miss I I do correct them and say 'Ms.' But I'm
38		uncomfortable with it.
39	Anna:	You are.
40	Sue:	Mm.
41	Anna:	Have you changed that have you always preferred to use that?
42	Sue:	Well I was married some years ago so (.) I was 'Mrs' then er:m bu:t I didn't like the term
43		'Mrs' either so I guess I've probably used 'Ms' as soon as long as it's been around.
44	Anna:	Mm, right. Why do you prefer that?
45	Sue:	(2) Well I guess it's to do with labelling you know people kind of label you er:m (.) if I
46		can give you an example from application forms for work erm having been on the other
47		side of recruiting people you do you can't help it you make value judgements as soon as
48		you see 'Miss' or 'Mrs' and I think 'Ms' well you there's a value judgement there that
49		you make but it's less easy to see people's marital status er xxx. So that's what it's about

50	for me that I <u>want</u> to be seen as (.) <u>Sue</u> rather than as a label as an attachment to a man or
51	as a status which has a very negative connotation. So it's it's the best of three evils but I
52	(.) I don't like it again [no not at all].
53	Anna: Er:m have you ever changed your surname?
54	Sue: Er: uh this is complicated now. <u>Yes</u> my mother remarried so there was I had my name
55	changed by deed poll when I was twelve and so that wasn't kind of a consensual thing
56	just kind of happened with that erm and then when I got married when I was quite <u>young</u> I
57	did change my name to my (.) husband.
58	Anna: Right. What was it like when you did change your name?
59	Sue: Er:m (3) <u>strange</u> I mean as a (.) I would like to have thought I was a feminist then that I
60	had a <u>position</u> on changing my name (.) but there was something about commitment to the
61	marriage as well about changing my name so it was kind of an emotional difficulty. I
62	<u>quite liked</u> his surname but that's a completely bizarre reason, but there you go (.) and
63	thought it was probably better than the name I had and <u>possibly</u> connected to the change
64	of deed poll and my mother got divorced and all sorts of things <u>although</u> that was quite
65	positive for me it was more about defining me as a person (.) whereas before I'd been
66	defined by my stepdad's name so (.) it's quite complex really it wasn't kind of (.) 'I want
67	to change it to this because I'm marrying [you]' it's sort of it's kind of a [complicated]
68	thing. I was in my first teaching post then as well in a very traditional old-fashioned kind
69	of a school and I can in fact xxx to change my name so there was that kind of peer
70	pressure and I was a young new teacher and wanted to please, so it's a whole range of
71	reasons.
72	Anna: So has it been important ha h has changing your name?
73	Sue: Er: (.) I guess not really. I think it was important at that time and I think it was important
74	to my (.) then husband and it was important to my family I did lots of things I think to
75	please others because I thought they were the convention to do. <u>Privately</u> inside I felt (.)
76	not uncomfortable, that would be too strong, erm (.) I wanted to be strong as a woman and
77	as a feminist and [stay correct] when I want to remain (.) my own identity erm so it was
78	kind of a erm very confusing <u>mixed</u> reaction. Having said that since (.) after I'd got over
79	that kind of initial feeling it's been fine I've not had a problem with divorce then wasn't a
80	problem and I quite like the name so it was probably overall a quite positive thing to do
81	but it was quite a difficult thing to (.) go through the process of doing. Just to add if I did
82	it again I <u>wouldn't</u> change my name now but that's with <u>hindsight</u>, which is a wonderful
83	thing, that's with <u>age</u> er and I probably get married again anyway I probably wouldn't do
84	it.
85	Anna: Do you feel that you that you erm I don't know does it is it important to you that you have
86	your name=
87	Sue: =Yeah, yeah I think I've probably well I've <u>created</u> this persona (.) I am who I am people
88	know <u>who I am</u> and I haven't got any fantastic reputation or anything like that but I think
89	there's something about (.) erm it's been part of my recognised identity just like my xxx.
90	So <u>yeah</u> I'm comfortable with it.
91	Anna: Just going back to using titles, I know you said you didn't like using them, but have you
92	ever found that people <u>react</u> to (.) using Ms? Have people ever been interested in that or
93	(.) mistaken?
94	Sue: (1) Erm people do react to it yeah. I mean it depends what the setting is (.) if erm (.) well I
95	I was booking a holiday a:nd they just said 'Are you Miss, Mrs or Ms?' and I just said
96	'Ms,' and it was fine it was <u>completely objective</u> erm but there have been other occasions
97	where (.) maybe I've been having some post delivered or something like that and they'll
98	say 'Mrs...?' and so I'll say 'No Ms,' and they go '<u>O:h</u>.' You know so the (.) they think

99		it's (.) me <u>probably</u> being well I feel that they're making some kind of judgement about
100		me that I'm being <u>quite precious</u> or something like that.
101	Anna:	Mhm.
102	Sue:	So it does depend I mean (.) people who are used to working with the public and filling in
103		forms, all sorts of things, I just don't think it's an issue for them it's when it's kind of out
104		of the ordinary and people make assumptions and I <u>correct</u> them (.) I hope nicely (.) but
105		that's but that's when I get <u>what appears</u> to be quite a negative reaction to that.
106	Anna:	Okay, that's just I've found that when um, if I use that title people tend to <u>ignore</u> it and
107		send me post with 'Miss' on or 'Mrs' on. It's happened several times on the phone if I say
108		'Ms' they then take it upon themselves to pick which one they think.
109	Sue:	To pigeonhole you.
110	Anna:	Mhm. Can you remember a time when your relationship status was different? When you
111		were single or I suppose when you were married?
112	Sue:	Yeah mm.
113	Anna:	And can you remember when you when it changed? Maybe when you were last single to
114		when you were in a relationship? Or er what that was like and the changes for that?
115	Sue:	The there were lots of changes. Erm I'll go from when my marriage broke up to being
116		single again.
117	Anna:	Right.
118	Sue:	There was obviously a lot of hurt with it being broken up. I didn't initiate it so there was a
119		lot of emotional baggage. So it was (.) erm I felt enormously rejected and erm well my I
120		felt and this sounds very dramatic but the middle of my whole core being had been
121		challenged by this sort of relationship break-up so <u>being single</u> was not at that time a very
122		<u>positive</u> thing to be I didn't choose to split I was rejected so erm I mean I don't know that
123		long that lasted erm <u>but then</u> I began to find a lot of positives about being single erm
124		making my own choices er not having to run after someone else and get someone else
125		[food] and you know all that sort of <u>dreary</u> things that you do in relationships. Er I began
126		to think (.) erm that I had <u>subsumed</u> quite a lot of my personality in him (.) my husband
127		and so these were all very positive things erm <u>I missed</u> obviously the closeness the
128		emotional, physical side all those sorts of things that are important to when you're a
129		partner but I felt it was a <u>very strong</u> moment for me as a (.) as a <u>woman</u> in particular (.)
130		and as a single person.
131	Anna:	(2) So do you associate, was that <u>happier</u>, a happy time for you at all?
132	Sue:	Er: happy would be too strong it was erm (.) I mean initially it was a <u>dreadful</u> time I was
133		<u>very desperately unhappy</u>.
134	Anna:	Right.
135	Sue:	Erm but I came out of that a much, this is a cliché I'm sorry, stronger erm I think a more
136		interesting person so I I look, you can tell I'm wanting to talk about it now it was quite a
137		long time ago so it was it was an <u>important</u> time in my life but I don't think I was happier
138		I was stronger erm and more assured of myself as an individual so I guess in terms of
139		moving my next step moving on it provided (.) can't think of the phrase (.) really a very
140		strong basis for doing that erm <u>happier</u> I don't know. If I look back now I'll think well my
141		divorce was probably the best thing that ever happened to me and that sounds very <u>cruel</u>
142		but I have to that's with hindsight again and xxx but it was not a happy period and if erm
143		someone said let's wave a magic wand and said you're gonna be re-married I don't know
144		what I'd say. I think on balance I could live (.) if I'd had a chance to do that.
145	Anna:	Right. Did it change your (.) social life, your family life?
146	Sue:	Er: social life <u>yes</u>. It did change my social life because <u>friends</u> didn't know who to side
147		with and it became very like that it I don't mean in an uncomfortable way but it was it

148		was <u>difficult</u> to maintain friends that we'd had together. Erm (.) and that was difficult for
149		both of us so I (.) well some friends just sort of dropped away and others then I obviously
150		developed others who xxx life on my own. Er family erm (.) well my mother was living
151		with us so that had an enormous impact on her she was absolutely she lost it her husband
152		quite recently too so it was a dreadful dreadful time er and she blamed me. She wouldn't
153		say that now but she she did and so there was a <u>massive impact</u> on our family life. So it
154		was, it was very disruptive in terms of the whole series of relationships and I felt very
155		judged by (.) mother in particular <u>not</u> by my sister and for a period of time my
156		relationship with [my sister] was quite difficult there <u>although</u> you know we have
157		discussed it since. So yeah (.) big changes both friends and <u>totally</u> as a result of that
158		relationship.
159	Anna:	(2) How about between then and now? Have things changed a lot in your life?
160	Sue:	Oh what in those areas or just generally?
161	Anna:	Generally.
162	Sue:	Er:m (7) I guess relationship-wise erm (.) I don't know a very difficult question. (2) Well
163		there's lots of things to do with trust and you know you think these things are going to last
164		forever and all that sort of thing I mean <u>I know now</u> I'm much street-wiser about that and
165		much more xxx to situations erm but I think I'm much more <u>thoughtful</u> in terms of
166		thinking things through and trying to see xxx and I think I'm much more <u>balanced</u> I'm
167		much more self-assured than I ever have been and I'm probably realising that my (.) way
168		in life and my happiness don't [necessarily come down to] the relationships that I'm in
169		which is quite a big change there's this wanting to please which I've always thought as
170		being quite a <u>female</u> attribute erm I don't know it could be to do with getting quite a bit
171		older more experience and those sorts of things but I'm I'm much more self-assured in (.)
172		many aspects of my life I think that's a very that's a positive thing. I'm not quite sure.
173	Anna:	Are your friends or just people you know mostly married, or single, or partnered?
174	Sue:	Mm (2) mostly married and or partnered.
175	Anna:	So (.) if they're in similar situation does that make are there aspects of your lives that are
176		similar? Is it easier to um to know people who are in a similar situation?
177	Sue:	(1) Er:m (.) before being in this relationship that I'm in now I would've said <u>yes</u>. But (.)
178		probably I <u>had</u> gravitated towards people who were mirroring maybe kind of things that
179		we had been through. I don't feel that now I feel much more of my friends are (.) have
180		been developed organically I mean there is a group of friends who are sort of historical
181		used to go to college with I'm still friends with them (.) years and years later. Er:m but the
182		sort of current round of friends are more to do with (.) shared interests rather than er than
183		er (.) erm partnered state or or not and I think that's very important erm I think that
184		<u>biggest factor</u> within that is I haven't got any children.
185	Anna:	Right.
186	Sue:	<u>And</u> a number of my friends who have married partners and <u>have</u> got children and but
187		that's clearly a shared interest and while though I am interested in (.) kids erm you know
188		we're not doing kind of after xxx friends and stuff like that so our friendships re based on
189		interests: drama, theatre er xxx think <u>mature</u> maybe cerebral things or <u>work</u> or xxx and in
190		fact my <u>closest</u> friend is is homosexual so again he's not he's not in a partnership at all
191		but [things start] <u>so</u> (.) does that answer it?
192	Anna:	Yeah.
193	Sue:	Yeah, mm.
194	Anna:	(2) Could you tell me any advantages of being of being (.) in a partnership?
195	Sue:	Mm I'm gonna be a bit repeating myself here. Erm <u>current</u> partnership I would say maybe
196		not in previous partnerships <u>is</u> (.) well emotional well-being erm someone just to talk to in

197	a non-threatening non-judgemental way who you can bounce arguments off er erm xxx
198	students so erm (.) well there's all sorts of you know erm I mean obviously <u>physical</u>
199	advantages y'know <u>share</u> xxx and things like that (.) share resources but you know that (.)
200	I'm just not into that any more that would have been something that [I got out of] twenty
201	years ago it's not <u>they are there</u> and I suppose I'm in a comfortable position not having to
202	worry about (.) if I was unemployed I'd be fine so it might be a different answer to your
203	question but then much more to do with emotional things erm a physical, emotional,
204	sexual kind of relationship rather than the advantages of sharing xxx.
205	Anna: (1) Okay any disadvantages?
206	Sue: Er:m (14) perhaps you'd better switch off, I can't think of any disadvantages (.) <u>none that</u>
207	<u>come to mind</u> currently. Erm again the disadvantages are things to do with with sort of (.)
208	job prospects I guess you know <u>because</u> of where my partner is and where I am weren't
209	not probably in xxx and so on I'm not going to try and run for a job in <u>Exeter</u> or
210	something like that which might look really interesting I don't know whether it's a
211	disadvantage it's a consideration (.) so it may (1) <u>hinder</u> perhaps career development. I
212	<u>can't say</u> that it has I can't ever think probably you would resolve it but it's a possible
213	disadvantage erm. Can't think of any more.
214	Anna: Okay that's good. Do you think that the your relationship has changed anything about
215	you? The way you think or.
216	Sue: Er: I'm much more <u>balanced</u> than I used to be I'm much more prepared to (.) think
217	through the consequences of what I do and say er and I don't mean that I've become
218	logical rational those sort of (.) boring things but I am much more (.) in tune to er (.)
219	what's happening outside so and that has (.) certainly helped me cope. Like I said before
220	much more self-assured not necessarily self-confident but much more (.) <u>aware</u> of my
221	strengths and weaknesses and been able to perhaps work on them that's been a very very
222	strong focus for xxx relationships positively. Erm (5) <u>also</u> I've been less (.) concerned
223	with maybe the future which I've always been (.) a worrier about you know 'What if this
224	happens and what if that,' I'm I'm not saying that's gone completely but it's (.) it's <u>much</u>
225	<u>less</u> of a worry er it's not necessarily through my partner through my relationship it's
226	much more about (.) me being feeling stronger (.) a very positive (.) development for me.
227	Anna: Would you <u>like</u> to see your relationship status change in the future?
228	Sue: Mm no.
229	Anna: That wipes out some of these questions.
230	Sue: Oh dear [(laughs).
231	Anna: [That's okay, that's good, fine.
232	(2) More of a general question, do you consider that you've generally been happier when
233	you've been in or out of relationships?
234	Sue: In.
235	Anna: Do you feel that's because it (.) just suits you?
236	Sue: (4) I've never really analysed it erm (4) I would say it probably <u>isn't</u> because it just suits
237	me I think (.) I don't know <u>friends</u> or (.) ex-husband or whatever partners would probably
238	say that I'm pretty well self-contained as a person so erm (3) no I'm not one of these I
239	<u>don't</u> think I'm one of these who only xxx got a man (.) sort of thing <u>but</u> (.) I don't know
240	(.) I don't know that's not been xxx and I didn't really want to change but then I was back
241	in a relationship again so (.) it's really hard for me to judge on that one erm. (2) I have
242	liked being on my own and I have liked being with a partner in all respects <u>a lot</u> so those
243	things are important to me in a relationship and I still do value those sorts of things in a
244	relationship erm. I suppose on balance <u>yeah</u> I'm probably better in a relationship but I I
245	just don't know I can't be definite on that one.

246	Anna:	Mhm, okay. (3) Do you talk about your experience of relationships generally with your
247		friends or family?
248	Sue:	Very xxx.
249	Anna:	Okay, some questions about words. When was the last time you used or heard someone
250		else use the word 'spinster'?
251	Sue:	Oh I used it (.) just earlier on (Anna laughs) do I have to say when I think someone else
252		has used it?
253	Anna:	If you want, then.
254	Sue:	I can't think I really can't. I remember saying it earlier in our discussion but I can't
255		remember before that.
256	Anna:	Okay. When you used it earlier, you said that it wasn't a it was a negative word and it has
257		negative associations.
258	Sue:	Mhm (.) yeah I do believe that.
259	Anna:	Okay. How about 'bachelor'?
260	Sue:	Well not within the context that we that we're talking about here I mean I don't remember
261		saying or hearing the word bachelor in terms of you know (.) single guy but working (.)
262		within an education place you have your Bachelor of Arts and so on so that's the context
263		that I've heard it in I cannot remember it in another context it's not a word that I seem to
264		use (.) I don't think anyway.
265	Anna:	Do you here people use the word single about themselves and other people?
266	Sue:	Yes (.) quite a lot.
267	Anna:	(2) How about the words 'wife' and 'husband' do you hear people say that about
268		themselves and each other?
269	Sue:	It varies (.) erm and I think that's kind of an age thing er: (.) contemporary peers of mine I
270		think do say 'wife' and those who are married do say 'wife' and 'husband' and it is a
271		possessive thing erm those who are married and are younger I don't see that quite so
272		much I mean I could be wrong here I mean I don't (.) think there's any particular trend.
273		Erm (.) where there's a very strong family tie like with again with children I think it's
274		much more the 'my wife' the 'my husband' sort of approach but I you know I'd be
275		pushed to say (.) back that up with facts but that's that's an intuition yeah.
276	Anna:	Yeah. Okay, the word 'partner' you've used that. Do you hear other people use that?
277	Sue:	Yeah more and more now. Erm (1) again in the context that I work with I do quite a lot of
278		equal opportunities training and diversity training so it's something that I'm very (.)
279		conscious of and we use it quite a lot anyway in that setting or er challenge people to
280		think of a different word so (.) erm I have to be careful because I use it obviously in a
281		teaching and training context quite a lot. But (.) you know talking to people on the train or
282		er you know in social situations where I'm never gonna see them again people do much
283		more so (.) 'My partner,' much more than (.) I remember (.) two or three years ago so it's
284		quite a recent (.) that's been used.
285	Anna:	Yeah.
286	Sue:	Rather than boyfriend or girlfriend.
287	Anna:	Have you or do you generally use any of these words to describe yourself?
288	Sue:	Er:m (1) well I used them [at] the time you know I I I did use although [I'm not
289		physically single any more signalling] sort of a value judgement. 'Partner' I wouldn't use
290		any of the other ones.
291	Anna:	Right. Has talking about the things we've been talking about so far erm have you thought
292		of anything (.) else that I haven't talked to you?
293	Sue:	(9) I guess not I mean I guess the act of talking about it is (.) has been quite interesting for
294		me there's quite a lot buzzing round my head about (.) I haven't really thought these

295		things <u>through</u> before and (.) you know should you ask me them in a weeks time will I
296		have the same sorts of responses I don't know. So that the particularly the ones where
297		you've asked me about you know (.) am I happy? Those are quite [pensive] you just live [
298		and that's it so that's quite interesting that <u>that</u> has made me think about the way I am and
299		the way I was. I <u>can't</u> think of anything else no.
300	Anna:	[Yeah.
301		And the next question's gonna be were any of the parts of it particularly interesting or any
302		areas that are particularly interesting for you to think about.
303	Sue:	Well just as I said there well I guess the (.) main one where there was quite a lot of
304		questions was the transition from being in a relationship to being single.
305	Anna:	Mhm.
306	Sue:	Er:m (3) I <u>don't</u> think I've talked about that ever before so that's quite interesting to think
307		about erm I've obviously <u>thought</u> about it a lot personally but not actually physically (.)
308		said it. So that was <u>interesting</u> and quite har difficult I found it too. <u>Not I didn't feel</u>
309		<u>emotional</u> about it but just sort of drawing on (.) mm xxx er so it made me think that
310		maybe I haven't sort of resolved all that. (1) So that was interesting talking about that
311		er:m that kind of (.) that question you asked me which I found quite hard about er (.)
312		about being in a relationship rather than <u>not</u>. Is that is it me being in a relationship I found
313		that quite hard and I wondered when I was answering it was I erm trying to paint some
314		kind of idealised picture of myself rather than the old sort of (.) 'You're always going to
315		be with a man,' all sort of 'stand by him' and that kind of stuff or am I going to be this
316		strong (.) woman who's on her own and <u>that was going on</u> in my head.
317	Anna:	Right.
318	Sue:	And I was trying to kind of (.) put something sensible out which I can't remember <u>so I</u>
319		<u>found that interesting</u> that I found that quite difficult to respond to that (.) which is about
320		my [personality].
321	Anna:	The last question that I [want to] ask you i:s is there anything that you (.) <u>want</u> to put into
322		the interview or that you <u>expected</u> me to talk to you about, but I haven't?
323	Sue:	(1) Erm I guess I probably skirted round this and it wasn't that I thought you should be in
324		the interview but you kept asking about advantages of being in relationships and so on
325		and I have never mentioned a sexual relationship or I [didn't] say physical relationship
326		and things like that and I kind of thought maybe you might have asked about that (.) not
327		details but it might of clearly it's a major things in terms of a relationship erm so not
328		surprisingly I felt quite (.) embarrassed but mentioning that=
329	Anna:	=Right=
330	Sue:	=sort of thing so I kind of used a euphemism erm 'physical side'.
331	Anna:	Mhm.
332	Sue:	Erm but it's <u>clearly</u> a very important issue.
333	Anna:	Yeah, okay. Thank you that's all the questions. Okay?
334	Sue:	(Audible exhale)
335	Anna:	Thank you very much.

1
2 Anna: First thing I was going to ask you about was (.) how would you describe <u>your relationship</u>
3   status?
4 Chris: Okay erm I've got a boyfriend we've been together fo:r (.) just twelve months and
5   engaged for six months (1) yeah.
6 Anna: Okay, so you've already told me how long you've been going out, do you feel that you
7   made (.) <u>a choice</u> about being in that relationship or did it just **happen**, did you just <u>end up</u>
8   in it?
9 Chris: No it wasn't (.) a <u>conscious</u> choice to a certain extent anyway partly as well something I
10   drifted into (.) a bit of both probably.
11 Anna: Yeah (.) did you er before you got engaged did you (.) do a lot of planning I mean did you
12   have to=
13 Chris: =No it was quite a sudden thing we didn't actually do (.) very much planning at all I mean
14   we haven't like booked a wedding or anything like that we're just (.) engaged and we're
15   starting to talk about getting married right now but the actual <u>process</u> of getting engaged
16   was very sudden and a bit of a shock to the system! For me at least.
17 Anna: Oh. So at the moment are you contented with being (.) engaged?
18 Chris: <u>Yea:h</u> I'm having sort of recurring bouts of cold feet where I'm like 'Oh my God! I'm not
19   sure that I want to do this. Do I want to get married? Do I even want to be engaged at the
20   moment?' kind of thing I'm happy with the relationship but the whole process of being
21   engaged is a bit of a shock to the system (.) a little bit scary but I'm (.) <u>reasonably</u>
22   contented at the moment.
23 Anna: Right. So what is the 'process' of being engaged?
24 Chris: It's just the idea I think that you're sort of <u>committed</u> to this person for life really I mean I
25   know (.) you have com you can have committed relationship without a ring or anything
26   like that where you've still got no intention of breaking up but the idea that you've got
27   this <u>ring on</u> and there's actually this thing between you that says 'Yes we're going to be
28   committed for life we're going to get married,' is like <u>quite scary</u> (.) particularly because
29   it sort of <u>happened</u> so suddenly and I sort of (.) agreed, accepted that sort of thing and
30   then it was like 'Oh my God what have I done!' (laughs) so (.) yeah it takes some time to
31   get used to.
32 Anna: Right. So is it (.) it's something you've had to adjust to?
33 Chris: Yeah definitely.
34 Anna: What <u>differences</u> has it made to you?
35 Chris: (1) Mm I think it's probably more a psychological difference than anything else I (.) I'm
36   tending to <u>dwell</u> on idea that <u>I'm engaged</u> to this person I'm [possibly] getting married to
37   them that sort of thing. <u>Certainly</u> hasn't made that much difference to the way the
38   relationship's gone because obviously I would've (.) continued to be faithful to him or
39   whatever we're in a committed relationship anyway er:m we haven't actually made any
40   concrete wedding plans yet so I haven't had all that <u>hassle</u> to deal with (.) but yeah it's
41   perhaps been more of a psychological difference than anything else.
42 Anna: Right er before you were in the relationship (.) um was your life a lot different and did
43   you want to be in a relationship?
44 Chris: Erm I didn't (.) actually (.) completely plan to get into the relationship I'm in now <u>quite</u>
45   so soon I'd sort of been out with somebody else for two years before that and broken up
46   about (.) <u>two months</u> before I got together with my current boyfriend which is a little bit
47   soon for me I think perhaps I should've spent a little more time being single and sort of on
48   my own.

49	Anna:	Right. (3) What er what kind of value erm if y if you you said that you maybe ought to
50		have spent more time being single what difference erm what was good about that bit?
51		That maybe you ought to have done more.
52	Chris:	I've erm I think I've probably been in a long term relationship since I was about <u>sixteen</u>
53		sort of (.) without that much gap in between relationships where I've had a chance to be
54		single so it was actually <u>quite nice</u> just to suddenly have to be concerned about <u>me</u> and
55		what I wanted to do and just like (.) go out with my friends when I felt like it and I didn't
56		have to think about whether I'd made plans with anybody else (.) like that or think about
57		'Oh I wonder he's going to be doing tonight,' or anything like that. Plus erm my last
58		relationship was kind of like quite traumatic towards the end so it's quite nice not having
59		to deal with any of the kind of hassle suddenly <u>it was over</u> (.) sorted haven't got to worry
60		about it any more. So that was all quite nice. Erm but yeah I think it's just the idea of er
61		being single and like just going out having fun and whatever and then suddenly I was
62		<u>back</u> in a relationship again and it was quite soon (.) I didn't perhaps give myself as much
63		time as I should have done.
64	Anna:	[Even] so <u>does</u> being in a relationship in a way restrict the amount you go out and have
65		fun or.
66	Chris:	Not really no I mean I still see my friends just as much but he tends to come with me but
67		it's just the fact that you've still got to think about somebody else and what they're going
68		to be wanting to do rather than just decide what you want to do on the spur of the
69		moment.
70	Anna:	When you're filling in forms or introducing yourself do you use the title Miss, Ms or
71		Mrs?
72	Chris:	<u>Ms</u> generally.
73	Anna:	Mhm, how long have you used that <u>did you ever</u> use one of the others?
74	Chris:	<u>Not that long actually</u> it's probably been in within the last twelve months something like
75		that (.) and I'm not actually sure <u>why</u>: I just (.) suddenly decided '<u>Yeah</u> I prefer the way
76		that sounds.'
77	Anna:	Right. You used did you use Miss up until that point?
78	Chris:	Yes.
79	Anna:	Can you think of any reasons why you might have changed it?
80	Chris:	I guess partly because I don't like the idea that (.) I don't really see why my title should
81		say anything about me in terms of martial status or anything like that (.) prefer s
82		something like <u>Ms</u> which is very (.) undefining.
83	Anna:	Mhm. Okay, when (.) if you got married or if you do get married (.) I presume that you
84		are (.) interested in getting married.
85	Chris:	Yeah.
86	Anna:	Will you change the Ms to Mrs? Do you think?
87	Chris:	I'm not <u>sure</u> (.) possibly not.
88	Anna:	(1) Why might you not do that?
89	Chris:	Erm I'm not sure about this whole kind of like changing <u>your</u> surname to <u>his</u> thing I don't
90		<u>rea:lly</u> see the point kind of (.) like (.) I don't know it almost seems like a symbol of
91		<u>ownership</u> something like that? I think I perhaps want to keep my own surname in which
92		case I would stick with (.) Ms.
93	Anna:	Ri=
94	Chris:	=Depending on the situation I think and the type of form I was filling out.
95	Anna:	Right. But perhaps you wouldn't change your name?

96	Chris:	Yeah for (.) <u>professional purposes</u> then I don't think I will change my name I dunno If I
97		was filling out (.) <u>a bank form</u> or something like that then maybe I would (.) use Mrs then.
98		I'm really not sure (.) it's something I've thought about but not really reached a decision.
99	Anna:	Right. Can you see reasons that you might want to change it? Or <u>do you like</u> the idea of
100		being Mrs?
101	Chris:	I'm not sure about the idea of being Mrs it seems so o:<u>ld</u> (laughs) er:m (.) I think that my
102		boyfriend would probably have a few complaints if I didn't want to take his name. (.) It's
103		such a typical <u>male</u> thing but yeah I think he might sort of be like 'Well <u>why</u>? What's the
104		problem?'
105	Anna:	Right.
106	Chris:	And it's not (.) <u>such</u> a big deal to me that (.) I would have to make a specific point out of
107		it <u>I'm not sure</u> it's something (.) I'm a little bit undecided about really.
108	Anna:	Right. Have you erm since you started using Ms er: (.) how do you find people react to
109		that? Have you noticed anybody.
110	Chris:	No, can't say that I have.
111	Anna:	Okay (1) it's just <u>I</u> find when I use that that um people send me things with Miss written
112		on anyway=
113	Chris:	=Yeah. <u>I've</u> had that actually or sometimes with Mrs it's like they just take pot luck!
114		(laugh) I though 'Oh!'.
115	Anna:	Yeah. Before when you did get into this relationship you did say it wasn't planned but do
116		you remember what it was like between being single and being involved (.) do you
117		remember any kind of adjustments or any changes?
118	Chris:	Yeah I think it's (.) partly just adjusting to being with (.) a different person 'cause
119		although I've been in relationships before obviously no two are the same everybody's
120		different it's just adjusting to this person's like (.) way of life, their mannerisms all their
121		habits things like that. Deciding how <u>quickly</u> to take the relationship once you get into it
122		because I was quite anxious to get for things not to get (.) sort of (.) out of control move to
123		fast.
124	Anna:	Mm.
125	Chris:	Which I thought I've (.) been in that position in the past with relationships where the
126		relationship itself has kind of carried itself along and I didn't really feel like I was in
127		control of what was happening any more. So I was quite anxious for that not to happen
128		this time.
129	Anna:	(2) Do you feel that you are <u>happier</u> now than you were when you <u>weren't</u> in a
130		relationship?
131	Chris:	Yeah, yeah I think I am.
132	Anna:	(1) Do you has it changed er: your social life or: (.) different aspects of your life?
133	Chris:	Er:m I guess it's changed my social life a little bit. I tend to see about he same amount of
134		my f my friends as I did before but he tends to come with me but I also probably do
135		different things that I wouldn't have done before because he likes to do them or whatever
136		and it's just introduced me to different things (audible intake of breath) other aspects I
137		don't know. It's probably made me trust <u>men</u> (.) a little bit more 'cause I've had some bad
138		experiences in the past but he's actually like <u>really great</u> so it's like 'Yeah there are some
139		good ones out there after all.'
140	Anna:	Ah, that's nice. How did your friends and family react (.) how about when you got
141		engaged?
142	Chris:	It was a shock because we hadn't been together that long and erm we were actually
143		friends for like quite a few years before we got into a relationship so it was (.) kind of
144		strange for my friends because suddenly I was like <u>engaged</u> to this person who'd just been

145		like no more than a platonic friend before. My parents were quite concerned because we
146		hadn't been together very long. They felt that I'd like <u>rushed</u> from one relationship into
147		another anyway so they were a little bit worried anyway in case (.) that could be a
148		problem but yeah they've kind of adjusted to the idea now.
149	Anna:	They're happy about it. Did they expect presumably they didn't expect?
150	Chris:	No they didn't (laughs).
151	Anna:	Are your friends, or the people that you socialise with mostly married, single or in
152		couples?
153	Chris:	Mixed really. I've got some single friends I've got (.) a couple of friends who got married
154		last year (.) and then the rest are in couples but are not actually living together or anything
155		like that I've got (.) quite a selection really.
156	Anna:	Right. Do you find that your (.) social life or your work life in any way, the way <u>you</u>
157		relate to people is different from the way that people who are <u>married</u> might or.
158	Chris:	Yeah I think so because you've got erm I mean I don't see my married (.) friends got
159		married abut twelve months ago suddenly they've got the extra responsibility of like a
160		mortgage and furniture and paying for food and stuff like that erm and (.) they kind of
161		have to run their social life around what they can afford at the time of the month with the
162		bills and stuff like that.
163	Anna:	Mhm.
164	Chris:	Erm (2) so yeah. The extra responsibility I guess.
165	Anna:	(2) How about your friends that are single? Erm are their lives much different?
166	Chris:	I know one friend who's single who's just come back from <u>a year</u> (.) in Australia which I
167		wouldn't consider doing because I'm in a relationship and I'd have to leave him for
168		twelve months whereas she just kind of upped and went which (1) was quite different to
169		my life in that way (.) erm (3) but right now probably not no.
170	Anna:	(3) Okay, could you think of any advantages for you of being in a relationship or being
171		engaged or the situation that you're in?
172	Chris:	(5) I like <u>being</u> in a relationship it's (.) I (.) sort of (.) I wouldn't like to think that (.) I'm
173		<u>not</u> going to get married one day or anything like that it's (.) quite nice to think 'Yeah I'm
174		gonna settle down with this person,' it feels good.
175	Anna:	(2) Do you think that (.) people who aren't in relationships miss out on anything?
176	Chris:	Yeah I think it's always nice to have somebody there who's there just for you and you've
177		got like <u>special relationship</u> with this person that you <u>never have</u> with anybody else but at
178		the same time then I'd rather (.) <u>not</u> be in a relationship at all than be in a <u>bad relationship</u>
179		(.) so (.) I think it would depend on the quality of the relationship that they might be in.
180		It's like well I'd rather be single definitely than be with somebody where the
181		relationship's bad and not happy.
182	Anna:	Mhm. Can you think of any <u>dis</u>advantages?
183	Chris:	Yea:h it does restrict your freedom obviously (.) erm (.) in all kinds of ways. (1) And it is
184		quite nice sometimes to be single and only have to worry about you and you have to (.) do
185		whatever you want basically without having to be concerned about what this person's
186		going to think or what they're gonna wanna do.
187	Anna:	(3) Do you think that being in this relationship has changed you at all or.
188	Chris:	Yeah it's probably but I mean it's difficult for me to define <u>how</u> its changed me but I
189		think that when you're with somebody (.) in sort of a <u>serious</u> long term relationship you
190		tend to pick up habits and views that they've got without even realising it you just tend to
191		absorb them so yeah I'm sure it has.
192	Anna:	Do you think other people, like your friends and family, might see a difference?

193	Chris:	My friends say that I've been that I'm a lot happier since I've been (.) with my boyfriend
194		(.) than they've seen me in past relationships and yeah I'm sure that they can pick up on
195		ways in which my mannerisms and my views have changed as well (.) but I couldn't tell
196		you what those actually are! (laughs)
197	Anna:	Okay. Would you like to see your relationship status change?
198	Chris:	Mm (.) no I don't think so (.) as long as things stay the way they are obviously (.) if the
199		relationship stopped working out then I would want to end it I wouldn't like to think that
200		I'd just kind of stick with it no matter what but (.) as things are then no er.
201	Anna:	(1) Would you like to get married?
202	Chris:	Yeah, yeah I think so.
203	Anna:	What differences do you think that might make?
204	Chris:	Scary things like mortgages and bills and responsibility (laughs) erm be quite nice to
205		actually have have our own space and like a house of our own and things 'cause at the
206		moment obviously we're living (.) separately and it's a bit restrictive sometimes so that
207		would be quite nice. The adjustments that you have to make when you move in with
208		someone new especially when you're sort of (.) living so closely together it's not like
209		having a flatmate you're actually like living really closely together so I think that takes
210		some adjusting to as well.
211	Anna:	What are the reasons it sounds good to you?
212	Chris:	(2) As things stand I kind of like the idea of like living with him it'd be really nice. Erm I
213		like the idea of (.) getting married most of the time (.) and being sort of (.) in that kind of
214		commitment situation.
215	Anna:	(3) Do you feel that at the moment you or in the future you will need to actively (.) sort of
216		invest in getting married? Actually have to work on (.) plan it a lot or is it something that
217		might just happen.
218	Chris:	No I think I can probably have to plan it I kind of like the idea of like upping and going
219		like just doing it but my Mum would kill me she wants like the proper wedding and that
220		kind of thing (.) it's really not worth the hassle of saying 'No: I'm just gonna go abroad
221		and do it now,' so yeah it's gonna take some planning and obviously financially as well
222		'cause we're both students and we're both broke.
223	Anna:	Right.
224	Chris:	And also I guess (.) emotionally for me to actually take the plunge and book the wedding
225		I'll really have to make sure that 'Yeah (.) I'm okay with this (.) I'm happy with this,' I
226		don't want to sort of book it and then afterwards go through all the cold feet thinking
227		again like I did after getting engaged 'cause that would just be like too scary you know (.)
228		wedding coming and I'm still not sure of (.) am I happy with this so (.) yeah in lots of
229		different ways definitely planning.
230	Anna:	Okay, can you think of any particular times when being in a relationship has made a real
231		difference to your life (.) good or particularly bad or anything that.
232	Chris:	Yeah (.) erm my first serious relationship (.) I met him when I was sixteen and he was like
233		quite a bit older than me he was actually thirty-two (.) we were together for four-and-a-
234		half years and I know he wanted to get married obviously because he was quite a bit older
235		and that but the relationship was just like hell. He was like (.) a complete nightmare to
236		live with (.) and that definitely made a difference it was just like my life was a nightmare.
237		I didn't realise until actually after I'd broken up with him how bad things were and I just
238		look back and think how could I put up with it for so long. So yeah definitely at that
239		point.
240	Anna:	So (.) when (.) when would you consider that generally relationships have made your life
241		better or happier or is it down to the individual?

242	Chris:	Down to the individual definitely.
243	Anna:	Right. Do you talk about your experience of relationships or your plans for the future with
244		your friends and family?
245	Chris:	Yeah.
246	Anna:	And with your partner do you actually actively discuss.
247	Chris:	Yeah, yeah we discuss about what we want for the future we've (.) already been through
248		the whole thing of what's happened in the past so yeah.
249	Anna:	Right. (Paper noise) Okay, on to some stuff about words. When was the last time you
250		used or heard somebody else use the word 'spinster'?
251	Chris:	I have never used the word spinster knowingly I don't think (laughs). Erm the last time I
252		heard it used was probably when I was hearing my friends bands being read in church and
253		they still use the wording 'Spinster of this parish' for the woman when they're reading it
254		out so that's probably the last time. I don't think I've ever knowingly used it. Other than
255		when repeating that obviously.
256	Anna:	(2) How about 'bachelor'?
257	Chris:	Erm (.) I heard (.) that's not a word that I can recall using either actually I'm sure I've
258		used both of them at some point but I certainly not within my memory I can't remember
259		using that and again the same thing they still use it for the bloke the woman's a spinster
260		and the bloke is a bachelor when they're reading bands for marriage out so (.) it'd be
261		about twelve months ago.
262	Anna:	Right. Have do you peop hear people use the word 'single' about themselves or about
263		other people?
264	Chris:	Both.
265	Anna:	Right. That's more common?
266	Chris:	Yeah definitely.
267	Anna:	(1) Do you think er (2) perhaps spinster and bachelor don't count because if there are
268		forms they have to fill in people will not necessarily use them about themselves but the
269		word 'single' does it generally come up in a positive way or a negative way or is it just a
270		functional?
271	Chris:	Erm I think it's just a functional thing really (.) it certainly sounds less negative than
272		'bachelor' or 'spinster' saying 'spinster' that's horrible. Generally I think it's just a
273		functional thing it depends on the context that people are talking, speaking.
274	Anna:	Explain to me about 'spinster' being horrible.
275	Chris:	I just think it (.) sounds awful it's (.) I don't know I kind of associate it with erm sort of
276		these old Jane Austen novels and things like that that you read where like old women are
277		always described as like spinsters when they couldn't find some bloke to marry them and
278		stuff and I just think it's a horrible word whereas bachelor (.) people tend to sort of you
279		know see it in a more like a playboy sort of light.
280	Anna:	Right. How about the words 'wife' and 'husband' do you hear people call themselves or
281		each other?
282	Chris:	Yea:h. (2) Mainly people sort of (.) of an older generation I think s (.) you know kind of
283		my Mum and Dad's generation that kind of thing certainly my married friends don't tend
284		to refer to each other as husband and wife it's just like (.) by name.
285	Anna:	Right. How about the word 'partner'?
286	Chris:	Yea:h I think that that (.) tends to be used (.) quite a lot as well er that's perhaps more (.)
287		sort of younger people tend to use it.
288	Anna:	(2) Have you ever used any of these words to describe yourself?
289	Chris:	(1) Er:m obviously not 'husband' or 'wife' (1) 'single' yeah. I'm not sure whether I've
290		ever used 'partner' to be honest (1) no.

291	Anna:	What would you use instead?
292	Chris:	Erm the name of the person or 'boyfriend'.
293	Anna:	Right. (3) Are there any things that I haven't asked you about yet that you think (.) might
294		be useful attached to these questions (.) or any issues that I haven't mentioned?
295	Chris:	Can't think of any.
296	Anna:	Okay, were any of the questions er the things that we said particularly good or particularly
297		bad?
298	Chris:	In what way?
299	Anna:	Um well okay well I've only got one or two more questions so.
300	Chris:	Mhm.
301	Anna:	Looking back at what's been said has there been anything particularly good or bad? Have
302		there been any questions you would say 'Don't ask anyone else that.'
303	Chris:	I don't think so.
304	Anna:	Okay. Well, is there anything else that you'd like on the tape?
305	Chris:	No, not that I can think of.
306	Anna:	Okay that's it then, thank you very much.

2 Anna: Right (.) the first question is (.) could you describe to me your relationship status?

3 Lillian: Yep (.) I've been married for: nearly two years and in (.) a relationship same relationship

4   before that for (.) practically eight years.

5 Anna: So for [you.

6 Lillian: [I've answered the second question as well (laughs).

7 Anna: That's alright (1) so do you feel that you made a: planned choice when you got married?

8 Lillian: Yes: to g to get married [yes (.) it was a planned choice to get married.

9 Anna: [Yeah.

10   And er:m when you er when you did get married had you been planning ti for a long

11   time?

12 Lillian: (intake of breath) No, no not really er:m (.) I think we had been planning it for (.) just

13   over a year, no (.) perhaps a little bit longer just in that it was like 'Right we'll get

14   engaged on this day and we'll get married roughly (.) a year later.'

15 Anna: Mhm.

16 Lillian: But it we didn't get marriage in the early stages it was quite a <u>long time</u> (.) during that=

17 Anna: =Mhm=

18 Lillian: =first part of the relationship.

19 Anna: Had you wanted to get married before?

20 Lillian: Erm, yes (.) <u>I</u> did. Erm (.) but like (.) many other people I think erm the other half finds it

21   difficult to (.) discuss marriage an and did for quite a while.

22 Anna: Right. So are you contented with being married?

23 Lillian: Yeah, on the whole I am (.) yeah I think it (.) does give you certain (.) erm (.) conflicts if

24   you like and I I kept my name for one (.) thing whereas lots of people choose not to do

25   that and that was a whole y'know that kind of shifting the stakes and deciding to do that I

26   think it is erm a mindset about independence as well.

27 Anna: Mhm.

28 Lillian: That's important and I didn't want to give that up.

29 Anna: Right, we'll come back to that. Can you think of any ways that being married makes a

30   difference to your social life, or your family life (.) or your work (.) everyday things?

31 Lillian: To my social life <u>no</u>, none at all I it continues as it always did erm y'know the the same

32   erm consideration if you like I think, when you live with somebody that that you say 'I'm

33   going out on such and such a night,' and erm you let them know where you are if you like

34   and that works two ways but that doesn't, you know being married doesn't <u>stop</u> doing (.)

35   anything like that just carried on er:m family life, I think its (.) er the difference to me is

36   that (.) people ask you when you're going to have children. Before you got married they

37   always asked you when you were going to get married but as soon as you get married=

38 Anna: =Right=

39 Lillian: =they ask you when you're gonna have children.

40 Anna: Oh really?

41 Lillian: <u>Yeah</u> (.) gosh (.) I'm sure if you asked a lot of people in my position they would say the

42   same thing [it's like a joke (laughs).

43 Anna: [People are.

44   People aren't at all (.) reserved about those kind of things?

45 Lillian: Well that (.) that actually surprises me I I would think twice I think before I asked (.)

46   somebody that question but <u>no</u> I mean we were on holiday recently (.) in Melbourne and

47   the taxi driver picked us up from the airport and (.) erm was driving along to where we

48   were going to stay and pretty much the first question was 'Are you married?' 'Yes,' and

49   'Have you got any children?' 'Erm no,' '<u>Oh</u> (.) are you going to have any children?' you

50		know and there's [kind of thing and now there's I mean that's like a cultural thing maybe
51		as well I don't know but (.) er I think a lot of people in the UK ask that (.) especially if
52		they're reasonably close to you, like family and friends. Somebody who you didn't know
53		would probably talk to you for about half and hour and then ask you.
54	Anna:	[Right.
55		People are that interested?
56	Lillian:	Mm. I think it's a conventional thing. Rather than being interested maybe it's about
57		placing people y'know the labels that you put on people er:m when you meet somebody
58		you think: what do they do? Are they married? Are they in a relationship?
59	Anna:	Mhm.
60	Lillian:	It's how you picture somebody isn't it, I think kids are part of that.
61	Anna:	Right, on to titles [when you're filling in forms or introducing yourself do you call
62		yourself Miss, Mrs or Ms?
63	Lillian:	[Mm.
64		When I'm filling in forms I always call myself Ms M S.
65	Anna:	You do, right.
66	Lillian:	Mhm.
67	Anna:	Did you ever call yourself Miss or Mrs?
68	Lillian:	Never Mrs, erm Miss when I was kind of very young through to my (.) teenage years then
69		I discovered another (.) title and used it.
70	Anna:	So why did you decide to change from Ms?
71	Lillian:	Erm well, well literally because I think I never knew that M S existed erm well (.) you
72		don't really when you're at school, you don't think about it but perhaps it would be
73		different now. Er:m but er: the decision to use it is born of a (.) you know of equality.
74	Anna:	Right. So: you said already that you didn't change your surname when you got married (.)
75		did you spend a long time thinking about that or was it an automatic decision?
76	Lillian:	(intake of breath) No it's quite a it is quite a difficult one I have erm (.) I've a number of
77		friends who kept their surname when they got married. They tend to be older they they
78		think without exception are all quite a lot older than me maybe sort of eight or ten years
79		erm (.) and got married later in life.
80	Anna:	Right.
81	Lillian:	But (.) I had a number of reasons for keeping my name and I didn't have any good ones
82		for changing it erm.
83	Anna:	Right.
84	Lillian:	And (.) my husband was okay about that (.) erm he was like 'Yeah, yeah, fine whatever
85		you want to do,' so he had a few drinks and then it was like 'Plea:se change your name,'
86		and then it was 'No sorry I'm not going to,' but he er on balance you know he's
87		extremely ha, you know he's fine about it=
88	Anna:	=Hm=
89	Lillian:	=he's fine about it but if he had a preference then he'd want me to change my name.
90	Anna:	Did other people expect you to change your name?
91	Lillian:	Yes and I frequently get post from my (.) in-laws and in fact from from (.) even friends of
92		ours who are more distant sort of friends who've just assumed I have.
93	Anna:	Right (2) could you tell me any of the reasons that you decided to?
94	Lillian:	Erm I can I mean the they're personal reasons er [wha er well no, no I don't mind telling
95		you I had three good ones, I'll probably tell you two of them er:m.
96	Anna:	[Well that's okay.

97	Lillian:	One is that the name I would have changed (.) mine to does not go with my first name at
98		all so it would be very difficult (.) to <u>say</u> and I'm in a job where I actually introduce
99		myself over and over again and that [can cause me some discomfort.
100	Anna:	[Mhm.
101	Lillian:	A second one is that I've worked in the same (.) profession for a number of years and [
102		people know me as as that and (.) you know I'm not saying you build up a name but it
103		kind of is it's continuity if you like.
104	Anna:	[
105		Right.
106	Lillian:	Erm and the third one was that my father died not very long before I got married and it
107		was er (.) I I'm <u>close</u> to my family and it=
108	Anna:	=Yeah=
109	Lillian:	=and it was a link I didn't want to let go so.
110	Anna:	No.
111	Lillian:	So those were the reasons for keeping.
112	Anna:	(3) So all the questions I've got about different titles then you've maintained both your
113		first name and the other part, the Ms part.
114	Lillian:	Yes, that's right, yeah, I don't use Mrs at all I just use Ms so my name essentially hasn't
115		changed between being single and married, so.
116	Anna:	That's interesting.
117	Lillian:	(2) But my husband did do the deal on children if you're interested (laughs) it was like
118		'Well if we have children will they take my surname?'
119	Anna:	(1) Mm.
120	Lillian:	Which is fine by me because none of the reasons that I have attach to (1) my children.
121	Anna:	Yeah.
122	Lillian:	You know, they're not close well not at the moment, close to my family or have built up a
123		name in a profession or.
124	Anna:	No.
125	Lillian:	Would have a name chosen for them that didn't go with their surname so.
126	Anna:	Right, so yeah.
127	Lillian:	So I've got rid of a [lot of your questions there haven't I? (laughter) I can see that.
128	Anna:	[Yeah, that's alright.
129	Lillian:	I it is about identity isn't it? Erm and I think identity's precious and that you spend a lot
130		of time <u>investing</u> in that and yes a change of name m means a change of identity in some
131		ways.
132	Anna:	Right.
133	Lillian:	And I think that's a price that I wasn't going to pay (.) to get married really.
134	Anna:	Mhm.
135	Lillian:	Erm I've got nothing against marriage in that, you know, I'm quite happy to <u>be</u> married
136		but I don't think it has to be about (.) it is about who you are isn't it? God. Well, do you
137		understand what I'm saying to you?
138	Anna:	Yeah, I do. Do you remember a time when you weren't, well you probably do remember a
139		time because it's not so long ago when you weren't married?
140	Lillian:	Yes.
141	Anna:	Do you remember it as different or distinct from the time you are married? Do you
142		remember particular differences.
143	Lillian:	(3) Well only (.) probably only cosmetic things really I mean I wear rings er:m, a wedding
144		ring but also an engagement ring er:m I I <u>do</u> frequently have problems with names yeah
145		erm in that all anybody who does any kind of work in the house any contractors or

146		builders or whatever <u>automatically</u> assume that my husband's name is the same name as
147		mine he also has problems (laughs) occasionally when I've spoken to somebody first and
148		given my name and er (.) that's just a perio a periodic nuisance really rather than anything
149		but <u>tangibly</u> about way of life or, what we do or, how we are then, then not really no, no.
150	Anna:	Right.
151	Lillian:	Erm, although I suppose, I don't know if you mean differences in terms of sense of
152		commitment erm (.) a friend of mine who got married before me said after she'd heard my
153		husband's <u>speech</u> on our wedding day said, 'He said something about it being a new
154		start,' she said 'And I think that's really perceptive because (.) <u>it is</u> however long you've
155		been together when you get married it's a new start,' and I hadn't thought of that at all but
156		(.) have to think about that one and (.) and I suppose it is in that (.) hm I suppose you
157		make a commitment to something and you carry on it d it is <u>meaningful</u>, yeah. But I don't
158		think it changes anything tangible er:m y'know I suppose for me it's a public commitment
159		of saying 'I'm in this, I'm in this (.) <u>to the end</u>,' and I'll probably <u>try harder</u> than I would
160		if I had remained single or not made a (.) particular leap or erm commitment, ooh joint
161		account, tha that's changed, there you go, didn't have a joint account till I got married, so
162		<u>trust</u> maybe.
163	Anna:	Ah. Did you feel when you got married [at all?
164	Lillian:	[No.
165		No I didn't really no, no (.) but then maybe that's about change of name. Y'know lots of
166		nice things, had a good day, got lots of presents all of that.
167	Anna:	Yeah.
168	Lillian:	But but in myself no, no.
169	Anna:	So (.) you wouldn't say, probably that you feel any happier, or any different <u>generally</u>
170		than you did before?
171	Lillian:	(3) Perhaps just a little bit more settled I don't know. Perhaps that's about making a
172		commitment saying I'm gonna stay with something and.
173	Anna:	Yeah.
174	Lillian:	Yeah (.) but not massively no.
175	Anna:	Okay (2) how did other people react when you got married? Were your friends and family
176		all pleased?
177	Lillian:	Erm yeah, yeah they were yeah, no doubt about that, it was very much a sense of 'It's
178		about time' so.
179	Anna:	Right.
180	Lillian:	Didn't have any problems.
181	Anna:	They all expected you to get married?
182	Lillian:	Yes: definitely.
183	Anna:	Do you think <u>they would</u> see any differences between what you were like then and what
184		you are like now?
185	Lillian:	That's a good question, I don't know, I think I'd probably have to ask them er:m. I would
186		say say they probably would would say that <u>our life</u> revolves more around our home but
187		in lots of ways that would have happened if we hadn't got married anyway in that [that's
188		to do with circumstances.
189	Anna:	[Mhm.
190	Lillian:	Where you buy a house as well, we didn't buy a house because we got married or get
191		married because we'd bought a house those were two separate things but (.) I suppose the
192		way they (.) happened one after the other would mean that people would think that
193		changed.
194	Anna:	Right, okay. So are your friends mostly married or mostly single?

195	Lillian:	There's a happy mixture of both.
196	Anna:	Right, okay, so (.) you don't (.) does it make any difference to the relationships you have
197		with them?
198	Lillian:	Erm (3) I'm only thinking about it because I've got a good friend who has been in a very
199		long term relationship which has just been, would be the same as marriage really, has just
200		split up and I think the difference there is in terms of where as it would always be the two
201		of us that would go over and spend the weekend with the two of them [and vice versa it
202		it's become a little bit more like I'll spend time with her.
203	Anna:	[Mhm.
204		Right.
205	Lillian:	Because although she's always very careful to invite (name) as well (.) I think he's not so
206		comfortable with that and (.) she she would have (.) more fun if just I went [you know?
207	Anna:	[Mhm.
208	Lillian:	So, so yes, there's a difference there but my my other single friends from university live
209		in London erm it doesn't make a difference really to those relationships because I usually
210		see them on my own anyway.
211	Anna:	Right. (8) With your friends that are single do you think that you can see things changing
212		for them, can you, do you think that, er, it's a difficult kind of question to get across what
213		I actually mean, (1) having been through a long relationship and decided to get married do
214		you think that maybe you can see other people going through the same thing, that maybe
215		would get married as well?
216	Lillian:	As in spot it before it happens or picture them doing it?
217	Anna:	See (.) the same kind of relationship, or has it given you some kind of insight?
218	Lillian:	Oh, I see what you mean, erm (1) hm, I'd love to say yes but I'm not sure it has! (laughs)
219		I think there's a definite tendency on the part of my single friends to want to be in a
220		relationship [erm both people who've broken up relationships or who are not in them at
221		all er, no sorry people who've broken up quite recently or people who've been single for
222		quite a long time.
223	Anna:	[Mhm.
224	Lillian:	And I actually don't feel like hugely, I don't sort of (.) preach marriage as the ultimate
225		kind of thing I think it is very personal and individual and I hate to see people just (.)
226		wanting to be (.) in a partnership for the sake of it.
227	Anna:	Mhm.
228	Lillian:	Er:m (.) but I (.) I think maybe there's just a lot of pressure on those people and I think
229		it's to do with things like social life actually I think it is to do with erm (1) y'know that
230		idea of couples socialising together or y'know when when you're married friends are all
231		off doing things together at the weekends you're on your own that kind of (.) thing that
232		that makes people want to be in relationships and I think I (.) actually try hard to (.) not
233		make people feel like that. [I
234	Anna:	[So
235	Lillian:	So in terms of insight I guess it's quite it is quite hard to have that, having been in a very
236		long term relationship I can't actually imagine what it would be like to be single as in not
237		in a relationship.
238	Anna:	Right.
239	Lillian:	It's a very long time since I was there and I'm such a different person now that h (.) how I
240		was then and how I am now would be two completely different things so yeah (.) it's
241		interesting though y'know I think we'd all like to imagine we could survive if we had to.
242	Anna:	Mhm. So do you remember being single at all?

243	Lillian:	Um <u>yeah</u> I mean I remember y'know sort of through, through the end of my erm (.) teen
244		years and when I was at university erm y'know I went out and had a good time and and (.)
245		enjoyed it but that time in my life was when I y'know lived with a house full of other
246		people who were also single and had a very good social life and erm a structure if you
247		like, at university you get, <u>enabled</u> that.
248	Anna:	Yeah.
249	Lillian:	Whereas once you leave that and you start working and stuff you your erm (.) the whole
250		pattern changes and I think it might be very <u>different</u> to be single (.) <u>now</u> and working in a
251		job that you've worked in for a number of years and you know, have <u>social patterns</u> that
252		are pretty much the same. That wouldn't be so much fun I don't think.
253	Anna:	Right. So what would you say, if you could name any advantages for you in being
254		married?
255	Lillian:	Do you mean (.) as in married married or (.) as in a (.) permanent sort of relationship?
256	Anna:	Mm, er:m, is there a difference do you think?
257	Lillian:	Well not for me <u>no</u>.
258	Anna:	Right, okay.
259	Lillian:	No, not particularly.
260	Anna:	How about being in a relationship then?
261	Lillian:	Advantages of being in a relationship?
262	Anna:	Mhm.
263	Lillian:	Erm <u>gosh</u>! I mean lots of things, erm emotional support erm somebody who (.) y'know
264		having somebody who's really there to be interested in in what you've got to say and how
265		you feel and erm (.) and in what you've done that day and it's it erm (.) very close
266		personal contact that I think human nature really is sort of (.) <u>geared</u> towards, certainly
267		socialised towards anyway. It's having somebody to do things with at weekends without
268		having to arrange it four weeks in advance it's it's being comfortable and er all those
269		kinds of things. So yeah, yeah, it's good.
270	Anna:	Do you think people who are not in (.) <u>relationships</u> miss out on any of these things (.) or
271		perhaps just get them from other places?
272	Lillian:	Yes from (.) the experience of my single friends I <u>do</u> think they <u>miss</u> them and that that's
273		that whole sort of thing to be (.) you know wanting to be back into a relationship again
274		erm I'm not saying that if you didn't have an extremely close <u>best</u> friend say that that
275		wouldn't be, you know you could have a relationship with similar to that in terms of
276		emotional support and somebody who's interested in most part of your life.
277	Anna:	Yeah.
278	Lillian:	Erm so yeah.
279	Anna:	(1) Can you think of any <u>dis</u>advantages of either being married or in a relationship?
280	Lillian:	(2) Mm yes erm, you will change names to protect innocent won't you? But erm yeah the
281		disadvantage of being married is that if you go out on the, on a night with some friends
282		who are single and you start talking to somebody who you think is really attractive then
283		you obviously have brakes to put on yourself.
284	Anna:	Mhm.
285	Lillian:	To, to <u>know</u> that you haven't got the freedom to just go off with that person and start
286		seeing them and do whatever else you'd like to do.
287	Anna:	Uhuh.
288	Lillian:	But that has to be the disadvantage you've made a commitment to one person and you
289		you're honour-bound to keep it and yeah I think anybody who's human would say that's
290		hard at times.

291	Anna:	Right. Do you think that being in a relationship changes the way you feel about yourself
292		at all? Do you think of yourself differently?
293	Lillian:	I think it's inevitable, again it's really difficult to to think back to a time when I wasn't in
294		a long term relationship or married and (.) and I certainly see myself differently, I am a
295		different person then then to now so.
296	Anna:	Right.
297	Lillian:	But it's just really hard to compare? Do you know what I mean?
298	Anna:	Mhm.
299	Lillian:	Yeah, I think your self-image is of someone who is married or in a relationship (.) it is
300		part of that I suppose your self image comes into um you:r consciousness when you talk
301		with other people perhaps, who you don't know very well 'cause it's a case of you're
302		evaluating them and you're thinking about who they are and it's that whole thing about
303		'Are they, are they married? Are they, do they have children? What do they do for a
304		living?' and you know they're doing that to you as well so it comes into their
305		consciousness so I suppose then th that just highlights, I don't know what I'm saying here
306		(laughter) but yeah, what was the question again?
307	Anna:	Does it change the way you feel (.) about yourself or the way you perceive yourself?
308	Lillian:	Yeah, it's just, just difficult to know, how it would feel if you weren't actually=
309	Anna:	=Yeah=
310	Lillian:	=it's almost impossible to separate I guess. Yeah, yeah it's part of the way you feel about
311		yourself, how it would be different I don't know.
312	Anna:	Okay. Do you find that being in a relationship, is part of the way you relate to other
313		people? It comes into what you just said about it being part of the, of who you are and you
314		also said that it (.) it does affect your social life, if you socialise as a couple or on your
315		own. Do you think it makes it easier to socialise with people who are in couples if you're
316		in a couple as well?
317	Lillian:	(.) Yeah, almost certainly because again it's about those things that you have in common
318		isn't it? So if you're talking to somebody else who's in a similar social (.) status if you
319		like then it's easier to find the links that make people get along together, perhaps it
320		shouldn't be that way but, but certainly superficially on the surface of things that's how
321		people relate, isn't it, to look at areas that they have in common and those tend to be kind
322		of life factor things, like the taxi driver 'Are you married? Good so am I. Got children?
323		No, mm, I have, got loads of them and I'm really interested in them so,' yeah he
324		proceeded to tell us all about them but (.) xxx you know that that kind of to do with
325		what's on the other persons mind I think.
326	Anna:	Mhm.
327	Lillian:	But yes, certainly to socialise it would be hard I think as a single person to meet (.) to be
328		talking to two people who were in a (.) relationship together for any length of time in a
329		social situation where (.) you haven't met them before because it would be like the
330		gooseberry factor wouldn't it whereas if there's two of you talking to another couple
331		that's perfectly sort of (.) socially acceptable and the conversation would be reflecting that
332		as well. Erm, so yeah (.) sad but true.
333	Anna:	Well I think I could probably predict your answer to this but (laughter) would you like to
334		see your relationship status change in the future?
335	Lillian:	Um no! God that would be a bit of a waste (laughter) lots of money and time and effort
336		but er no I wouldn't.
337	Anna:	So there's no point in asking you what differences, maybe can can you see, in the future
338		do you see things changing at all, do you see the nature, do you see how you feel about
339		your relationship changing or the nature of things you do or.

340	Lillian:	Erm yeah, I have erm (.) I have strong views about cer about lots of these things in a way
341		and er erm I suppose my own theories as everybody else does but I think that er you know
342		as I say the person I am now is not the person I was ten years ago and I think that's true of
343		my husband as well and (.) and I think you know I'm gonna sound like I'm about a
344		million years old now but I reckon your goals change as you move through life and if
345		you're in a relationship (.) and that other person's goals change too then you always have
346		to try to make sure that you're working towards at least some similar goals otherwise
347		that's when people have nothing in common or (.) don't' get along any more (.) or just er
348		are drawing apart because that's the way (.) they way they are and I think there's erm (.) a
349		challenge is you like I mean it's it's perhaps easy if (.) I think some people give up a lot
350		more independence than I have in getting married. Often because they want to but not
351		always because they want to I mean I wouldn't and didn't and so the risk in doing that is
352		that you have two people who are very (.) independent that still have a relationship and if
353		you want to make that work over a long period of time then it's probably harder to do it
354		that way.
355	Anna:	Right.
356	Lillian:	Erm (.) than if you just assume that you have the same goals or that the unit becomes the
357		most important thing (.) that may sound so so (.) you can have an individual identity but
358		you also have an identity as a couple don't you.
359	Anna:	Mhm.
360	Lillian:	And I think I think sometimes people take on the identity as a couple much more strongly
361		than they do as an individual I have (.) have an identity as both but my individual one is is
362		probably more strong. And I'd say the same that's true of my husband as well I don't
363		think we'd want it any other way.
364	Anna:	Mhm. (3) So (.) if you were single (.) I might there, one of the questions I would ask
365		would be: um if you want to change that then what are you doing to change that so
366		maybe, in this situation obviously you want to (.) do you feel that you actively have to
367		work to keep those goals, to keep the joint identity?
368	Lillian:	Yeah, there are times when you have to do that definitely, and I think that's been true I
369		think that's been true of us over a number of years in that if for example m (.) well the
370		best example is my husband who's just he is just changing jobs at the moment but if we
371		go back I don't know probably about four or five years ago he had a job that he wasn't
372		happy with and (.) wanted to change jobs which involved moving from not quite one end
373		of the country to the other but certainly you know, moving a considerable distance.
374	Anna:	Right.
375	Lillian:	And that had (.) an impact on me and that's about you know whether I then decide I
376		change my job that I might be happy with and those kind of things are shared goals, what
377		do we want out of this.
378	Anna:	Yeah.
379	Lillian:	You know, not just what one person wants out of it and then the other one has to follow
380		on behind and er (.) you know built into that is consideration for the other person (.) in
381		that (.) you know you shouldn't be in the position of stopping somebody from doing
382		something but hopefully they would consult you and talk about it and (.) reach some kind
383		of decision so you then both carry on doing whatever you're doing which might involve
384		individuals different things but essentially you know, it's both of you god that lot didn't
385		make any sense whatsoever did it?
386	Anna:	Well I think it amounts to (.) as sort of yes answer-there has to be active compromise.
387	Lillian:	Yeah, that's it. (Laughter) Could have said that in two words.

388	Anna:	(7) Right, okay (1) do you talk about your relationship with your partner with your friends
389		and family? Do you actively talk about your marriage with your husband?
390	Lillian:	Husband (.) occasionally, friends sometimes, family, never.
391	Anna:	Right, okay.
392	Lillian:	That's part of (.) men like discussing things about relationships less than female friends
393		who prefer it, to family who would love to but you're never going to tell them anything
394		anyway (laughter).
395	Anna:	(cup noises) I think you already answered the question about whether you generally
396		consider yourself happier now you're married or when you're in a relationship. I think
397		you said that it made you feel a bit more settled since you got married.
398	Lillian:	Mm, yeah.
399	Anna:	(7) Okay, some different questions. When was the last time you used or heard someone
400		else use the word spinster?
401	Lillian:	Mm: (.) it's not in common modern usage it would be (.) my Grandmother or my Mother
402		or somebody like that probably.
403	Anna:	Right.
404	Lillian:	I don't [know remember.
405	Anna:	[Do you remember anybody saying?
406	Lillian:	Yeah I think I can remember somebody saying it but don't ask me who or when it would
407		certainly be (.) you know, in the context of elderly relatives I think.
408	Anna:	Right, okay=
409	Lillian:	=Mhm=
410	Anna:	=how about bachelor?
411	Lillian:	Yes! That one's much more um (.) frequently used because it's more (.) it's more (.) it can
412		be trendier can't it? In the context of unmarried men.
413	Anna:	Can you remember the last time you heard that whoever was saying it?
414	Lillian:	Not specifically no but I wouldn't be surprised to pick up a a magazine you know a fairly
415		glossy magazine and find it in there somewhere.
416	Anna:	Mhm. How about single?
417	Lillian:	The word single?
418	Anna:	Yep.
419	Lillian:	God. Difficult to think of specifics but I mean all the time, all the time, mm, yeah, oh
420		yeah but then er:m that's because I deal with people's C.V.s and it will be, almost
421		invariably, no, no that's not fair actually, more than fifty percent of people who do their
422		C.V.s will put their marital status on there and that's not necessary but it's quite
423		interesting because of people why they choose to put that on there.
424	Anna:	You find that people add it on even when they don't have to tick boxes or anything?
425	Lillian:	Absolutely yeah, yeah! You don't I mean it is actually illegal to discriminate on the
426		ground of being single or married.
427	Anna:	Right.
428	Lillian:	Erm, currently in the UK (.) and even if you explain that to people I mean, if you do a
429		C.V. for a program in the United States it will tell you not to put that information on there
430		because they obviously don't want to be in a position to take into account, this is very
431		politically correct but even if you say to somebody here 'It's actually illegal to
432		discriminate whether you're single or married so you can take that line out,' some people
433		will say 'Oh well,' you know 'It could be an advantage to be married because um (.) it
434		sounds more stable doesn't it,' or erm 'Well you know, they'll think I'm gonna stay
435		longer,' or something like that but some people say exactly the same about single which is
436		'Well the company wants me to, you know I'll need to relocate to (.) Kent or wherever

437		and being single has to be an advantage doesn't it,' so people have their own justifications
438		about why they keep that in there.
439	Anna:	Gosh.
440	Lillian:	Mm I can see the point but then again I wouldn't dream of putting that on my C.V. or an
441		application form.
442	Anna:	Gosh=
443	Lillian:	=Because it shouldn't be on an application form because it isn't (.) relevant information.
444	Anna:	Right, but people still feel they're communicating something by putting it on.
445	Lillian:	(audible intake of breath) They do, they do and I think that's part of it as well. No nobody
446		ever kind of says that but I think that's (.) erm (.) I think that's communicating something
447		about yourself isn't it, it's how people define themselves, yeah.
448	Anna:	Gosh, how about the words wife, husband and partner?
449	Lillian:	Mm, yeah well I used to use partner and now I use husband and er (.) it it took a bit of
450		getting used to erm and I I'm aware that I use that (.) reasonably frequently and er (.) I
451		don't dislike using it but lots of people hate partner I'm not one who did but er (.) there
452		some people think it sounds very business-like erm (.) I think some people it just sounds
453		like you're definitely not married er:m that kind of thing.
454	Anna:	Did it just happen? Did you just start using it once you got married?
455	Lillian:	Not automatically you kind of have those sort of (.) jokey things that go on in your head
456		like 'Oh I can say husband now!'
457	Anna:	Mhm.
458	Lillian:	And erm, and probably didn't the first few times I was probably in a position to describe
459		(.) (Name Omitted) to anybody else but you know, gradually over time you do, you do
460		use it because it is, it is an understood term you know.
461	Anna:	Yeah.
462	Lillian:	It's it's a perfectly legitimate and accurate one but I think I'm still aware of using it in that
463		it signals something to somebody else about, about our status.
464	Anna:	Do you like using it?
465	Lillian:	No, not particularly, I don't think I do, I still have a bit of (.) discomfort about it, so (.)
466		bec I think because it is it is it's all tied up, in saying that I mean I think I don't bother
467		about it but I wouldn't use it to people that I knew well because I'd just say (.) his name.
468	Anna:	Mhm.
469	Lillian:	But to people I know who don't know my husband or who have only just met me you'd
470		use that as a generic term so they would know what you were talking about if you just
471		said a name and in doing that you signify something about your marital status and yes I
472		think I'm still (.) quite cagey about that really it's not (.) the first thing I want people to
473		define me as and that is (.) part of maybe keeping my name and something about
474		independence xxx think. Some members of my family have got a terrible hang-up about it
475		and I know some of my friends are really quite proud of me really and would do the same,
476		well saying or have done the same.
477	Anna:	Do you ever use any of these words to describe yourself? Do you ever, I suppose the only
478		ones that might come in would be wife or partner.
479	Lillian:	Mm. No (.) I don't think so (.) I don't know, it's not, no it's not how I think of myself.
480		'Partner' but it is a bit of a contrived word in lots of ways so.
481	Anna:	Yeah.
482	Lillian:	Mm: interesting.
483	Anna:	Has talking about any of these issues made you remember anything in particular? Can you
484		think of anything else that might=

485	Lillian:	=Well there, there's one issue that perhaps you haven't touched on or talked about and
486		that's <u>financial</u> and I think, think that made a major difference to me in that I <u>never</u> have
487		(.) and I still fight about this one myself but I now work four days a week and the reason I
488		can afford to work four days a week is because my husband earns quite a lot more than I
489		do and <u>together</u> it's absolutely no problem if I don't work full time erm but (.) its its been
490		quite a struggle you know I've wanted to do it but I haven't actually wanted to have that
491		feeling of <u>dependency</u> that goes with it.
492	Anna:	Right.
493	Lillian:	And you know nothing that (Name Omitted) does is geared up to make me feel that way
494		and it's then just an item of decision making.
495	Anna:	Right.
496	Lillian:	But (.) but it's how <u>I</u> feel about it that's at issue so (.) so in terms of advantages and
497		disadvantages I think an advantage of being married is that I have more financial freedom
498		I certainly wouldn't have if I was single.
499	Anna:	Right.
500	Lillian:	Er:m (2) and the disadvantage of that is I dunno I suppose it makes you (.) quite yeah, the
501		disadvantage is the ten there is a er: not tendency but like an option to depend on someone
502		else and I don't always think that's a good thing, it's how you balance that really.
503	Anna:	Looking back at everything you've told me were there anything, was there anything that
504		was particularly <u>good or bad</u>, any bits that were particularly interesting or particularly (.)
505		not?
506	Lillian:	Um, I think it's all, it's all very interesting the kind of thing about <u>identity</u> and how much
507		that's bound up with (.) your marital status is is actually quite an important one I think
508		and I (.) I do feel I do feel strongly about this and it's just that quite a few people that I've
509		worked with have <u>got</u> married recently and have just been in such a <u>tearing hurry</u> to
510		change their names and describe themselves as married and to (.) erm use that as an
511		identifying characteristic and I'm almost totally the other way and I've, <u>that</u> that's
512		interesting (.) and I kind of <u>wish</u> that women weren't always like that. (1) They're not all
513		like that but (.) but I think the majority of people still think that being married is the
514		socially acceptable way to be particularly when you get to the end of your twenties the
515		beginning of your thirties and you know there's a lot of pressure to do that and I think a
516		lot of that pressure would change on people would be much more healthy and not so <u>male</u>
517		<u>dominated</u> either because I think it's kind of (.) driven by (.) lots of kind of conventions
518		that have been put in place by male society all my, all my er <u>feminist tendencies</u> arising
519		now but er yeah, I think that's true.
520	Anna:	Right. So one of the last questions would be was there anything that you wanted to or
521		expected to talk about that I haven't mentioned. You said just now that financial things
522		haven't come up. Do you think that maybe that would be an important er an <u>interesting</u>
523		thing to add into other interviews?
524	Lillian:	(1) I think it's a whole sort of practical thing that erm that makes an awful lot of
525		difference to relationships I think money is one the things people argue about most and I
526		think it's it's the balance of power in relationships in lots of cases (.) erm (.) so that would
527		be (.) xxx
528	Anna:	Alright. That's it, I haven't got any more questions unless you've got anything else that
529		you'd like to have on the tape.
530	Lillian:	No, not at all.
531	Anna:	Okay, thank you very much.

Wednesday 2nd May, 2001

Dear Sir or Madam,

I recently contacted you by phone regarding the possibility of interviewing some of your residents at (*your institution*). I am grateful for your agreement to receive and consider the contents of this communication, containing further details about the study.

I am a researcher in the psychology department of Aston University, Birmingham, conducting a project looking at how marriage and relationships affect women's lives. This project began over a year ago and will continue until October 2002. The study has received ethical approval from the university committee and is also supervised within the department. This stage of the study entails interviewing women over the age of 60, and this is where I seek your co-operation.

I am hoping to interview women over 60 with varying experience of relationships, including widows, married and never-married women. A copy of the questions asked in interviews is enclosed. The structure of interviews revolves around reflecting on women's experiences and discussing their opinions of marriage and relationship issues. I am looking to talk to women on a one-to-one basis for between 1-2 hours. Everything said during interviews is treated as confidential. Interviews are tape recorded so no notes need be taken and I can devote my whole attention to interviewees.

If you feel that any of your residents would be interested in being interviewed I would be happy to visit your organisation at dates and times convenient to you. I will contact you again within the next week to enquire as to whether you consider that any of your residents might be prepared to take part. Thank you for your time,

Yours Sincerely,

Anna Sandfield

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Interview Question Schedule
Marriage & Relationships Study
Anna Sandfield

Self-description
1. Would you describe yourself as married, widowed, divorced or never-married?
2. How long have you been in that situation?
3. Was it something you had planned (if single or married) or did you 'end up' in that situation?
4. Are you contented with your situation?
5. Does your situation make a difference to your life or your relationships with family and friends?

Titles & Names
1. Do you use the title Miss, Ms or Mrs when you introduce yourself or fill in forms?
2. Have you ever used or known anybody else use Ms?
3. Have you ever used a different title (marriage or divorce)?
4. What did it feel like when you started using your new title? How did others react?
5. (If married) Did you change your surname to your husband's?
6. Did you consider keeping your maiden name?
7. Do you know anybody else who kept their maiden name?
8. How did it feel when you started using your new name?
9. Did it take time to get used to your new title and name?
10. Did you notice other people treating you differently?

Changes
1. When you were younger person did you have expectations of marriage?
2. (If married or divorced) How did your life change when your status changed, at first?
3. Did it affect your feelings of security and being settled?
4. Did you do different things then, see different people after your situation changed?
5. How did your friends and family react when your situation changed?
6. Did your relationships with them change?
7. Did your change of situation affect your working life?
8. Did your feelings about your situation change as you got used to things?
9. Has the importance of your relationships or marriage changed over time?

Acquaintances
1. Are the people you know mostly in the same situation as you?
2. If you know people in different situations does it make their lives different to yours?
3. Do their different situations make a difference to the things you do together or talk about?

Evaluation
1. Can you think of any advantages, for you, in being in your situation at the moment?
2. Have these changed over time?
3. Do you think that people in other situations miss out on any of these advantages?
4. Would you say there are disadvantages to your situation?
5. Have these changed over time?
6. Do you feel that being in/not being in a relationship has changed you or things about you?

7. People have mentioned that changed earnings and access to money as a result of relationships has changed their lifestyles. Do you feel that increased or decreased money as a consequence of relationships or marriage has affected your life?

Reflection
1. Would you say that your situation has made a great difference to your life (work, family satisfaction)?
2. Do you think your life would have been very different if your situation had been different?
3. Do you talk/think about your experience of relationships in the past often?
4. If you were a young adult today do you think you would make the same choices?
5. Do you feel that the relationships of the family you grew up in influenced the relationships you had as an adult?

Words
1. When was the last time you said or heard the word 'spinster'?
2. Who were they/you describing, in what context?
3. Did you hear it more years ago than now?
4. Do you like the word? What does it make you think of?
5. When was the last time you said or heard the word 'bachelor'?
6. What does it make you think of?
7. Did you hear it more years ago than now?
8. Does this word seem different to you?
9. Do you hear people use/use the word 'single' often?
10. In what context?
11. What does it make you think of?
12. Did you hear it more years ago than now?
13. Do you often hear people use the words: 'wife' and 'husband'?
14. Who, in what context (some people have mentioned jokes)?
15. Did you hear it more years ago than now?
16. Do you often hear people use the word 'partner'?
17. Who, in what context?
18. Do you hear it more now than years ago?
19. Do you particularly like/dislike any of these words?

Review
1. Has talking about these issues brought up any particular thoughts or feelings?
2. Is there anything you wanted to add or expected to talk about that we haven't mentioned?

Singleness, Marriage & Relationships Study
Interview Schedule

Self-description
1. How would you describe your relationship status?
2. How long have you been single/in that relationship/married?
3. Was that something you had planned to happen or did you 'end up' in your situation?
4. Are you contented with your situation?
5. In what ways does your situation makes a difference to your social/family/work life at the moment?

Titles & Names
1. When you are filling in forms or introducing yourself do you use the title
2. Miss/Ms/Mrs?
3. Have you considered using Ms?
4. Have you ever used a different title?
5. If yes, why?
6. What did it feel like to use your new title? How did others react?
7. If married, did you change your surname?
8. Why? Did you consider keeping your maiden name?
9. How did it feel when you started using your new name?
10. Did it take time to get used to your new title and name?
11. Did you notice that other people treated you differently?
12. Has everyone you know made the same title and name choices?

Changes
1. When you were a child or young person did you have expectations of marriage/relationships?
2. How did your life change when your relationship status changed at first (if applicable)?
3. Did you feel different? More secure?
4. Did you do different things then, see different people?
5. Did it have other implications for your social/familial life?
6. How did others react, your friends and family, your parents?
7. Did your relationships with them change?
8. Did it have an impact on your working life?
9. Did your feelings about your relationship/lack of change over time as you go used to things?
10. Has what you expect/need from your partner/relationship/life changed as you've got older?

Acquaintances
1.Are the people you know mostly in the same position as you?
2.If you know people with different relationships does it make their lives different to yours?
3.Do their different relationships make any difference to the things you do together or the things you talk about?

Evaluation
1. Would you say there are advantages, for you, being married/relationship/single at the moment?
2. Have these changed over time?
3. Do you think that people in other situations, married/relationship/single, miss out in any way?

4. Would you say there are disadvantages, for you, being married/relationship/single?
5. Have these changed over time?
6. Do you feel that being in/not being in a relationship has changed you or things about you?
7. People have mentioned that money has changed their lifestyles in relationships. Do you feel that increased or decreased money as a consequence of relationships has played any role in how they affect your life?

Future relationships (if appropriate)
1. Would you like to see your relationship status change in the future? How/when?
2. What differences do you think this might make/would you like this to make to your life?
3. Do you have a particular idea about the sort of person/relationship that you are looking for?
4. Do you do anything now that might help bring about this change/find this sort of person?

Reflection
1. Would you say that your situation has made a great difference to your life so far?
2. Have your relationships/lack of made a difference to your experience of/progress at work?
3. Do you think your life would have been different if you had been in/out of a relationship in particular ways?
4. If you were starting your life again now, as a young adult, do you think you would make the same choices?
5. Do you talk/think about your experience of relationships in the past often?
6. Do you feel that the relationships of the family you grew up in influenced the relationships you had as an adult?

Words
1. When was the last time that you used, or heard someone else use, the word 'spinster'/'bachelor'?
2. Who were they/you describing, in what context?
3. Do you use the word, do you like the word?
4. What does it make you think of?
5. Do you hear people use/use the word 'single' often?
6. In what context?
7. Do you often hear people use the words: 'wife' and 'husband', 'partner'?
8. Who, in what context?
9. Do you particularly like/dislike any of these words, do they provoke any particular responses when you hear them?

Review
1. Has talking about these issues brought up any particular thoughts or feelings?
2. Is there anything you wanted to talk about/expected to talk about that we have not mentioned?

JUDY

2	Anna:	Would you describe yourself as married, widowed, divorced, never married, in a
3		relationship or (.) single? Any of those words?
4	Judy:	Divorced.
5	Anna:	Ok. And how long have you been in that situation?
6	Judy:	Divorced two years but (.) separated seven.
7	Anna:	Mhm. So are you contented with living in that situation?
8	Judy:	Yes I am.
9	Anna:	Did it take time for you to get used to it?
10	Judy:	(2) Erm (1) yes I suppose it did but it was what I wanted so (.) I can't say I ever went
11		through a terrible grieving process because it was my choice to (.) you know, break it
12		off.
13	Anna:	Yeah, yeah. Erm how old were you when you got married?
14	Judy:	Twenty-one.
15	Anna:	And had you planned to get married was it one of those things when you were little
16		did you think that you might like?
17	Judy:	(laughs) Well I suppose so well I can't remember thinking about it when I was little.
18	Anna:	Yeah.
19	Judy:	But yeah I suppose I did, yeah.
20	Anna:	Erm when you did get married did it make a big difference to your life?
21	Judy:	(1) Yes it did because I (.) you know I lived with my parents up until then or in (.) in a
22		nursing home so I was then in my own home.
23	Anna:	Yes.
24	Judy:	And having to do everything for myself.
25	Anna:	Did you did it change the social activities, did you do more or did you do [less?
26	Judy:	[No it didn't really change because we'd been together for (.) a couple of years
27		anyway so we used to do things together anyway so no it didn't really.
28	Anna:	Some people have said that they found (.) they found it they found it easier as a couple
29		to do social things because some things they say, like going out for a meal, are
30		designed for two people.
31	Judy:	Oh definitely yeah, yeah I wouldn't have (.) I wouldn't have dreamt of going in a pub
32		on my own (.) in fact I still don't like going in pubs on my own. Yes, that's a lot
33		easier.
34	Anna:	So have you found it have your social activities changed since you were living on your
35		own?
36	Judy:	Erm (1) I suppose I go out for meals more because th (.) that's a thing that I feel
37		women are happier doing (.) together than actually going in a pub. I still feel it's
38		probably more acceptable for men to go to pubs than it is for women (.) and most of
39		the pubs round here seem to be geared for (.) people younger than us anyway.
40	Anna:	Yeah. Er (1) er has living on your own made any difference to your relationships with
41		family and friends? Can you see them more or?
42	Judy:	Er: I can see the friends that I want to see more but its also made a difference in that
43		some friends obviously decided that they (.) that they didn't particularly want to see
44		me anymore. They judged me and found me wanting in fact, one particular friend said
45		to me (.) you know, "Couldn't you have made it work? Did you try and make it
46		work?" Well yes I did, I went to erm Relate (.) before I got divorced I certainly didn't
47		enter into it into it easily.
48	Anna:	No.
49	Judy:	But having said that I chose not to have my husband go to Relate with me 'cause I
50		didn't want to say in front of other people that I didn't want to be with him any more.
51		But certainly come friends chose to (.) to drop me erm but then I've gained friends in a
52		similar situation who (.) who I see more.

53	Anna:	Ok. When you first got married did you change your name to your husbands name?
54	Judy:	Yes I did.
55	Anna:	And start using the name [and the title 'Mrs'?
56	Judy:	[Yeah.
57		Yeah, I did that, yeah.
58	Anna:	Was it something that you thought about or did you do it automatically?
59	Judy:	I think it was automatic (.) that's what you do.
60	Anna:	Yeah. Erm when you started using the name was it a positive thing? Do you when you
61		had your new name and had to write cheques or other things, to use your new name
62		was it (.) exciting?
63	Judy:	I suppose it was at the beginning yeah. I soon got used to it but yes I did have to think
64		about it it wasn't an automatic thing.
65	Anna:	Erm do you nobody who didn't [change their surname?
66	Judy:	[No I don't, no.
67	Anna:	Erm did you feel that other people treated you differently or did you feel different
68		because some people have mentioned that when they became a Mrs they felt more like
69		they were respected or it was as though they'd achieved something.
70	Judy:	No, no I don't think I felt any different (.) except that in situations where perhaps we
71		weren't for example when we went to buy a television.
72	Anna:	Yes.
73	Judy:	Which I was paying for but they wanted my husband to sign (.) the erm the documents
74		which made me quite angry because I was paying for it it was my cheque that was
75		paying for it but they seemed to assume that because (.) he was the man it was his you
76		know responsibility. I won in the end and was allowed to do with it but it wasn't (.)
77		you know it wasn't acceptable and the same with (.) things like mortgage it's (.)
78		always the husband's name that goes down first even if it's a you know joint
79		mortgages, it's the man (.) and then the woman. I don't know if that's still the case but
80		er certainly it was then.
81	Anna:	(2) Ok (.) er ok firstly, did your life change a lot when you got married, you said you'd
82		moved out to a new place, did you do lots of different things?
83	Judy:	No not really, not apart from moving and you know having to (.) do all the household
84		things that my Mum had always done but no I didn't really. I was still mixing with the
85		same friends because we'd mixed with them as a couple anyway.
86	Anna:	Yeah. Erm did it affect your feelings of being secure or being settled down?
87	Judy:	(2) It's so long ago that (.) I suppose I suppose I felt secure yeah (.) erm but (.) I
88		wanted to be the boss.
89	Anna:	Mhm.
90	Judy:	Without causing xxx I can remember an instance where I went to work and when I
91		came home he had (.) purchased a motorbike in my absence and I just said "Well
92		either that goes back or I go," because we were living in rented accommodation saving
93		to buy a house and in my opinion you don't go buying a motorbike if you (.) you
94		know if you're saving to buy a house erm (.) when I came home the next day it had
95		gone back so (laughs) I don't know what excuse he gave "My wife said I can't keep
96		it."
97	Anna:	How did your friends and family react, if you can remember when you first got
98		married?
99	Judy:	Erm (1) friends that were friends with both us didn't (.) really react differently at all
100		my parents actually never (.) never approved of him my father thought that he wasn't
101		good enough for me but I don't think anyone would've been with my father (.) and
102		erm later on when the children were when I was having my first baby I think Dad
103		thought it was immaculate conception (laughs) "It doesn't happen to my daughter"!
104	Anna:	xxx when you started living on your own, did that change your life a lot?

105	Judy:	Only in erm (.) I don't know if physical is the right word but things that needed doing
106		that (.) not necessarily I would call a man's job but because probably of my build and
107		erm (.) medical history I had to things that I can't really do like erm (.) you know,
108		gardening and household things.
109	Anna:	Practical things.
110	Judy:	Practical things, yeah (.) but as far as managing the house I'd always done it anyway
111		(.) during (.) during marriage you know he gave me the money and I sorted it all so (.)
112		I didn't have anything to learn there.
113	Anna:	Erm (1) did that change (.) any of your social activities? Did you see different, well
114		you said you did see some different people, did your friends and family, did your
115		contact with them change besides as you said some of them deciding [xxx.
116	Judy:	I probably saw more of my parents because my dad would come and do things for me
117		that (.) you know that my husband used to do erm (.) I probably saw less of some
118		relations for the simple reason that I can't drive and if we went to see relations it was
119		my husband that took us there so (.) that changed but apart from that I don't think so,
120		no.
121	Anna:	Ok erm (.) did you work er before and during when you were married?
122	Judy:	Yeah, I worked before I was married and then stopped (.) stopped work when the
123		children were small and then went back to it.
124	Anna:	(2) Have you erm (.) since you've been on your own have your feelings about that
125		changed have you become more comfortable with that or=
126	Judy:	=With what?
127	Anna:	With living on your own.
128	Judy:	Erm (1) yeah I think I was (.) very anxious at the beginning because I couldn't
129		imagine living on my own in fact some friends (.) said that they thought I was really
130		brave you know making this step you know a lot of people perhaps would just put up
131		with the marriage situation because (.) you know because it's easier and it is easier (1)
132		but erm (.) I don't think anything changed for the worse really.
133	Anna:	Erm do you know er are the people are your friends mostly in the same situation as
134		you, have they been married?
135	Judy:	Erm I suppose in my social circle most are in the same situation most have been
136		married and are divorced or (.) have been in relationships and no longer are I think
137		I've only got one (.) one friend that I actually socialise with who (.) is married.
138	Anna:	Yeah. Does it make it easier to (.) to see them is it easier to be friends with people
139		who've had that same experience or similar?
140	Judy:	I don't know if it's easier, it's just the way it's happened. You know I don't know that
141		I chose to do it but that's the way it happened and I think (.) also when you've friends
142		who have (.) you know who are in the same situation as you, you can see them when
143		you want to whereas I tend to feel with married friends that I mustn't (.) mustn't
144		bother them at the weekend because that's their time with their husband and (.) it's
145		probably not the case but it's the way I feel whereas you know my single friends are
146		free when I'm free usually.
147	Anna:	Yes. Erm do you know anybody who hasn't got married at all among your friends?
148	Judy:	When you say 'not married at all' do you mean not having had a relationship or just
149		not married?
150	Anna:	Mm er do you (.) for a start do you know anybody who has remained single that hasn't
151		had any relationships or hasn't (.) been er I suppose (.) anybody who you would say
152		has stayed single?
153	Judy:	Well I have a friend who has never married but she has had relationships and has got a
154		daughter.
155	Anna:	Yeah.

156	Judy:	Erm I mean I know people that have (.) never really had relationships but not (.) I
157		wouldn't say I was friendly with them I just <u>know</u> them.
158	Anna:	Do you er do you think that their that being married made a difference to your life
159		made a difference to you, you might have learnt things or?
160	Judy:	Well I wouldn't have had the children if I hadn't been married.
161	Anna:	Yeah.
162	Judy:	You know I <u>I don't think I would</u> and I wouldn't have considered it I don't think so (.)
163		you know if nothing else came out of the marriage (.) <u>they did</u>. And I <u>can't</u> look back
164		and say it was all absolutely awful because it wasn't it it you know it just maybe
165		wasn't right.
166	Anna:	Mhm. (1) Erm can you think of any advantages for you of living on your own? What
167		are the best things?
168	Judy:	That I can do (.) well more or less what I want when I want except that (.) because I've
169		got (my daughter) and (her partner) living with me then I'm not on my own so to a
170		certain extent (.) that isn't strictly true but I can <u>go out</u> whenever I want (.) <u>see</u>
171		whoever I want (.) hopefully.
172	Anna:	More than you could.
173	Judy:	More than I could, yeah because even though (.) my husband used to say that he didn't
174		mind me going out he was always in a bad mood when I did go out so.
175	Anna:	Um have (.) have the advantages changed over time? Has anything has it got better?
176	Judy:	Erm (1) I suppose I think er it's an advantage I've become more selfish.
177	Anna:	Mhm.
178	Judy:	You know I've started saying, you know "I'll do what I want to do," but maybe that
179		would've happened as the children got older anyway, you know I'm not my feeling is
180		a bit you know "I've given you twenty-five years and (.) now it's my turn," but that
181		might have happened (.) had I stayed married.
182	Anna:	Would you say that there are disadvantages to living on your own?
183	Judy:	When you say on my own do you mean (.) with them?
184	Anna:	Yes, yes.
185	Judy:	Erm (2) no, no I can't, no I don't think I would really (.) I can't think of any except for
186		the practicalities and things.
187	Anna:	Yes, ok. Erm (2) people have mentioned before that when they've been in
188		relationships its made them more financially secure one of the advantages for being
189		married was that they didn't have to work as much or things changed in that way so
190		did you find that when you were married it changed that aspect of your life?
191	Judy:	Yes I suppose it did. Erm I mean when we were married (.) all my money was sort of
192		luxuries, holidays and new things for the house and his money went to pay the
193		mortgage whereas now (.) my money has to pay the mortgage when I was married I
194		didn't have to worry about having a job (.) now (.) you know <u>I do worry</u> about losing
195		my job and the job I'm in is (.) erm sort of reviewed every year and every year around
196		this time I'm thinking "Oh, shall I still have a job in September and (.) if I haven't
197		what will I do?" And I'm always aware that I've got to keep a small amount (.) <u>in the</u>
198		<u>bank</u> in case I am (.) you know unemployed for whatever reason but having said that I
199		still (.) wouldn't consider changing my job even though it is a bit precarious because I
200		enjoy the job I'm in and (.) perhaps I'd earn some (.) more somewhere else but (.) you
201		know I think it's important that I like being where I am.
202	Anna:	Ok. Er (2) so would you say that having been married has made a big difference to
203		your life, having done those things has made a difference to who you are now?
204	Judy:	(2) In what way?
205	Anna:	Well some people say that erm (.) they couldn't some people say that particularly
206		they're glad they were married or they're glad they are married because they wouldn't
207		have had children otherwise or because some people couldn't imagine what they

208		would have done if they hadn't because they'd always expected to be married and er
209		(1) do you think that er (.) or its changed their working patterns or they've learnt
210		things about themselves or they've become more independent or they've (.) they've
211		changed about themselves.
212	Judy:	And what was the question to start off with? Sorry I've forgotten now! (laughs)
213	Anna:	That's ok, it was well it was that first question under 'Reflection' so I was asking
214		about whether you felt that being married and having had your children had made a
215		big difference to you?
216	Judy:	Certainly having the children er yeah made a massive difference I mean I (.) I suppose
217		I had always assumed that I would get married and have children (.) but unfortunately
218		probably the minute that the first one was born erm (.) she became my life and then
219		ultimately when the second one came you know they became my life probably (.) no
220		not probably my husband got pushed out erm because he was no longer important. I
221		don't mean that he was only important because he provided them but (.) they just erm
222		took over my life and I suppose it's only now that I'm beginning to (.) you know feel
223		that (.) I want to have a life of my own again.
224	Anna:	Yeah, [you want some of that back].
225	Judy:	Yeah, yeah I mean they still are the most important thing but you know they're big
226		enough to look after themselves so I can (.) do things for me as well.
227	Anna:	Do you think your life would have been very different if you hadn't decided to get
228		married when you had?
229	Judy:	I can't imagine doing it (.) any differently I mean I think given my time again I'd
230		perhaps marry later (.) but I can't imagine a life without them.
231	Anna:	Yeah. Do you think that, this is quite a difficult question, if you were a young adult
232		today you would er make the same choices? You said you might marry a bit later.
233	Judy:	Maybe (.) I maybe wouldn't even get married at all and I would certainly have
234		children later I mean I don't regret having them when I did (.) but I think things are
235		different now (.) you know when I got married and had the children it was quite
236		acceptable to have your children in fact I was twenty-five which at the time was (.)
237		reasonably old to start having a family but I think (.) you know it's acceptable now to
238		have them a lot older than that.
239	Anna:	Yeah.
240	Judy:	So I probably would have done that, you know waited (.) and done more. I suppose a
241		regret is that I haven't ever (.) done a great deal of travelling but then (.) once again
242		that was my choice I didn't want to (.) my ex-husband wanted to go travelling all over
243		the place and I was quite happy to go to Devon or Cornwall or (.) but now I'm
244		thinking (.) you know maybe I would like to travel (.) maybe I have missed out
245		something.
246	Anna:	Do you think that maybe perhaps people who don't have children or a family or (.) a
247		partner that the miss out on something? That you know, you've got those
248		relationships.
249	Judy:	Well I think they do but (.) whether they'd think so or not [I don't know in that, you
250		know, the people that I know that are single do seem quite happy never having had
251		children but I can't imagine (.) never having had them and I said to (.) you know
252		anybody that would ask me that they are (.) the best thing that's ever happened to me.
253	Anna:	[Yeah, yeah.
254		Ok, um. Some people have mentioned to me that, particularly their parents'
255		relationship, or other relationships like their siblings for example who have got
256		married before, influenced the way they thought about relationships either in a
257		positive or negative way. Do you feel that happened in your case?
258	Judy:	Well I'm an only one so I can't judge by siblings but certainly with my parents my
259		Mum did (.) does everything for my Dad and I always felt (.) growing up that you

| 260 | | know there was no way I was going to do that clean his shoes and (.) you know, |

260 know there was no way I was going to do that clean his shoes and (.) you know,
261 practically hand feed him you know. I always said you know "I wouldn't do that," and
262 when she would agree with him I would say (.) you know "If you don't agree (.) don't
263 say that you agree," but I have to say that once I was married I certainly wasn't doing
264 everything physically for him but a lot of the time I wouldn't say I agreed with him
265 but I didn't argue with him because it was easier just to (.) you know anything for a
266 quiet life really.
267 Anna: Mhm. Ok (.) right I've got some questions about words. Erm do you remember the last
268 time that you said or heard somebody else say the word 'spinster'?
269 Judy: (1) (laughs) Yes, I smiled when I went through the question because it was only last
270 week (.) erm and I don't know why it came up but a friend and I were talking about (.)
271 how people change appearance-wise and we named (.) three or four people that we
272 know that are spinsters probably never even had boyfriends and they seemed to (.)
273 looked always looked old but now that they are old they don't look any older.
274 Anna: Yeah.
275 Judy: And we were sort of sitting trying to think of who else we knew that had never been
276 married and thinking "Yeah she did look like that when she was thirty and she still
277 doesn't look any older." So although they looked old when they were young they
278 perhaps look (.) young now that they're old.
279 Anna: Yeah. Did you come up with an explanation for why?
280 Judy: (.) No not really, no, I mean no. Unless it's er (.) having (.) you know having more
281 time to do (.) what you want to do, but no we didn't really (.) no we just spent time
282 thinking about who we knew that was a spinster and (.) what you know what they
283 were like.
284 Anna: When you say the word 'spinster' do you think of it as a negative thing? Some people
285 think of it as a nasty word or just a functional word?
286 Judy: I don't think I like the word it doesn't (.) smack as nicely as 'bachelor'.
287 Anna: No. Have used that or heard that recently?
288 Judy: 'Bachelor'?
289 Anna: Mm.
290 Judy: No. No I don't think I have.
291 Anna: Ok. Erm how about the word 'single' people tend to use that more often so is that one
292 you hear more?
293 Judy: Erm (.) no I don't think it is no. No I wouldn't say I'd heard it (.) no.
294 Anna: Ok erm, what about the words 'wife' and 'husband'? Some people have said that the
295 words 'wife' and 'husband' when they were married were a particular kind of novelty
296 in that being able to say 'my husband' was exciting. Did you used to use those words?
297 Judy: (1) Yeah I think maybe I did yeah. I think I was (.) you know I quite liked saying that I
298 was somebody's wife and (.) that he was my husband but I don't think that people (.)
299 use the words as much in fact colleagues tend to refer to their wives or husband just by
300 their name they don't say "My husband," they say (.) you know "David" or whatever.
301 I don't think the words are used as much. [Or maybe I'm just aware of you know
302 more aware I don't know.
303 Anna: [Yeah.
304 Mhm. What about the word 'partner'? Do you hear that a lot?
305 Judy: Yes I suppose I do yeah. I have friends who, actually even married friends would refer
306 to their husband or wife as 'partner' rather than 'husband' and 'wife' yeah. I mean I
307 describe my daughter and her fiancée I tend to use the word 'partner' rather than
308 fiancée, I don't know why (.) but I use that word.
309 Anna: Erm some people particularly dislike that word, some people say to me that because
310 it's so ambiguous people use it for lots of different [meanings] does it strike you as.

315

311	Judy:	Yeah I can see what you're saying but no I don't (.) it doesn't strike me as being (.)
312		the wrong word to use. Then I suppose people use it in business don't they (.) I can't
313		(.) imagine it's a word that I would have come up with (.) I don't even know where it
314		came from, who started using partner but er (.) no I think it's an acceptable word to
315		use.
316	Anna:	Ok. And er just before those last questions erm are there any, with things like er less
317		people getting married or people putting off getting married and more people getting
318		divorced and staying single later in life it has been suggested that some time in the
319		future there'll be older people who don't have children or a partner or families (.) a lot
320		more people living alone. Do you see that as a negative thing or? Can you think of any
321		reasons for that or is it just.
322	Judy:	Yeah I think (.) yeah you may be right erm (.) and it maybe is a negative thing that old
323		people (.) get to the stage where they can't really look after themselves. Er they can go
324		into a home but I think it could be quite lonely I mean I find life (.) living with my
325		daughter and her boyfriend quite lonely. Erm in fact maybe I won't maybe they're not
326		lonely when they get old because I have said to people that (.) I think I'll be less
327		lonely on my own than I am with them.
328	Anna:	Mm.
329	Judy:	Because they're (.) you know (.) a couple they're together and I feel as though I'm
330		living (.) almost like a guest in my own house and (.) certainly I'm (.) less lonely when
331		they are out than I am when they're in so maybe it maybe you wouldn't be lonely on
332		your own.
333	Anna:	Yeah.
334	Judy:	But I think that (.) it depends whether they are people that have been together with
335		someone who become on your own or do you mean someone that's been on their own
336		always.
337	Anna:	Well um I think I probably mean both but um er (.) I'm particularly interested in the
338		idea that more people are choosing to just to be on their own in that more people are
339		young people I mean younger people are being able to afford their own houses and
340		putting off getting married and the newspapers say "They're putting off getting
341		married till it's <u>too late</u>"! and a lot of people think that this is a negative thing that
342		there's <u>less marriage</u> and that a decline in marriage would be a bad thing for society
343		but (.) and then on the other hand people think it's just choice, letting people decide
344		whatever choices.
345	Judy:	Yeah well the people that I know who are (.) who have <u>always</u> been on their own (.)
346		<u>don't</u> seem lonely but then I do have friends that have been married and who have
347		children (.) yeah children the same age as mine who they see growing away from them
348		and one in particular is (.) <u>is getting lonely</u> more and more day by day and (.) she
349		obviously doesn't want to be one her own but doesn't know how to go about (.)
350		finding someone to share her home with her.
351	Anna:	Yeah.
352	Judy:	So it's an individual thing I think but maybe maybe it's not a good thing. (2) It can't It
353		can't be good to be on your own all the time can it. Do you think?
354	Anna:	Well (.) I'm not sure I mean I know there's a lot in psychology that I've reading
355		there's a lot of assuming that people who live on their own don't have any support or
356		don't have (.) don't have the same kind of social don't have friends to share things
357		with but (.) some of the people that I speak to say that they have friends and they've
358		been married or they've been in a relationship and that they're just as happy with that
359		now because they still see their friends and go out so I'm not sure it's completely
360		negative thing but having said that I don't know (.) a lot of researchers are concerned
361		that when people get older and become infirm a lot of particularly with mental health
362		problems when they get older, ageing disorders, that there'll be a big problem because

363		there won't be enough <u>care</u> as there'll be such an enormous number of older people
364		who don't have children or partners or connections to help support them.
365	Judy:	Mm.
366	Anna:	So.
367	Judy:	I wouldn't like to think that my children feel that they have to support me (.) when I'm
368		old and doddery (.) and yet I think maybe my parents feel (.) that it's my responsibility
369		to do that for them. I erm (.) but then the way that I treat my parents is totally different
370		to the way that (.) my children treat me. Mine will <u>say things</u> that really annoy me and
371		(.) I just sort of you know think "Oh god," but if I say things that (.) that annoy the
372		girls then they'll say "Oh for heavens sake Mum don't talk stupid," or "Don't say
373		that."
374	Anna:	Mhm.
375	Judy:	So (.) you know the way they treat me is differently to the way (.) that I treat my
376		parents. Erm I don't know that I would <u>support</u> (.) that (.) that certainly when I left my
377		husband seven years ago (.) <u>I thought</u> that I was quite happy to be my own (.) I was
378		quite happy to be on my own for and <u>I was</u> happy to be on my own for the next five
379		years but then (.) suddenly meeting this man and suddenly thinking <u>I don't</u> want to be
380		on my I want to be with him and share things and other people think how nice it is that
381		they do things together. Suddenly you know (.) I'm not the same as I was seven years
382		ago when I first got d you know got separated.
383	Anna:	So that's changed.
384	Judy:	Yeah.
385	Anna:	(2) Ok is there anything else you wanted to mention or anything about your opinions
386		on being single, in a relationship or married or anything that you wanted to add?
387	Judy:	I don't think so (.) no I mean if there's anything else that you want to ask then ask but
388		I can't think of anything.
389	Anna:	No that's everything, ok. Well thank you very much, I'll turn the tape off.

1		
2	Anna:	Right, erm would you describe yourself as single, partnered (.) married, divorced,
3		widowed, never-married or (.) any=
4	Fred:	=Partnered.
5	Anna:	Ok. How long have you been in that situation?
6	Fred:	(.) Three-and-a-half years.
7	Anna:	Ok. Er before you were in that relationship did you want to be in a relationship
8		particularly?
9	Fred:	Nope, no I was quite happy on my own.
10	Anna:	Did it just happen?
11	Fred:	It just happened.
12	Anna:	Ok, are you contented with being in this situation at the moment?
13	Fred:	Yes (.) very.
14	Anna:	And (.) when you first (.) got into this relationship what kind of differences did it
15		make?
16	Fred:	The biggest difference wa:s (.) the (.) the hugs. The the tactile part (.) very much so
17		yes.
18	Anna:	So that was a positive difference?
19	Fred:	Definitely positive.
20	Anna:	Did it make any difference to your working life, if you were working?
21	Fred:	I wasn't working.
22	Anna:	Ok.
23	Fred:	I was doing odd bits of supply teaching (.) didn't make any difference at all (.) I only
24		did odd days.
25	Anna:	Erm (.) what about your relationships with your friends or your family or your social
26		life? Did it=
27	Fred:	=Didn't affect it at all no. No, most of my friends knew (my partner) anyway.
28	Anna:	Yeah.
29	Fred:	And my own children knew him, family all knew him and it was something that just
30		happened (.) from a friendship (laughs).
31	Anna:	Yes, just while we're on this subject erm (.) was it when you said that you were quite
32		happy being on your own did that (.) were there any negative things, changes that you
33		noticed about when you stopped being on your own?
34	Fred:	Stopping being on my own?
35	Anna:	Mhm.
36	Fred:	Er:m I felt a little bit at times as though er (.) my space was being invaded I think it's
37		because he came to live at my house.
38	Anna:	Yeah.
39	Fred:	So obviously he was in (.) my house (.) he lived he lived in the way that I lived but er
40		(.) now it's all fine.
41	Anna:	Ok. Right I'm going to ask you a couple of questions about titles and names. When
42		you have to select a title, such as on a form, do you use Miss, Ms or Mrs?
43	Fred:	I still use Mrs. (.) But I use my former married name still.
44	Anna:	Right.
45	Fred:	With a very good reason! (laughs) If I can carry on.
46	Anna:	Mm.
47	Fred:	I: well my married (.) is (my surname) well was (.) and my maiden name was (first
48		maiden name-second maiden name) hyphenated so the (present surname) caused far
49		less trouble than going back to (.) xxx.
50	Anna:	Yeah.
51	Fred:	So I just didn't even (.) contemplate changing it for lots of (.) other reasons as well.
52	Anna:	Yeah.

53	Fred:	Just er (.) procedures and (.) it didn't seem important to me.
54	Anna:	Erm did you ever use a different title to Mrs?
55	Fred:	No.
56	Anna:	Erm.
57	Fred:	I don't like Ms.
58	Anna:	Why?
59	Fred:	I think it's (.) <u>impersonal</u>. Mm.
60	Anna:	When you were married you changed your name you said. Erm was that an automatic
61		decision or did you have to think about it?
62	Fred:	When I changed to my: husband's name?
63	Anna:	To your married name, yeah.
64	Fred:	I think it was just automatic I don't think I really thought about it. It was just an
65		automatic pattern (.) to follow.
66	Anna:	Yeah. When you first started using that name was it a <u>positive</u> thing at the time? Were
67		you pleased to have a new name and a new.
68	Fred:	Yes I was, yeah. It was what happened with getting married.
69	Anna:	Yeah. (2) Do you know anybody who hasn't or didn't change their surname?
70	Fred:	I don't know (.) personally don't know anybody who hasn't but <u>my Grandmother</u> (1)
71		erm who died I can't remember how many years ago that would be she (.) she would
72		have been well over a hundred by now (.) but she had a friend who refused to er
73		change to her husband's name and who also refused to wear a wedding ring (.) but had
74		a very happy marriage brought up a family and (.) everything was fine but she said she
75		wanted to remain (.) her own person.
76	Anna:	Yeah. Did that go down ok, did her husband mind?
77	Fred:	As far as I know it all went down ok. Yeah (laughs) they were erm (2) were they
78		councillors in (a nearby town) (.) you know so they led a quite a busy (.) <u>social</u> life.
79	Anna:	Yeah.
80	Fred:	But er xxx.
81	Anna:	I see (.) er: when you changed your name to your married name did it take (.) time to
82		get used to or: was it something you did automatically?
83	Fred:	I don't think it really (.) as far as I remember it didn't take time to get used to becau:se
84		(.) I practised about it to start off with! (laughs) Come on! All girls I reckon (.) well
85		not all (.) must have a little "Ooh this looks nice, this looks nice," write it down (Anna
86		laughs) practice the signature.
87	Anna:	Yeah.
88	Fred:	No (.) 'cause we'd been together quite a while 'cause I'd gone through college before
89		we got married and so I'd got used to the (.) idea you know. Probably mine was more
90		difficult because (.) the hyphenated name cause <u>so much bother</u>.
91	Anna:	Did it?
92	Fred:	Yep. Everybody thought we were posh and we <u>weren't posh</u> because we were
93		hyphenated.
94	Anna:	How did you come to have the hyphen?
95	Fred:	My: Grandmother was married twice (.) and my Dad was the son of the first husband
96		and he died and she remarried and apparently he was a super father and he took my
97		Dad took both names. So that's how we ended up with it. I was actually grumbled at at
98		grammar school for not knowing my own name. Because in primary school I was
99		always (the second hyphenated surname). When they called out our names for the
100		classes in the playground I came under the (different letter of the alphabet) for (first
101		hyphenated name-second name) and I just stood there and thought (laughs) it didn't (.)
102		just didn't register.
103	Anna:	Yeah.
104	Fred:	And I (.) was grumbled at for not knowing my own name.

105	Anna:	Mm. A question I forgot to ask you from the other page was, before you actually
106		planned to get married did you <u>want</u> to get married?
107	Fred:	Yes. Yes, I did.
108	Anna:	And did you expect to?
109	Fred:	Yes. (2) I always loved looking after children and this was (.) a pattern that I wanted
110		even though I did further education I went off to college and everything.
111	Anna:	Yeah.
112	Fred:	I still (.) I wanted to do it.
113	Anna:	Yeah (4) ok erm what was it like, the question was when your relationship status last
114		changed so I suppose it would be (.) when you got into the relationship [you're in
115		now.
116	Fred:	[The relationship I'm in now wouldn't it.
117	Anna:	Yep.
118	Fred:	What was it like?
119	Anna:	Well (.) well some people have said that it that they that their lives were suddenly
120		improved, or they felt more secure or stable or generally happy or.
121	Fred:	I was (.) I was definitely happy but then I wasn't unhappy before. It's it's er: I would
122		describe it as (.) it's quite complicated probably (.) er a friendship that developed into
123		love and also we live life together-apart. We do our own things and (.) we just respect
124		each other's space and everything xxx.
125	Anna:	Ok. Er did it have when you got into this relationship did it have implications for your
126		social life or the amount of activities you engaged in?
127	Fred:	Not really because I'd met (my partner) through a friend at a university and (.) course
128		I I'd moved here when I'd left my husband anyway so over the years I'd gradually got
129		into that (university) group (.) and I've got a lot of friends from that and (my partner)
130		was a friend of a friend from (university) and so <u>socially</u> that side developed and we
131		still (.) keep in touch very much with a lot of the (university) people. But that's the
132		kind of friends over at (a nearby town) and (another town) [I see regularly.]
133	Anna:	Yeah.
134	Fred:	So it didn't really (.) alter (laughs) much.
135	Anna:	Did it um (2) er (1) it is do you find it different socialising as part of a couple if you
136		have someone to go out with? A couple of people have mentioned to me that they find
137		it <u>easier</u> (.) to go out as part of a couple.
138	Fred:	I think so (.) yes. (.) Yeah I do 'cause there are still places (.) with me being older
139		there are still places that I don't feel comfortable on my own. I <u>wouldn't</u> go into a pub
140		on my own unless there I knew I was meeting someone or if I'd come in with
141		someone I still don't think feel comfortable though on my own (.) although I have
142		done it (.) once or twice but still (.) not happy about it.
143	Anna:	Yeah, ok. How did other people react when your (.) situation changed and you got into
144		this relationship?
145	Fred:	Very happy and (.) yeah everybody was very happy.
146	Anna:	(1) Ok.
147	Fred:	Course I'm probably like anybody else in that (my partner's) twenty years what
148		twenty-one years younger than me (laughs) so it does make a (.) a difference but
149		everybody's (.) <u>it doesn't really</u> but you'd think some people might be a bit (.) odd
150		about it an:d (.) all our friends (.) well <u>most</u> of our friends knew both of us anyway its
151		just been accepted. No problems.
152	Anna:	Are your friends and acquaintances mostly in relationships or in the same situation as
153		you or are (.) they in different?
154	Fred:	Lots of different (.) there's lots of different xxx.

155	Anna:	Ok (.) some people have said that it's <u>harder</u> if you're socialising in a couple to meet
156		(.) to speak to single people to meet single people, that when you're in a couple you
157		tend to meet couples.
158	Fred:	(1) Mm I'd say (.) quite even, I suppose.
159	Anna:	Yeah, ok. (2) So has being in a relationship made any differences to how to the
160		amount of time you spend with other people or the things you do with other people?
161	Fred:	Probably the things we do with other people. Erm (.) as I said when I was on my own I
162		wouldn't go into the pub, although we would probably go as a group, whereas as a
163		couple (.) although we don't really look at it as going to the pub, we go to the quiz
164		every week I mean we meet up at the pub but it isn't essentially for a drink it's a social
165		occasion and (.) just a light-hearted quiz and to get together with our friends at the
166		same time.
167	Anna:	(3) Ok could you describe any <u>advantages</u>, for you, of being in a relationship?
168	Fred:	Hugs.
169	Anna:	(2) Ah.
170	Fred:	It is really the physical contact.
171	Anna:	Yeah.
172	Fred:	Yeah.
173	Anna:	So that's something that is definitely. Do you think that people (.) other people (.)
174		might miss that if they were out of relationships, do you think it might be a general
175		advantage?
176	Fred:	If they're like me yes. That was the one thing that I definitely missed, the physical
177		contact.
178	Anna:	Could you describe any disadvantages?
179	Fred:	(3) Just getting (.) sort of his little habits that annoy me and I know very well that
180		some of my little habits annoy him.
181	Anna:	Mhm.
182	Fred:	Though those (.) are very small they're out <u>far outweighed</u> by advantages.
183	Anna:	Do you feel that being in this relationship has changed the way you feel or you?
184	Fred:	I don't really think it has changed the way I feel because I think I (.) I'm older and so
185		(.) I don't know if I've sort of got into a pattern of how I work.
186	Anna:	Yeah.
187	Fred:	But I don't think its really affected that.
188	Anna:	Has it changed, do you feel generally that it goes back again to the idea that
189		sometimes feel generally happier or secure.
190	Fred:	Well yes I'm happier, happier (1) er er yes I would describe it as <u>happier</u> than when I
191		was on my own yet I was happy on my own.
192	Anna:	Yeah.
193	Fred:	Because I wasn't looking for a relationship.
194	Anna:	Mhm. (6) Ok (2) are there any particular points in your life when being in a
195		relationship has been particularly good for you or particularly bad? Been particularly
196		significant.
197	Fred:	(2) With the downs in life it's good (.) it's just the (.) there's somebody else there to
198		comfort you.
199	Anna:	Yeah.
200	Fred:	<u>That is when</u> (.) you do appreciate there's another half there. (2) Of course you share
201		(.) the good bits together don't you (laughs).
202	Anna:	Mm. Ok I'm going to ask you some questions about <u>words</u>. When did you last use or
203		hear somebody else use the word 'spinster'?
204	Fred:	(3) Ages and ages ago it must have been because I don't remember.
205	Anna:	Ok. Er are there or can you think of any associations, what kind of things do you think
206		of (.) to do with that word?

207	Fred:	(2) xxx cold and black and hard (laughs) [paintings]. Seems like a very, very old word.
208	Anna:	Yes.
209	Fred:	Doesn't seem to [appear] in my age-group even though you had to describe yourself as
210		a spinster when you took your marriage vows so (2) don't feel that its been part of my
211		life that word.
212	Anna:	Ok how about the word 'bachelor'?
213	Fred:	(2) Just conjures up a food manufacturer! (Fred and Anna laugh) I don't know it's
214		probably in the same (.) area as 'spinster'.
215	Anna:	Yeah.
216	Fred:	It's categorising (.) and I don't like to categorise very much.
217	Anna:	Ok. Er:m what about the word 'single' do you hear or use the word 'single'?
218	Fred:	(2) I do (.) becau:se (.) of what I said earlier about I don't like the fact that I'm
219		categorised as divorced. (.) I think I (.) I should have every right to say "I am single"
220		as I'm (.) not married.
221	Anna:	So does being single have more positive associations than being (.) called 'divorced'?
222	Fred:	Yes (.) because if I'm single I'm me (.) and if I'm divorced I used to belong to
223		somebody else.
224	Anna:	Yes.
225	Fred:	That's how they describe me they think of me as (.) having belonged to somebody else
226		(.) and I don't like that.
227	Anna:	What about the word 'partner'?
228	Fred:	(3) It's a (.) (my partner) and I have talked about this it's a difficult word we feel it's
229		the only word that we could use to explain each other.
230	Anna:	Mm.
231	Fred:	I'm quite (.) quite happy with it as a word. It's just categorising me all the time and I
232		just don't like it! (laughs) Yeah. (2) I mean 'partner' covers both sexes doesn't it?
233	Anna:	Yep. (3) Ok in a more general sense with there being fewer marriages today and er (.)
234		an increasingly unattached older population particularly more people living in one-
235		person households um some people do you see these kind of trends as the result of
236		anything in particular or do you see it as having any positive or negative implications?
237	Fred:	With the older households and people on their own? Erm I suppose you think that it's
238		a (.) probably a healthier environment so we're living longer and (.) you have to just
239		accept the trend that I think that (.) well I am told that women live longer than men
240		and the (2) well I can't think of anything else (laughs).
241	Anna:	Ok. Do you (.) do you see the decrease in the marriage rate as a negative thing or just
242		as a way of people making a choice, having a choice?
243	Fred:	I think it's probably people making a choice. Xxx.
244	Anna:	No, no.
245	Fred:	I mean mine was the choice to walk out of that marriage.
246	Anna:	Yes.
247	Fred:	So why shouldn't I [anybody have] that choice. I wasn't happy I didn't want it to be
248		the rest of my life. Tried talking it over and couldn't and (.) couldn't do anything
249		about it so.
250	Anna:	Could you tell me what it was like when you first started living on your own?
251	Fred:	(3) I was frightened that I wasn't going to manage financially (.) and I didn't have
252		very much at all when I came here (.) physically (.) within the household but er (.)
253		gradually built it up and I became very secure here. It was mine and I was completely
254		felt very secure here (.) but very frightened when I came here (.) despite the fact that
255		I'd made that decision. I was scared.
256	Anna:	(5) If if er I could ask you, it sounds like a bit of a strange one but, when you first got
257		married and you said you wanted to get married and do that sort of thing. When you

258		did first get married erm (.) what kind of experience was it, was it a positive thing that
259		met your expectations?
260	Fred:	Yeah. We were very happy. I've got a lot of happy memories to look back on.
261	Anna:	Yep.
262	Fred:	We went through a rough period after the marriage but (.) we're great friends again
263		now (.) we don't see each other very often but we're good friends. We've had children
264		together so (2) it made it difficult xxx. No, we're ok.
265	Anna:	Ok, is there anything you can tell me regarding your opinions or experiences of being
266		single, being married or being in relationships generally?
267	Fred:	Mm (2) I I st (.) I do feel that you're accepted more as a couple whether you're
268		married or not.
269	Anna:	In what way?
270	Fred:	Er socially. It's it's er (.) just seems that you know one adult goes free with another
271		adult and that kind of thing I come up against very often (.) entrance fees and that.
272	Anna:	Yeah.
273	Fred:	Mind you again you come up against exactly the same two children go free with two
274		parents and we had three children so! (laughs) It's it's this two point four isn't it.
275	Anna:	Yeah.
276	Fred:	But I think socially (.) I I sort of had to fight out of that when I was on my own. I am
277		quite independent I'd go to the theatre or go to the cinema or whatever 'cause if I
278		didn't I just wouldn't have gone.
279	Anna:	Did you erm (.) has being married and then living on your own do you feel that you've
280		learnt things or changed across?
281	Fred:	I've become a lot more independent. And (1) I don't mind saying what I actually think
282		whereas we were (.) we were brought up to (.) have opinions (1) and discuss things in
283		a sort of pxxx way but not to sort of (.) not to come out with anything (.) just on your
284		own whereas (.) (my partner) and I talk things through a lot, it's a very different
285		relationship that we've got. I mean I was (.) I wasn't actually subservient but I was
286		almost subservient, you know it was an accepted thing that the man was the (.) the
287		head of the household and this is an extremely (.) different relationship. We talk things
288		through and respect each other (.) from that point of view (.) (Interruption: chimes
289		sounding) It's the wind you know! (Fred and Anna laugh). Yeah we're we're very open
290		with each other (.) which I wasn't before and I think I've learnt (.) I was very wary
291		when I first got in this relationship I was (.) bothered about being (.) let down again.
292		(2) And I didn't want (.) I know very well I didn't give my all to start off with because
293		I wanted to keep that little bit back to protect myself.
294	Anna:	Yeah.
295	Fred:	And I still don't know that its all been given quite honestly I still think there's a little
296		bit there that's (.) that's ready just in case.
297	Anna:	Mhm. Is that part of something that you've got from living on your own and having
298		that independence?
299	Fred:	Yes, definitely. (2) I mean it's also (.) it's from living on my own and its also through
300		the hurt that I went through at the marriage breakdown.
301	Anna:	Yeah.
302	Fred:	I obviously didn't want to feel that again. (2) But it's a (.) also (.) I I just (.) felt very
303		strange about going into another relationship. (2) There was a little bit of "What will
304		people think?"
305	Anna:	Yeah.
306	Fred:	Because that was also part of our (.) home background very much you know "What
307		will the neighbours think?"
308	Anna:	Can you think=
309	Fred:	=I didn't want to be rejected by people (.) because I'd got into this relationship with

310		(my partner) I didn't want people to (.) not reject us as such but <u>not accept</u> this new
311		relationship. I don't know if youngsters go through that I don't know if I did when I
312		was younger! (laughs)
313	Anna:	Did you think that people might (.) probably didn't expect it?
314	Fred:	I don't think people did expect it. I didn't expect it I'm sure (my partner) didn't expect
315		it.
316	Anna:	Yeah.
317	Fred:	No, no I don't think they did.
318	Anna:	Another one of the questions I've seem to have forgotten was if you were, obviously
319		this is imagining, if you were a young (.) a young adult today would you make the
320		same choices and do the same things at the same time do you think?
321	Fred:	(2) <u>No</u> (.) I don't think I would because (.) I I (.) you can't say yes or no because (.)
322		social pressures are different aren't they.
323	Anna:	Yes.
324	Fred:	And (.) with experience (.) you would approach thinking probably differently (.) so
325		you can't say you would do the same.
326	Anna:	No. Ok. Erm and that's absolutely everything I've got to ask you.
327	Fred:	Is it? Oh.
328	Anna:	Yeah that's it. It was quick, that was it. (Anna and Fred laugh) Unless you can think of
329		anything else that you wanted to say, extra.
330	Fred:	(2) I don't think so really. We quite surprised quite a few friends when we did get
331		together. Our very closest friends, I don't think this is anything bearing on what
332		you've got to (.) got to write about (laughs), our very closest friends <u>hadn't even</u>
333		<u>noticed</u> and we did keep it from people for <u>three months</u>.
334	Anna:	Yeah.
335	Fred:	We actually went away on holiday together and still didn't tell people. But our very
336		closest friends it still didn't click with them and I made up a board game, a guessing
337		board game to trying and get it over (Anna laughs) so because I (.) I just couldn't face
338		them and I didn't I just thought "Whatever will they think?" So I made up this board
339		game and they <u>still</u> didn't get it and we <u>still</u> had to tell them after all these damned
340		things! (Anna laughs) Yeah. It was (.) something very similar to (.) when I fell in love
341		when I was younger because it was quite exciting really. We've got great respect for
342		each other and (.) we have our loony moments (.) it's great. I wouldn't do without him
343		(laughs).
344	Anna:	Ah.
345	Fred:	I wouldn't he's a love.
346	Anna:	So why would (.) why couldn't you just tell your friends?
347	Fred:	I think it was the age difference. See with me being in (.) well I was in my late fifties
348		then.
349	Anna:	Mm.
350	Fred:	I think it's just (.) just the way you're brought up.
351	Anna:	Yeah.
352	Fred:	And (.) I feel that (.) people will <u>quite happily</u> accept (.) the woman younger than the
353		man.
354	Anna:	Yep.
355	Fred:	But this way round (.) we have come across any prejudice, open prejudice, at all but I
356		just feel (.) that there's something in the press and what-have-you saying women,
357		older women and with a younger man you know carrying on with this <u>toy-boy</u> type.
358	Anna:	Yeah.
359	Fred:	(2) So (.) (why people be prejudice about that).
360	Anna:	(2) (Fred laughs) I certainly don't have the answer to that question.
361	Fred:	I don't. So (.) there you are. I just wouldn't be without him now.

362   Anna: Mhm.

363   Fred: I was very wary to start off with thinking "Well he probably won't (.) stay with me,"

364   you know the odds are against you, he probably won't but er (.) he has (laughs). I

365   suppose that was my insecurity if I'm honest. There you are then.

366   Anna: Ok, thank you very much.

367   Fred: That's quite alright.

2 Anna: Right ok (.) would you describe yourself as married, widowed, divorced or never-
3 married?
4 Carrie: I'm married.
5 Anna: Ok and for how long have you been married?
6 Carrie: I have been married for twenty-seven and a half (.) no almost twenty-eight years.
7 Anna: Ok er before you got married was it something you had planned (.) before you met
8 your husband did you <u>like</u> the <u>idea</u> of getting married?
9 Carrie: Very much so (.) yes. I met my husband when I was fourteen (laughs).
10 Anna: Ah:
11 Carrie: So we were er (.) yes it was something that we always er (.) sort of (.) well I say it was
12 <u>always</u> planned <u>I'd always</u> wanted to get married yes but we did split up he went off to
13 uni and we split up for a while but then (.) he decided to come back.
14 Anna: <u>Ah:</u>
15 Carrie: Yes and it was me rather than anybody else sort of thing so we'd had gaps in-between
16 yes and we'd both go out with other people but as soon as he came back we planned
17 on getting married so we actually <u>got married</u> bef when he was still studying so (.) we
18 got married on one months salary (laughs).
19 Anna: So are you contented with being married? Does it suit you?
20 Carrie: Ye:s (.) it <u>does</u> suit me. Yes, I can't imagine not being. (2) But who knows (.) no one
21 knows do they.
22 Anna: No.
23 Carrie: I'm quite <u>I'm quite</u> aware of that but yes (.) yes it suits me.
24 Anna: Does being married (.) has it made a big difference to your relationships with friends
25 and family? Now that's a bit of er a strange question say when you first got married
26 did it make a difference to how much you saw your friends and your family?
27 Carrie: (1) I (.) saw my family <u>a lot</u> I used to I sort of still wanted to see my Mum and Dad I
28 remember when we first got married we lived in the same place and I used to call on
29 my way home from work most evenings <u>but</u> (.) at that time I had a brother and when I
30 got married my brother was three (.) so therefore I was really, really close to him and I
31 really wanted to see him every day so I suppose <u>that</u> was another reason. So yes I kept
32 close to my family and friends we all well I was the first of a <u>crowd</u> of friends to get
33 married so <u>everyone</u> used to congregate on our house so we were always very much a
34 focal point (.) erm and a lot of those friends are still (.) my <u>best</u> friends.
35 Anna: Ah.
36 Carrie: From <u>way back</u>. They're all school friends and the but the (.) but the erm (my
37 husband) and I going to the same school then a lot of the friends are the same well his
38 friends and my friends are the same friends because we were all there together anyway
39 so we go back way back and although people have gone off to wherever (one county)
40 or (another nation) here there and everywhere (.) we <u>always</u> keep in touch we're
41 always there for each other sort of thing so.
42 Anna: Ok right (.) so titles and names, do you use the title 'Mrs' when you fill in forms or
43 introduce yourself?
44 Carrie: Always yes, I do.
45 Anna: Do you take when you got married did you take 'Mrs' automatically did you start
46 using that?
47 Carrie: Straight away.
48 Anna: Yeah. And did you change your surname to your husband's name?
49 Carrie: I did, straight away yes, both things. That was the end of my maiden name sort of
50 thing.
51 Anna: Did you consider not changing your name or your title?
52 Carrie: Not at all. It was a it was just an automatic thing (.) I just (.) wanted to do it and I did it

53		straight away and that was that, yeah.
54	Anna:	Do you remember (.) was it <u>part</u> of getting married? Was it just something that
55		happened along with it or was it important to you? Did you <u>like</u> the idea of having a
56		new name?
57	Carrie:	<u>I think I did</u> actually I mean it's twenty sort of seven years quite a long time ago to
58		actually remember (.) how I felt about something like that but er <u>yes</u> I think I was
59		quite <u>excited</u> about it really.
60	Anna:	Mm.
61	Carrie:	I never thought about keeping my maiden name really (.) at all. My daughter did (.)
62		we'll go on to that bit now well my daughter always said that when she got married
63		that she would want to keep the name (our surname).
64	Anna:	Yeah.
65	Carrie:	She wouldn't mind taking the other name <u>as well</u> but she wanted it to be a hyphenated
66		name the name.
67	Anna:	Yes.
68	Carrie:	If it had been (another surname) it would have been (another surname-our surname)
69		you know <u>that</u> type of thing. But she was very she said she would <u>always</u> keep her
70		name.
71	Anna:	Yes.
72	Carrie:	Which is strange considering what happened, now she will won't she. But anyway she
73		did (.) she would have I'm sure she would have she was very vehement because she
74		was the last in line.
75	Anna:	Yes, yeah.
76	Carrie:	Except her Dad you know, so.
77	Anna:	So when you started using your you had your new name (.) after you got married and
78		you signed cheques in a different name (.) did that was that a pleasing thing? [Were
79		you pleased about it?
80	Carrie:	[Yes.
81		Yes I was. But it was something you were very <u>aware of</u> in the beginning so you <u>had</u>
82		to think about it so every time you picked up a pen (.) almost you were thinking (.)
83		"Ah!"
84	Anna:	Mhm.
85	Carrie:	"I've got to write a different name now." Yes. It was quite an <u>exciting</u> time. Yes it was
86		(.) thinking about it it was sort of (.) not something I've thought about for a long time
87		but yes! (Carrie and Anna laugh)
88	Anna:	Er:m do you remember <u>other people</u> calling you by your new name or other people
89		calling you 'Mrs' instead of using your other name?
90	Carrie:	Yes I do and I remember thinking "My goodness, do I look like my mother-in-law?"
91		(laughs) It seemed very <u>strange</u> from that point of view, it was very formal you know
92		'Mrs. (surname)' like my mother-in-law's around here somewhere (laughs) yes it was
93		a lot xxx.
94	Anna:	Erm so did it take time to get used to?
95	Carrie:	(2) I think it took t well <u>it did</u> take time I think well what happens <u>initially</u> (.) you are
96		very aware that you've got a new name so you (.) you you sort of (.) accept it very
97		quickly from that point of view but after a period of time you're not quite so aware of
98		it and that's when you <u>forget</u> (.) and you probably <u>then</u> (.) at that moment that's when
99		you do your signature you go back.
100	Anna:	Yeah.
101	Carrie:	Er because (.) it's not sort of at the forefront of your mind so I think it's a period
102		probably (.) six months a year later when you might (.) sort of let it slip (.) but other
103		than that really it then it just becomes natural after that I think, yes.
104	Anna:	Do you think other people (.) did you notice other people treating you differently? (2)

105		Just in that erm people have mentioned that being called 'Mrs' and 'Mrs' is a title that
106		has respect about it.
107	Carrie:	I can't remember (.) I really cannot remember, I can't remember feeling (1) no (.) I
108		think I was quite sort of proud to be Mrs because I was <u>quite young</u> we got married
109		quite young so I suppose I was I thought <u>yeah</u> (.) I was quite proud of it I suppose.
110		Yes, I'd say that.
111	Anna:	So I already asked and you said that you did want to get married (.) did you <u>expect</u> to
112		get married when you did or had you got other plans?
113	Carrie:	(1) No (.) I didn't have other plans I was <u>I wanted to get married</u>. I wanted to get
114		married I wanted to (.) have a home of my own I wanted my <u>own home</u> I wanted to be
115		able to invite people to my home. Erm (.) and twenty sort of (.) seven years ago you
116		didn't very often (.) <u>have a home</u> unless you were (.) going to get married you didn't
117		(.) it's different these days things are different and (.) life is so very different so
118		perhaps we wouldn't have got married as young.
119	Anna:	Mhm.
120	Carrie:	But (.) <u>at that time</u> that didn't happen <u>very</u> often. My sister-in-law actually lived with
121		her husband for a year (.) the year before (my husband) and I got married and erm (.)
122		and then they got married about the same time as us now strangely enough their
123		marriage lasted for about three, four years. And they'd <u>lived together</u> for a year so (.)
124		and I always looked back and thought well (1) <u>that</u> doesn't really prove anything.
125		Doesn't make any difference whatsoever something's going to last either it is or it
126		won't.
127	Anna:	Yes.
128	Carrie:	Lots of different (.) things to look at with that aren't there?
129	Anna:	Yeah.
130	Carrie:	Lots of different things, yeah, so.
131	Anna:	So er when you got married did (.) did a lot of things about your life change? Erm did
132		you (.) you said you wanted to set up a home so did it so when you started doing that
133		did it make your life very different?
134	Carrie:	Well (1) I suppose I did because I was very sort of <u>contented</u>.
135	Anna:	Yeah.
136	Carrie:	Yeah I was contented we were we were able to entertain and (.) I suppose it was a bit
137		like <u>a game</u> (.) at the beginning (.) we had a little rented cottage because of course we
138		had no money so we (.) we had rented a cottage two up and two down. Dart-board on
139		the back door plenty of beer bottles and xxx and yea:h it was just fun it was a fun
140		thing to start with until you start taking responsibilities and (.) you try and save money
141		and get a deposit on a house and things like that which we did within (.) just under two
142		years we managed to do that and er (.) then things become a bit more serious and then
143		of course I had my first child (.) erm we'd been married (.) five years when (my first
144		daughter) was born and er (.) so obviously you have responsibilities then so things do
145		alter at that time.
146	Anna:	But not at first.
147	Carrie:	Not at first, no, no.
148	Anna:	Ok. Erm did it affect how (.) secure you felt or did you start to feel settled when you
149		got married?
150	Carrie:	(1) Yes I did I felt (.) I felt very contented and very settled, yes. It was just a (.) yeah a
151		very nice (.) well <u>a nice time really</u> I suppose! (Carrie and Anna laugh) Well most of
152		it.
153	Anna:	How did your friends and family react when you got married?
154	Carrie:	Oh they all thought we were far too young (.) <u>fa:r</u> too young. My Father suggested we
155		had a fight, a deliberate fight at the wedding xxx him (laughs) because he said we
156		would be always arguing and we were far too young to settle down (.) and so on and

157		so forth (.) which er and then as I said we were the youngest of all our (.) friends
158		everyone was (.) a couple of years after us in getting married but er (.) so yes we were
159		young I suppose looking back we were very young (.) but we were very determined.
160	Anna:	Mm.
161	Carrie:	We were going to get married.
162	Anna:	Did it affect your working life did you work before you got married?
163	Carrie:	Yes, I always worked.
164	Anna:	And did you work=
165	Carrie:	=And when I got married I carried on working. I did actually change my job but erm
166		(.) well change the place where I worked just after we got married but erm (.) no I
167		carried on working till (my daughter) was born (.) carried on work xxx.
168	Anna:	Yeah. Ok erm did er did how much er you enjoyed being married (.) did it change
169		when you got used to things was it different at the start? Did it (.) has it been.
170	Carrie:	Well I don't know (.) well no only the differences that, as I say, as the years
171		progressed you took on more responsibilities so therefore (.) er you became (.) I
172		suppose you became much more mature about various things because things were
173		thrown at you which you had to be (.) mature about I think a l (.) a lot of things had
174		happened to us er (my husband) was very ill when we'd only been married so long and
175		I think in a way that makes you (.) you're much more aware of what can happen I
176		mean he was very poorly (.) and this was before (my first daughter) was born we've
177		had two or three things like this and I think in a way it makes you care a lot more (.)
178		for people and possibly that is something that's been erm (.) a goof footing for a
179		marriage if you like.
180	Anna:	Yes.
181	Carrie:	As much as a horror as it (.) as much as the fact that it was a horror at the time erm (.)
182		looking back it was probably a sure footing (.) for us.
183	Anna:	Are the people who you're f you know your friends and acquaintances are they mostly
184		in the same situation to you are they mostly people who are married?
185	Carrie:	They are. They were people that were married (.) and who were married a couple of
186		years after us but (.) I would say that er of a bunch of possibly seven or eight couples
187		(1) no more than that probably nine or ten couples that we've all been friends there are
188		only (.) three couples that are left with their original couples. It's a very, very low
189		percentage really isn't it. That's what's happened over that period of time. So you see
190		they would have all been married now at about for about twenty-five years (.) but I
191		would say after between eight and twelve years into marriage their marriages split and
192		they've had other partners or whatever.
193	Anna:	Does it make any difference to erm (.) to your relationships with your friends in that
194		situation does it make it easier or harder erm does it make it easier to spend time with
195		them or see them if they are in the same situation?
196	Carrie:	Er:m (1) I suppose we've been very adaptable really because (.) as the friends that
197		have got new partners we've managed to (.) erm start a friendship with both equally
198		but I find the sad part is that the one (.) the person who wasn't the original friend
199		they've drifted off and we've lost touch on most (.) yeah on most cases we have lost
200		touch with those people and that is sad (.) because they were nice people and I find
201		that sad. But but we've kept in touch with one or other but (.) we've not really kept in
202		touch with both original if you know what I mean.
203	Anna:	Yeah.
204	Carrie:	You tend to (.) lose one.
205	Anna:	I see.
206	Carrie:	Mm, lose one (.) which is sad.
207	Anna:	So (.) do you know anybody who isn't who never got married?
208	Carrie:	Right (.) our original friends (.) who never got married.

209	Anna:	Mhm.
210	Carrie:	No. No I don't we all eventually got married.
211	Anna:	Yeah.
212	Carrie:	Mm no I haven't got any single (.) not single single friends no. I haven't thought about
213		before xxx.
214	Anna:	Well most people get married in their lives something like ninety-seven percent of the
215		population so. Right so what are the advantages to you, if you can think of any, of
216		being married? What are the best things?
217	Carrie:	Well if it's a successful marriage you have your best friend with you all the time
218		basically. So that's really important someone you can always talk to someone who's
219		always there <u>for you</u>.
220	Anna:	Yeah.
221	Carrie:	Someone who you are <u>number one</u> to. (1) So that's a (.) that to me that is the <u>'cause</u>
222		<u>you are</u> (.) if you haven't got someone like that then you're not particularly number
223		one to anybody else I don't think. Erm you could be by your parents if you were an
224		only child perhaps but other than that you're not really number one to anyone except
225		that (.) person.
226	Anna:	Yeah. And has that changed over time?
227	Carrie:	No. No it becomes more so because of the trials and tribulations that you go through
228		as part of your life you feel (.) that it gets stronger.
229	Anna:	Do you think that other people that aren't married might miss out on the advantages
230		might miss out on these things?
231	Carrie:	Well I do I mean (.) you can say well you can be number one to someone whether
232		you're actually well what is a piece of paper?
233	Anna:	Yes.
234	Carrie:	At the end of the day what is a piece of paper I don't know, but yes it is a commitment
235		if you're that sort of person you're happy with a commitment so therefore I think <u>yes</u>
236		<u>they are</u> (.) I think yes they are.
237	Anna:	Mhm. Are there any disadvantages you can think of (.) of being married?
238	Carrie:	(2) No not really. Not really. I suppose my husband might xxx no I was joking
239		(laughs) no I don't think so really. I wouldn't want to be single.
240	Anna:	You wouldn't?
241	Carrie:	No.
242	Anna:	Because you enjoy the [relationship you're in?
243	Carrie:	[Because.
244		Yes, yes absolutely. Absolutely, and I like having that best friend that I've always had.
245	Anna:	Um (3) do you think that perhaps being in your relationship has changed things about
246		you or or being involved in your relationship has changed you?
247	Carrie:	I just feel as if we've always been in this relationship I suppose we've been with each
248		other for (.) for <u>so long</u> I know we had that break of a couple of years when we were
249		(.) sort of sixteen, seventeen.
250	Anna:	Yeah.
251	Carrie:	Erm we've always (.) I can hardly remember life without him (.) that sounds strange
252		doesn't it really but I just can't really (.) sort of always been there. So erm I can only
253		say that really (laughs) can't really remember.
254	Anna:	Ok, erm I think maybe you've already answered this question but people have
255		mentioned that erm <u>marriage</u> and relationships have been (.) have been important in
256		their lives because they've changed, in their lives they've changed their access to
257		money because erm (.) some older ladies have told me that getting married was
258		particularly good for because it meant that they cou:ld move into a house they could
259		(.) have their have their own things and lead their own lives. People have said they had

260	more access to money that made them feel more secure (.) and they could have more
261	possessions.
Carrie:	Right (1) right well (.) as far as that is concerned yes you do own your home 'cause it
263	(.) when you if you live at home with your parents [or whatever] which is what I did I
264	didn't have a place of my own, so therefore you obviously get more possessions
265	because you're moving into a home and you're (.) brining into that home (.)
266	possessions all the time you're purchasing them or whatever so yes there's that side of
267	it. As far as actual (.) erm money is concerned then we've alw we have always both
268	worked the money what's his is mine and what's mine's his and we've just never, ever
269	separated it and if I want something then I know I can say "Have we got x?" 'cause (.)
270	the way we do it he looks after the finances, he looks after fin that's his job, but all I
271	have to say is "Look have we got x amount in the bank? Fine, yeah." So I go and buy
272	whatever so it's never a (.) never a problem erm (.) so it's all shared absolutely.
273 Anna:	Yeah.
274 Carrie:	In that we don't have an account for (.) a his account and a hers account or (.) or
275	anything like that we our money just all goes in together.
276 Anna:	Yes.
277 Carrie:	And then whatever we want we'll say "Well, lets do this or whatever," or I just say I
278	just say "Right how much is there spare?" and we and I go and that's that (.) so we just
279	work it out between ourselves always been very happy with that. It's a sharing job
280	(laughs).
281 Anna:	Mhm. Do you think that might have been different if you hadn't got married? Do you
282	think=
283 Carrie:	=Well I think I probably would have been different from that point of view (.) erm it's
284	difficult to say it is very difficult to say 'cause who knows what you what path you
285	would have travelled on you don't know really do you?
286 Anna:	No.
287 Carrie:	You decide to take a path and you (.) you go down it and you have to take the (.)
288	rough with the smooth and what have you but I'd a well it's difficult to say I just don't
289	know, don't know the answer to that one.
290 Anna:	Ok. Er:m (1) So did you ever think about before you got married what you might have
291	done erm do you think your life would have been very different if you hadn't decided
292	to get married at that stage?
293 Carrie:	Just can't imagine not having not got married sort of at that stage erm (.) I suppose a
294	couple of years before we actually got married when (.) when he'd gone off to
295	university and he actually met someone else at that stage I didn't know quite what I
296	was going to do but erm (3) I j I don't know, I don't know it's very, very difficult to
297	know whether I would have xxx myself to someone else I really don't know (.) I can't
298	really. I suppose I would really because I w (.) I just wanted a home and I wanted a
299	home to share.
300 Anna:	Yeah.
301 Carrie:	You know (.) not that I was unhappy at home a at my home home but er (.) I think I
302	would because I was that sort of a person a sort of (.) a homely type of person wanted
303	to do (.) be the little [cook] wife and do all the cooking (laughs).
304 Anna:	Do you think if you were a young adult today you would have made the same choices?
305	Or do you think things have changed a lot?
306 Carrie:	I think things have changed a lot. I think (.) perhaps we would have ended up living
307	together for a while then marrying later maybe but I don't know but having said that I
308	don't feel sorry that we made the commitment that we did (.) so (.) so yeah difficult to
309	say.

310	Anna:	Ok. Erm a slightly different question, do you feel that the relationships, again this is
311		prompted by things other people said, did the relationships of your parents of other
312		relationships you saw.
313	Carrie:	Mhm.
314	Anna:	Did they encourage you, did that make you want to get married?
315	Carrie:	They probably did, yes. I mean I re I was never, ever (.) involved with (.) any family
316		or anyone close to us that was <u>divorced</u> or (.) at that time because that just didn't seem
317		to happen the same, perhaps we were just very fortunate as well that it didn't happen.
318		It's not something I've thought that I've ever really thought about I mean I remember
319		my Dad saying "Oh you're so young," and er you know how it <u>won't last</u> and all that,
320		yes I was, xxx tell him my life was xxx and it was never a real option to me that it
321		wouldn't.
322	Anna:	Yes.
323	Carrie:	It was something that was sort of put in front of me and said "Well, it might not" but it
324		was never (.) to me never a reality, no.
325	Anna:	Ok. Ok a section on words. When was the last time you said or heard the word
326		'spinster'?
327	Carrie:	A long, long time ago.
328	Anna:	Was it?
329	Carrie:	Yes, yeah. Yes it's not a word that you hear very often at all or I've heard very often
330		at all for a long time or have thought about it.
331	Anna:	Are there any associations that you think of, what sort of things do you think of to do
332		with the word 'spinster'?
333	Carrie:	'Spinster' I think of an old biddy! (laughs) Well I just do [my mind goes straight to
334		that situation yes, nothing else really.
335	Anna:	[Yes.
336		Erm, people have said that they think of a spinster as an unhappy person as a
337		miserable person or a mean person.
338	Carrie:	I suppose (.) yeah well (.) yes probably I just <u>visualise</u> this little old biddy with a little
339		shawl tuck tucked round her.
340	Anna:	Yeah. What about the word 'bachelor' have you heard the word 'bachelor' or said it=
341	Carrie:	=Things like yes well yes in the (.) erm sort of a 'bachelor pad' and all things like that
342		not actually (.) no not as a <u>per:son</u>. But for a <u>long, long time</u> we used to talk I mean I
343		remember saying "Oh he'll just become a bachelor," er thinking about (.) I know
344		somebody who was (.) not particularly wanting to join in with going out in couples
345		and things like that when we were much, much younger (.) but it's not again it's <u>years</u>
346		ago it's not something that you hear of now no, no not to me.
347	Anna:	Ok, what about the word 'single'? Do you hear that more often?
348	Carrie:	I think you do yes, you often hear the word "He's single," or "I want to stay single,"
349		or (.) whatever yes so that is a one said much more in the language these days yeah.
350	Anna:	Ok (.) what about the words 'wife' and 'husband' do you <u>use</u> them? (1) Do you use
351		the word 'my husband' or.
352	Carrie:	Yes. Yes we use those yeah.
353	Anna:	Do you remember when you first started using those words?
354	Carrie:	I remember it as a joke at the wedding but (laughs) yeah from there on in, yeah. And I
355		think <u>I do</u> remember one thing very much so, my husbands name is [husband's name]
356		as you know and <u>that</u> was such an <u>old</u> name even (.) you know when I was going out
357		with [my husband] (laughs) when I was like fifteen, sixteen, seventeen. I <u>hated</u> saying
358		it to anyone because (.) er I did not know another [husbands name] of such an era, all
359		the [husband's name's] I knew then were about fifty and so I would say 'my
360		boyfriend'. I used to call him 'my boyfriend' <u>all the time</u> (.) you know when I
361		whoever I was talking to (.) if they didn't know him it was 'my boyfriend' I would

362		never say "Oh [my husband's name] and I," I'd say "My boyfriend and I," because I w
363		that word I used to think that they would think I was (.) you know going out with this
364		really old man you see so (.) I remember that but I don't (laughs) but that's to do with
365		names so that's interest with names.
366	Anna:	Yes. Well people have mentioned that when they first got to say 'my husband' it was
367		quite (.) nice they quite liked being able to say that xxx it seems to be something
368		people are positive about.
369	Carrie:	Yes, yeah.
370	Anna:	How about the word 'partner'?
371	Carrie:	Well that er I mean going back to when we were first met I don't think it was a word
372		that was ever used I do not remember it at all but I mean now it's such an acceptable
373		word. My own Mum has now, I lost my Dad five years ago and my Mum has now got
374		a partner (.) and I mean to for my Mum to have a partner, ooh! Its got to be the up and
375		coming thing! So no: it's very much, very xxx isn't it now so.
376	Anna:	Some people said=
377	Carrie:	=It's not a word I have a problem with. I think it can be a good thing and I think for
378		example for my Mum I think it's lovely that she's got a partner.
379	Anna:	Yeah, oh good. Right, ok before the last couple of questions, do you think that the
380		recent change in the way less people getting married and more one person household
381		and generally in years to come there's going to be more increasing older people adults
382		and lots of people who aren't connected into marriages or families. Do you have any
383		thoughts or opinions about why that might have happened or: whether it's a good or
384		bad thing?
385	Carrie:	I don't think it's a good thing. I think in honesty that families are so important (.) I
386		always feel that families are so important and erm (.) I think it's sad for children as
387		they're growing up if they haven't been part of a family and I and I just feel that (.) a
388		child needs we bring children into this world and I think they need both of their
389		parents if at all possible.
390		Anna: Yes.
391	Carrie:	I do feel strongly about that. Er I think that it's sad when they're all separate and one's
392		visiting the other and (.) sometimes it can't be helped but (.) quite often in this day and
393		age it can be it's a it can be it's a planned baby they're planning to have a family but
394		they haven't given themselves the commitment.
395	Anna:	Yes.
396	Carrie:	You know to me you need to commit yourself (.) to that situation.
397	Anna:	Yes.
398	Carrie:	So yes it's important. I think it's sad as they get older when they do end up with this,
399		yes I agree with you we will do, less and less and less families but I don't think it
400		makes for better people.
401	Anna:	Ok. Er: is there anything extra you can tell me about being single or married or
402		relationships or these issues that might help?
403	Carrie:	Mm, that's difficult, it's really open isn't it? (laughs) I don't know really. (2) I can't
404		think of anything.
405	Anna:	That's ok. So is there anything else you wanted to say on tape? (2) No, ok that's fine.
406		Thank you very much.
407	Carrie:	No problem at all.

1		
2	Anna:	Would you describe yourself as married, widowed, divorced or never-married?
3	Enid:	Widowed.
4	Anna:	How long ago were you widowed?
5	Enid:	About four and a half years ago.
6	Anna:	And er how long ago did you get married? (1) Or how old were you?
7	Enid:	I was, we were married forty-six years.
8	Anna:	And were you contended with being married?
9	Enid:	Very, very contented.
10	Anna:	Yeah. And since have you got used to living on your own? Is it something that you
11		can be happy with?
12	Enid:	No, I've never liked being on my own, never.
13	Anna:	(1) Erm when you first got married what kind of changes did that make to your life?
14	Enid:	(1) It made me a lot happier.
15	Anna:	Did it?
16	Enid:	Very much happier yes.
17	Anna:	Did it make practical differences, did you er did you get a house, a new house straight
18		away or did you [have to wait?
19	Enid:	[No, no we lived at home for a year and then we got a council house and we were
20		there about seven and a half years when we (.) had this one built.
21	Anna:	So did you like having your own house when you moved?
22	Enid:	Very much so, that's what we worked for.
23	Anna:	Yes. Did it make differences to the social things you did? Did you go out (.) more or
24		less?
25	Enid:	Not really no, no.
26	Anna:	Some people have said that when they got married or they met their (.) partner-to-be
27		erm that it made it easier to socialise because you could do different social activities
28		when there were two of you, like go out for meal. Did you find that?
29	Enid:	Well not really no (.) because in those days we didn't really go out for a lot of meals.
30	Anna:	Yeah.
31	Enid:	It was a thing that er (.) we never heard of hardly.
32	Anna:	Yes.
33	Enid:	No.
34	Anna:	So=
35	Enid:	=It didn't really make a lot of difference.
36	Anna:	Ok. Erm since you've been on your own has that made a difference to your social
37		activities?
38	Enid:	Very much so. Yes it has. I think where a woman's concerned it's it isn't the same
39		going out on your own as it is a man going out on his own, not really.
40	Anna:	That it's less acceptable for, there's less things for a woman to do on her own?
41	Enid:	Definitely yes there is, yes.
42	Anna:	Ok. When you first got married did you change your surname to your husband's
43		name?
44	Enid:	Yes.
45	Anna:	And start calling yourself 'Mrs'?
46	Enid:	Yes.
47	Anna:	Was that something you thought about or was it automatic?
48	Enid:	It was automatic.
49	Anna:	Erm and was it something you were pleased about? Some people have said that it was
50		nice to write their new name and they were sort of <u>proud</u> to be 'Mrs'.
51	Enid:	(2) Well yes, yes, yes.
52	Anna:	Do you know anybody who didn't change their surname when they got married?

53	Enid:	(2) Not really no, only (a relative) because her name was (her surname) before she was
54		married and (the same) when she got married (laughs).
55	Anna:	Alright. Erm when you started calling yourself your new name did that make you feel
56		more grown up or? Some people have said that it made them it was more respectable
57		to be 'Mrs'.
58	Enid:	No I'd rather be called (Enid).
59	Anna:	Right. So you don't use the formal name. (1) And just with getting married some
60		people felt they'd achieved something they'd reached (.) some place, did you feel that?
61	Enid:	Well not really, no, no.
62	Anna:	(1) Erm (.) do you think other people might have treated you differently when you
63		became got married, that you were more responsible?
64	Enid:	Well in a way because people know that you've got someone and they don't (.)
65		acknowledge you not like they did when you were on your own really. I found that.
66	Anna:	Yes. So before you got married did you like the idea of getting married? Was it
67		something that you thought you might do?
68	Enid:	I'd looked forward to it because we (.) we had a very strict bringing up and to me
69		when I got married I felt more freer than I did when I was single.
70	Anna:	Yes. And did you always expect to get married?
71	Enid:	Well yes, yes.
72	Anna:	Do you have any ideas about what you might have done if you hadn't got married?
73	Enid:	No idea.
74	Anna:	Ok. Erm (1) did being married make you feel more secure?
75	Enid:	Yes definitely, yes.
76	Anna:	Did you feel that when you'd got married you'd settled down? Some people have said
77		they felt settled.
78	Enid:	I don't think I did no (.) because I could do more when I got married than I did when I
79		was single.
80	Anna:	What kinds of things?
81	Enid:	Well I could please myself which when I was at home we weren't allowed to.
82	Anna:	Yeah.
83	Enid:	But when I got married I mean (my husband) was very easy and I sort of more-or-less
84		pleased myself. Yeah.
85	Anna:	So it was a positive thing, you enjoyed it?
86	Enid:	Very much yes.
87	Anna:	(1) When you decided to get married how did your friends and family react?
88	Enid:	Well they were all very pleased. Very, very pleased.
89	Anna:	And did you find that your relationships with them changed? Did you see your family
90		and friends less?
91	Enid:	(1) No it didn't change no.
92	Anna:	(1) Did you work before you got married and after?
93	Enid:	Yes, yes both.
94	Anna:	You kept it up?
95	Enid:	Yes, yes.
96	Anna:	Do you feel that the importance of being married changed as you got older? Some
97		people have suggested that the more things that they went through with their husband
98		the more important it became, that relationship?
99	Enid:	Well it was always important to me, very important.
100	Anna:	Um are the people that you know now mostly in the same situation as you, have they
101		mostly been married or are they mostly married?
102	Enid:	They're on their own now, most people that I, yes they're on their own, lost their
103		husbands. Yeah, yeah.
104	Anna:	Does that does that make it (.) erm can you understand each other's=

105	Enid:	=Yes, yes and nobody else can that's not in that position. People can say they're sorry
106		for you but they don't really understand till they're in that position. Yeah.
107	Anna:	Do you know anybody who's never got married?
108	Enid:	Oh yes, yes.
109	Anna:	Has that made their lives very different to yours?
110	Enid:	I think they're more independent (.) because they've been living on their own, yes.
111	Anna:	(2) Right, erm what were the advantages, the best things about being married?
112	Enid:	(3) Well I d well I'd got someone always there for me and I knew they'd do anything
113		for me and they'd stand by me which was a big thing.
114	Anna:	(2) And are there any advantages to living on your own?
115	Enid:	None at all. I think it's terrible.
116	Anna:	Ah: And were there any disadvantages about being married?
117	Enid:	None, no.
118	Anna:	What about disadvantages of being on your own?
119	Enid:	Very xxx yes.
120	Anna:	(1) Ok (.) do you think that being married has changed you? Do you think you're a
121		different person from how you would have been if you hadn't got married?
122	Enid:	No.
123	Anna:	Erm some people have said that being married helped them feel more financially
124		secure, they could think about not working or working less or they had that backing
125		knowing there was another person. Did that make a difference to you?
126	Enid:	Not really because I always worked.
127	Anna:	Yes.
128	Enid:	So it didn't make a lot of difference, no.
129	Anna:	Do you think that (.) the experience of being married has made a big difference to
130		your life?
131	Enid:	Well you alt you alter your outlook a lot definitely because you've got to share
132		haven't you?
133	Anna:	Yes.
134	Enid:	That is one thing but er (.) I don't think it alters you at all.
135	Anna:	Ok. Do you think your life would have been very different if you hadn't got married?
136	Enid:	Well you can't say can you? You don't know.
137	Anna:	Erm do you think if you were a young adult today you would make the same choices,
138		get married at the same time do the same things?
139	Enid:	Yes, definitely, I do. (1) I don't think anyone ought to get married until they're
140		twenty-four (laughs).
141	Anna:	That's is that how old you were?
142	Enid:	Mm.
143	Anna:	You think people should have a bit of a [bit of a single life?
144	Enid:	[I do because I think everyone when they get turned twenty-one I think they alter their
145		opinion.
146	Anna:	Yes. (2) Do you feel that people you grew up with, your parents' relationship or other
147		marriages, did they give you ideas about how marriage would be, positive or negative
148		influences?
149	Enid:	Not really no, no.
150	Anna:	(1) Ok when was the last time, these are questions about words, when was the last
151		time you heard somebody say or used the word 'spinster'?
152	Enid:	(2) I don't think I, I don't know as I've heard it actually. No, very seldom.
153	Anna:	Ok.
154	Enid:	Very seldom.
155	Anna:	Some people think that it's a negative word, an insulting kind of word.
156	Enid:	No, I wouldn't think so.

157	Anna:	Ok, what about the word 'bachelor' do you hear that more?
158	Enid:	Well yes I hear it but it doesn't mean anything, not really.
159	Anna:	Ok and do you people call themselves 'single' more than those?
160	Enid:	Not really no, no.
161	Anna:	When you were married did you use the words 'wife' and 'husband'?
162	Enid:	Xxx.
163	Anna:	Some people have mentioned that they like to use the words "My husband" because it
164		sort of, that relationship makes them proud.
165	Enid:	Well yes (.) 'my husband' probably yes.
166	Anna:	Did you like being a wife?
167	Enid:	Well I suppose so yes, yes, yes.
168	Anna:	And what about the word 'partner'? Some people.
169	Enid:	That's a word we never used hardly, no.
170	Anna:	Is it something that you hear more now?
171	Enid:	More now, yes, definitely.
172	Anna:	Some people have said that they don't like that word because they can't tell if people
173		are married. Do you mind that? No? Right. On a more general level erm with fewer
174		people getting married, the marriage rate going down and more divorces, more people
175		choosing to live on their own (.) some people have think that a few years down the
176		line there'll be more older people who've never been married or don't have any family
177		or connections. Some people think of that as a bad thing, do you see these trends as a
178		bad thing=
179	Enid:	=I think that will be a bad thing definitely when they get older. I don't think they can
180		see it now but it's when they get older and they haven't got any family or whatever
181		you want (.) that's when I think it's gonna hit them hard (.) because they've got no
182		security just living with somebody have they?
183	Anna:	So do you think marriage is important?
184	Enid:	I do definitely, I definitely do.
185	Anna:	Ok. Now is there anything extra you can tell me about your views about marriage or
186		relationships and things like that?
187	Enid:	No, I don't think so. I think today there's not a lot of love to start off with in marriage
188		and there's not a lot of talking. I think if there was more talking and love at the
189		beginning people would put up with a lot more and there wouldn't be so many
190		divorces.
191	Anna:	Yes (2) ok well that's all the questions I wanted to ask you.
192	Enid:	That's good (laughs).
193	Anna:	Thank you very much.

This study forms part of my PhD project looking at peoples' views on singleness, relationships and marriage. I am interested in finding out about your opinions about this area and the card-sorting task we're about to undertake has been devised to look at and talk about your ideas. You will be presented with a selection of words to do with relationships on different cards (e.g., 'wife'). Then you will be asked to select a pair that are similar and one other card that is different to that pair, and describe your reasons for making these choices. You will then be asked to rate other cards on whether they are similar to the cards selected. Don't worry; it's not as complicated as it sounds! There is no time limit for completing the task and there are no right choices or reasons for making them, I am interested in finding out about different people's own opinions. Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study, I hope that you will also find the task interesting to complete.

Record Sheet
Anonymous details to be included in study

Date...

Pseudonym...

Age...

Interests/education/employment..

....

....

....

....

....

....

Research Contract for Singleness, Relationships & Marriage Study

Researcher's Briefing and Undertaking

This study involves a process of sorting word-cards related to singleness, relationship and marriage talking about this process. The task will be described in detail before it is begins. You have the right to withdraw from the process at any point.

Your card pairings, reasons for these choices and the ratings you provide will be written down and analysed afterwards as part of a larger study. If you consent to tape-recording this process the tape will be destroyed after being typed up, in order to preserve your anonymity. If you wish to withdraw your contribution from the study, any documentation or recordings will be destroyed.

In order to make sense of the results I have collected, when I write up the study I will need to include a brief description of the participants. I will post you a copy of this description, together with a copy of the results from the task [usually within six weeks]. You will be a given a pseudonym and your real name will not be used, neither will any other names or identifying details mentioned during the sorting process.

I am not deceiving you in any way about the purposes of this research, and am happy to answer any questions you have about the project.

As a postgraduate research student, I agree to abide by the British Psychological Society's Code of Conduct and Ethical Guidelines for Research with Human Participants.

Signed: Researcher   Date:

      (Anna Sandfield)

Participant's Briefing and Undertaking

I have agreed to take part in this study, on the basis of the written briefing made available to me by Anna Sandfield. I agree to be involved in the research process outlined above.

I understand the purpose of the study and give my informed consent. I understand that I have a right to withdraw at any stage of the process, and to withdraw the data I have provided, up to the point at which I am given the opportunity to view and veto (withdraw) the results and description.

I accept that a brief description of myself will be used in papers written up for research, on the basis that this description will be agreed with me, as outlined above, and that my name or identity will not be revealed.

Signed: Participant   Date:

      (Your name)

A signed copy of this agreement to be kept by (i) the researcher and (ii) the participant. Only a *blank* copy of the agreement may be inserted in any papers or research reports.

Contact Information

Thank you very much for participating in this project. Your contribution will be both useful and valuable and hopefully the process will also be interesting for you. Following the completion of this task I will type up the information collected for analysis alongside the other results I have gathered to form part of my research project. You will receive a copy of the results and of your anonymous description in the post, giving you an opportunity to review these and comment further if you wish. Please do not hesitate to contact me further if you have any concerns or queries regarding this project.

Thank you
Anna Sandfield

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Cards chosen

		$\longleftrightarrow$	

Reasons for choice

	$\longleftrightarrow$	

Myself in past	1	2	3	4	5
Myself now	1	2	3	4	5
Myself in future	1	2	3	4	5
My ideal self	1	2	3	4	5
Widow	1	2	3	4	5
Single	1	2	3	4	5
Housewife	1	2	3	4	5
Partner	1	2	3	4	5
Spinster	1	2	3	4	5
Flirt	1	2	3	4	5
Career Woman	1	2	3	4	5
Separated	1	2	3	4	5
Cohabiter	1	2	3	4	5
Wife	1	2	3	4	5
Girlfriend	1	2	3	4	5
Mother	1	2	3	4	5
Divorcee	1	2	3	4	5
Party girl	1	2	3	4	5

2 Anna: (Bob coughs) (5) Xxx things that you think of when you see that word, associations
3   rather than xxx.
4 Bob: (13) Hm.
5 Anna: Ok. (9) Ok er what's the similar thing about those two that you put together? {Mother
6   and Divorcee}
7 Bob: My mother's a divorcee.
8 Anna: Mm. Well I'm going to ask you some more irritating questions xxx and the difference
9   between that and your ideal self is?
10 Bob: (1) xxx explain it to me! (laughs)
11 Anna: Right=
12 Bob: =Right ok=
13 Anna: =One of the things about this is that I'm going to ask you lots of irritating questions [
14   <u>because</u> I'm supposed to write down exactly your own words.
15 Bob: I see.
16 Anna: So if <u>I</u> put down what I think it would be: the difference would be.
17 Bob: [No that's ok.
18 Anna: (5) Ok. So (coughs) would you see if your ideal self <u>wouldn't</u> be divorced what would
19   your ideal self be?
20 Bob: (4) Probably a cohabiter, I don't believe in marriage.
21 Anna: (8) So would part of your ideal self be in contrast to being divorced would it be a stable
22   relationship or a xxx relationship, would that be the difference? For example when
23   you're saying you wouldn't want to end up divorced but you would rather end up in a
24   relationship cohabiting?
25 Bob: Yes.
26 Anna: Ok, alright then. Ok, so, I'm sorry this is making you work, erm with the erm divorcee
27   being the difference.
28 Bob: Mhm.
29 Anna: When I'm trying to make that into two categories you could have 'somebody in a
30   stable relationship' versus 'somebody who's erm broken up' or 'somebody that has
31   been in a relationship in the past' (coughs) or you could have versus the opposite of a
32   stable relationship being erm 'somebody who's on their own' what do you think of (.)
33   when you think of a divorced person?
34 Bob: A relationship that's broken down (.) erm.
35 Anna: (5) Ok lets try this. (8) Alright, so Yourself in the past erm on a scale of being in a
36   stable relationship being having had a relationship broken down? If it doesn't apply go
37   for the middle. (1) Do you see what I mean?
38 Bob: Yes.
39 Anna: Ok.
40 Bob: Erm xxx to do xxx probably (3) mm sorry.
41 Anna: That's alright.
42 Bob: Two.
43 Anna: Ok. And now?
44 Bob: Erm three.
45 Anna: And in the future?
46 Bob: (2) (laughs).
47 Anna: This is xxx thing.
48 Bob: Yeah this bit xxx three.
49 Anna: And ideally?
50 Bob: Five.
51 Anna: Ok and now more generally when you think about a Widow do you think of somebody

52		who's been in a relationship that has broken down or somebody in a stable
53		relationship?
54	Bob:	Erm I guess in a way it's broken down. Xxx erm two xxx chosen to be single.
55	Anna:	Mm, ok. A Single person?
56	Bob:	Xxx {3}.
57	Anna:	And a Housewife?
58	Bob:	Erm (2) xxx erm (2) three.
59	Anna:	A Spinster?
60	Bob:	That would be three.
61	Anna:	A Flirt?
62	Bob:	Three.
63	Anna:	A Career woman?
64	Bob:	Three (laughs).
65	Anna:	A Separated person?
66	Bob:	(.) One.
67	Anna:	A Cohabiting person?
68	Bob:	(2) Five.
69	Anna:	Ok, a Wife?
70	Bob:	Five.
71	Anna:	Ok. A Girlfriend?
72	Bob:	Four.
73	Anna:	A Mother?
74	Bob:	Er three.
75	Anna:	Ok. A Divorcee?
76	Bob:	One.
77	Anna:	A Party Girl?
78	Bob:	Three.
79	Anna:	Good, right. [Paper noises] Ok and you can use any of the ones you had before xxx.
80		(21) Ok.
81	Bob:	Mm am I allowed to change my mind?
82	Anna:	Yes of course yeah.
83	Bob:	Sure {Changes Party Girl and Partner for Wife and Partner}.
84	Anna:	Ok.
85	Bob:	This is [very hard] xxx.
86	Anna:	Well if what happens is, sometimes what happens is the first thing that comes into your
87		head xxx.
88	Bob:	Mhm.
89	Anna:	And then you pick up these and think 'But not all people are like that' you can then go
90		down the list and so you don't have to (.) you can use them as xxx. (7) Ok (5) ok the
91		similar thing about those two? {Wife and Partner}
92	Bob:	They both have a bond with another person.
93	Anna:	And this person? {Single}
94	Bob:	Xxx there's just no bond xxx.
95	Anna:	Mhm.
96	Bob:	Xxx, right.
97	Anna:	Yeah. (4) Xxx? (5)
98	Bob:	Xxx.
99	Anna:	(7) Ok, Yourself in the past?
100	Bob:	One.
101	Anna:	And now?
102	Bob:	(2) Five (laughs).
103	Anna:	And in the future?

104   Bob: Er:m (2) three.
105   Anna: And ideally?
106   Bob: One.
107   Anna: And a Widow?
108   Bob: (5) Mm (3) xxx can if you are a widow you could still then have a relationship with
109   somebody else and still be a widow?
110   Anna: Yes, yeah you can.
111   Bob: You can (.) so three then.
112   Anna: Ok. (1) A Single person?
113   Bob: (1) Five.
114   Anna: And a Housewife?
115   Bob: Three.
116   Anna: And a Partner?
117   Bob: Erm one.
118   Anna: And a Spinster?
119   Bob: Five.
120   Anna: And a Flirt?
121   Bob: Three.
122   Anna: A Career woman?
123   Bob: Three.
124   Anna: And a Separated person?
125   Bob: Three.
126   Anna: Yep. And a Wife?
127   Bob: One.
128   Anna: A Girlfriend?
129   Bob: One.
130   Anna: A Mother?
131   Bob: Three.
132   Anna: A Divorcee?
133   Bob: Three.
134   Anna: And a Party girl?
135   Bob: Three.
136   Anna: Ok. [paper noises] (26) Ok.
137   Bob: (15) Shall I say xxx?
138   Anna: Why [don't you want to]?
139   Bob: I was (.) those are both quite modern concepts {Cohabiter and Career Woman} of roles
140   and relationships (.) [and that's kind of more traditional {Wife}] is that ok?
141   Anna: Yeah erm well the idea is that.
142   Bob: Xxx me (laughs).
143   Anna: Er no if erm (.) one of the reasons we're using the cards is that instead of whereas in an
144   interview I ask all the questions and set the direction you're supposed to [do that] so
145   that's what you've done.
146   Bob: Ok.
147   Anna: (2) Right ok so if you can tell me about those two {Cohabiter and Career woman}?
148   Bob: Ok they're xxx roles and relationships.
149   Anna: (5) And the difference to that? {Wife}
150   Bob: More traditional.
151   Anna: (2) Could you tell me anything else about how those are different from this one?
152   Bob: They go against the (.) traditional view that (.) men are breadwinners and that [only
153   valid] relationships are married relationships.
154   Anna: (27) Ok. (7) Right (.) so right in order to adapt this could you think about for example

155	yourself whether you've been part, whether you have been or see yourself being part
156	of xxx relationships.
157	Bob: Right ok yeah.
158	Anna: And then on a more <u>general</u> level here this being (.) xxx sometimes I end up scrapping
159	xxx.
160	Bob: Right ok (laughs).
161	Anna: Ok right. So here, Yourself in the past modern or traditional?
162	Bob: (3) Four.
163	Anna: And now?
164	Bob: Three.
165	Anna: Ok, and Yourself in the future?
166	Bob: One.
167	Anna: Ok and ideally?
168	Bob: Er one.
169	Anna: You can change them if you want.
170	Bob: The future is probably a three.
171	Anna: Right, ok, that's ok no problem. Ok when you think of a Widow is it a modern or a
172	more traditional concept? It's a bit difficult isn't it.
173	Bob: Modern, no I wouldn't say that er three.
174	Anna: Ok. A Single person?
175	Bob: Er: (3) I don't know. I'll say two for that.
176	Anna: Ok, a Housewife?
177	Bob: Five.
178	Anna: A Partner?
179	Bob: Er: two.
180	Anna: Ok. A Spinster?
181	Bob: Three.
182	Anna: A Flirt?
183	Bob: Er two.
184	Anna: A Career woman?
185	Bob: One.
186	Anna: A Separated person?
187	Bob: Er two.
188	Anna: Ok. A Wife?
189	Bob: Three.
190	Anna: A Girlfriend?
191	Bob: Three.
192	Anna: A Mother?
193	Bob: Three.
194	Anna: A Divorcee?
195	Bob: Two.
196	Anna: And a Party girl?
197	Bob: Two.
198	Anna: Ok. [Paper noises] xxx (91) Ok. Xxx similar thing about those two? {Party girl and
199	Girlfriend}
200	Bob: Erm they're both images you'd associate with being younger and (.) more free.
201	Anna: (2) Ok. (3) Ok and the Housewife?
202	Bob: Involves more commitment and responsibility that's generally more associated with
203	older people.
204	Anna: Ok. (16) Ok. (2) It would also xxx it would be possible if xxx to do young and old on
205	the other side.
206	Bob: Ok.

207	Anna: So what was the (.) ok if kind of we ignore the age association for a bit and go back to
208	that and we just go for that images of the freedom versus commitment and
209	responsibility, ok?
210	Bob: Right, ok.
211	Anna: Ok, Yourself in the past?
212	Bob: (2) One.
213	Anna: Ok. And now?
214	Bob: One.
215	Anna: Ok. And in the future?
216	Bob: Three.
217	Anna: Ok. And ideally?
218	Bob: Five.
219	Anna: Ok. And when you think of a Widow?
220	Bob: I think three.
221	Anna: Ok and a Single person?
222	Bob: (7) Three.
223	Anna: And a Housewife?
224	Bob: Five.
225	Anna: And a Partner?
226	Bob: Four.
227	Anna: Ok. And a Spinster?
228	Bob: (2) Two.
229	Anna: And a Flirt?
230	Bob: Two.
231	Anna: A Career woman?
232	Bob: Four.
233	Anna: Ok. A Separated person?
234	Bob: Three.
235	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
236	Bob: Four.
237	Anna: Ok. A Wife?
238	Bob: Four.
239	Anna: Ok. A Girlfriend?
240	Bob: Two.
241	Anna: Ok. A Mother?
242	Bob: Five.
243	Anna: Ok. A Divorcee?
244	Bob: Three.
245	Anna: And a Party girl?
246	Bob: Two.
247	Anna: Ok, right that's half way through. Would you=
248	Bob: =That last one I said was a two (laughs) can I change to a one.
249	Anna: Ok. Would you like to have a break with the tape off?
250	Bob: Ok, well yeah.
251	Anna: Yeah?
252	Bob: I'm running out of ideas sorry! (laughs)
253	Anna: Ok. [Tape turner of and recommenced] Do you mind if I unplug the heater.
254	Bob: No.
255	Anna: Because at least half the tape from earlier I'll just have the frrrrr (Bob laughs) [noises
256	unplugging heater]. Ok.
257	Bob: Ok.
258	Anna: Xxx we shouldn't say that on tape xxx. (Bob laughs) (6) Ok. And the similar thing

259   about those two? {Party Girl and Single}

260   Bob: They're more likely to spend their time with friends.

261   Anna: Ok.

262   Bob: The Mother has more important things, children (.) people she has to put before herself.

263   Anna: Ok.

264   Bob: If she's a good mother.

265   Anna: Mhm.

266   Bob: In which case (laughs).

267   Anna: (2) Right there are lots of ways we could do this xxx time socialising versus time with

268   children, and erm xxx so there are lots of ideas there that you could use again if you

269   wanted to.

270   Bob: Oh right (laughs).

271   Anna: If you wanted to use them. Ok, xxx spends time with (2) xxx on this side xxx friends

272   xxx. (3) Well we could just do spends time with friends versus spends time with=

273   Bob: =Children.

274   Anna: Children? Ok. (3) (coughs) Yourself in the past?

275   Bob: One.

276   Anna: Ok. And now?

277   Bob: One.

278   Anna: And in the future?

279   Bob: Three.

280   Anna: Ok. And ideally?

281   Bob: Three.

282   Anna: Ok. And a Widow?

283   Bob: Three.

284   Anna: Ok. And a Single person?

285   Bob: Three.

286   Anna: Ok. And a Housewife?

287   Bob: Er: four.

288   Anna: And a Partner?

289   Bob: Three.

290   Anna: A Spinster?

291   Bob: Three.

292   Anna: Ok. And a Flirt?

293   Bob: Three.

294   Anna: Ok. And a Career woman?

295   Bob: Three.

296   Anna: Ok. And a Separated person?

297   Bob: Three.

298   Anna: Ok. And a Cohabiting person?

299   Bob: Three.

300   Anna: A Wife?

301   Bob: Three.

302   Anna: Ok. And a Girlfriend?

303   Bob: Three.

304   Anna: Ok. And a Mother?

305   Bob: Four.

306   Anna: Ok. And a Divorcee?

307   Bob: Three.

308   Anna: Ok. A Party girl?

309   Bob: Two.

310   Anna: Ok. (2) What?

311   Bob: (1) Didn't work very well (laughs).
312   Anna: It's alright it doesn't have to (.) it doesn't have to be all different. It's your choice. (45)
313   (coughs) (4) (coughs) Sorry. (54) Ok. (10)
314   Bob: Xxx (Anna laughs).
315   Anna: Right, the similar thing about those two? {My ideal self and Mother}
316   Bob: (1) Er I can't put this in two separate things.
317   Anna: You can't?
318   Bob: I have to put it in a sentence, the whole thing.
319   Anna: Ok, alright.
320   Bob: Maybe I could choose something else if you like.
321   Anna: No, tell me about it.
322   Bob: Ok. Erm I would like to be defined (.) by the people (.) that I love (.) rather than my job.
323   Anna: Ok.
324   Bob: Does that make sense?
325   Anna: Yeah.
326   Bob: I don't know how you're going to separate that out (Anna laughs).
327   Anna: It's fine. Alright so (.) um: (2) right so I could say (.) just put it as simply as well as
328   you put it there as 'defined through relationships' or 'defined by job' or we could put
329   'defined by relationships' or 'defined by' (2) this well the Mother is just kind of the
330   relationships so that could be 'defined by family' or by 'outside family' or 'family
331   focused' or 'relationship focused' versus 'career focused' or erm 'focused on private
332   relationships' versus 'focused on public achievements'.
333   Bob: Yeah, I think that one.
334   Anna: Ok. (13) xxx.
335   Bob: That's ok.
336   Anna: I don't know you've xxx.
337   Bob: Xxx (laughs).
338   Anna: Yourself in the past?
339   Bob: (4) Two.
340   Anna: And now?
341   Bob: (2) Two.
342   Anna: And in the future?
343   Bob: (3) Three.
344   Anna: And ideally?
345   Bob: (2) One.
346   Anna: Ok. And when you think of a Widow?
347   Bob: Mm (12) two.
348   Anna: And a Single person?
349   Bob: Two.
350   Anna: Ok. And a Housewife?
351   Bob: Two.
352   Anna: And a Partner?
353   Bob: Two.
354   Anna: And a Spinster?
355   Bob: Mm two.
356   Anna: And a Flirt?
357   Bob: Two. Xxx.
358   Anna: Ok (laughs) it doesn't matter at all. A Career woman?
359   Bob: Five.
360   Anna: Ok. A Separated person?
361   Bob: Two.
362   Anna: A Cohabiting person?

363	Bob: Two.
364	Anna: A Wife?
365	Bob: One.
366	Anna: Ok. A Girlfriend?
367	Bob: Two.
368	Anna: A Mother?
369	Bob: One.
370	Anna: A Divorcee?
371	Bob: Two.
372	Anna: And a Party girl?
373	Bob: Three.
374	Anna: Ok, right two more to go. (21) Ok. (8) Right, the similar thing about those two? (Party
375	Girl and Girlfriend}
376	Bob: Words that you associate with young people.
377	Anna: (6) [Any other] xxx?
378	Bob: Xxx just things that xxx.
379	Anna: Yeah, yeah you can yes, ok and this one? {Spinster}
380	Bob: It makes you think of old people (laughs) mm.
381	Anna: Ok. Xxx asking whether you're going to be younger or older in the future (Anna and
382	Bob laugh) is a bit pointless so (.) when you look xxx {Widow}.
383	Bob: Four.
384	Anna: Ok. A Single person?
385	Bob: Two I mean three.
386	Anna: A Housewife?
387	Bob: Four.
388	Anna: A Partner?
389	Bob: Four.
390	Anna: And a Spinster?
391	Bob: Five.
392	Anna: Ok. A Flirt?
393	Bob: Two.
394	Anna: Ok A Career woman?
395	Bob: Four.
396	Anna: A Separated person?
397	Bob: Four.
398	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
399	Bob: Three.
400	Anna: A Wife?
401	Bob: Three.
402	Anna: A Girlfriend?
403	Bob: Three.
404	Anna: A Mother?
405	Bob: Three.
406	Anna: A Divorcee?
407	Bob: Four.
408	Anna: And a Party girl?
409	Bob: Two.
410	Anna: Ok. [Paper noises] Ok, one more.
411	Bob: Right.
412	Anna: (10) Ok. (7) Ok. (86) Are you alright, do you want another break?
413	Bob: Yeah. Xxx so.
414	Anna: Ok have you got any slight tentative ideas?

415	Bob: Xxx.
416	Anna: Ok, describe it to me.
417	Bob: Mm er (laughs).
418	Anna: If it's really difficult try and be <u>less</u> thoughtful.
419	Bob: Right, ok. (26) Er: (laughs) sorry.
420	Anna: Did you have a thought then that xxx.
421	Bob: No not really. I kind of worked through (.) I had xxx.
422	Anna: Sure. Well do you do you have one pair and one different one that you can sort of xxx
423	or are you completely stuck?
424	Bob: Er yeah. I have pairs.
425	Anna: Yeah?
426	Bob: I don't have different ones xxx when I think about it's just a bit too xxx. Xxx so far xxx.
427	Anna: They've been <u>fine</u>. Xxx. (5) If you wanted to make an idea out of those which you've
428	got xxx here you were talking xxx children. You also said that a mother might be (.)
429	have to xxx for other people rather than herself so that's a that's something to do with
430	motherhood but it's different we didn't rate anything about that so we could use xxx.
431	Or if you could think of that would be a difference between xxx. [Tape runs out and is
432	turned over] Ok. Tell me about those two? {Mother and Housewife}
433	Bob: (4) They're both associated with having commitments to people other than themselves.
434	Anna: Ok. (12) And that one? {Career woman}
435	Bob: (5) More self-motivated. She doesn't need to have as much consideration towards
436	others.
437	Anna: (12) Ok (16) xxx ok.
438	Bob: Xxx worse and worse (laughs). I xxx (Anna laughs).
439	Anna: Ok. 'Committed to others' or 'self motivated'. Yourself in the past?
440	Bob: Er:m (2) Four.
441	Anna: And now?
442	Bob: Mm three.
443	Anna: Ok. And in the future?
444	Bob: Three.
445	Anna: And ideally?
446	Bob: Two.
447	Anna: Ok. And when you think of a Widow?
448	Bob: (3) Three.
449	Anna: Ok. And a Single person?
450	Bob: Three.
451	Anna: And a Housewife?
452	Bob: (2) [Four].
453	Anna: More self-motivated?
454	Bob: No, two!
455	Anna: Ok. A Partner?
456	Bob: Three.
457	Anna: A Spinster?
458	Bob: Three.
459	Anna: A Flirt?
460	Bob: Four.
461	Anna: Ok. A Career woman?
462	Bob: Four.
463	Anna: Ok. A Separated person?
464	Bob: Three.
465	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
466	Bob: Three.

467　　Anna: And a Wife?

468　　Bob: Three.

469　　Anna: A Girlfriend?

470　　Bob: Three.

471　　Anna: Ok. A Mother?

472　　Bob: Two.

473　　Anna: Ok. A Divorcee?

474　　Bob: Three.

475　　Anna: A Party girl?

476　　Bob: Four.

477　　Anna: Ok, that's it. Ok right (.) that's all I'm going to ask you. [Paper noises] (Bob sighs) Is

478　　　　　there anything else you would like to say on tape?

479　　Bob: No, no.

480　　Anna: Ok. Thank you very much.

2 Anna: {Cohabiter paired with Wife, Girlfriend different} When you (.) 'Living in a
3   relationship' to 'Not living in a relationship' it doesn't wxxx.
4 Caro: Ok so if it.
5 Anna: If you <u>were</u> living in a relationship it would be one or if you were xxx.
6 Caro: Ok so if I wasn't would that be five.
7 Anna: Yeah.
8 Caro: Ok then.
9 Anna: Ok. And now?
10 Caro: (1) I guess in the middle because I'm not living in (.) with my boyfriend but I (.) kind of
11   xxx share a lot of the time.
12 Anna: Ok so would that between xxx.
13 Caro: Yeah I'd say two.
14 Anna: Ok and in the future?
15 Caro: Yes. {1}
16 Anna: Ok. And ideally?
17 Caro: Mm: (2) One.
18 Anna: Ok. Right and on a more general level when you think of a Widow do you think (.) xxx
19   and if it doesn't xxx middle?
20 Caro: Erm (.) xxx.
21 Anna: So would that be the middle? Ok. A Single person?
22 Caro: xxx. {5}
23 Anna: Ok. Housewife?
24 Caro: (2) Ok. {1}
25 Anna: A Partner?
26 Caro: One.
27 Anna: Spinster?
28 Caro: A five.
29 Anna: A Flirt?
30 Caro: [Four].
31 Anna: A Career woman?
32 Caro: Career woman, mm (6) erm (5) three.
33 Anna: Yeah, ok. A Separated person?
34 Caro: Five.
35 Anna: Ok, A Cohabiting person?
36 Caro: One.
37 Anna And a Wife?
38 Caro: One.
39 Anna: And a Girlfriend?
40 Caro: Er: five.
41 Anna: A Mother?
42 Caro: One.
43 Anna: A Divorcee?
44 Caro: Five.
45 Anna: A Party girl?
46 Caro: I'll give that three.
47 Anna: Yep, ok. Leave that. (2) [Paper noises] Are you alright to do another one xxx.
48 Caro: Erm xxx (laughs).
49 Anna: Ok, alright. (10) Ok (8) now the similar thing about those two? {Career woman and
50   Party girl}
51 Caro: Their independence.
52 Anna: Ok. Independence (.) xxx a relationship?

53   Caro: Er:m.
54   Anna: Or maybe how would you describe this xxx?
55   Caro: I kind of think I suppose independence is (.) <u>self</u> (.) sufficiency (4) being your own first
56   priority. (8) And then Wife is kind of self-sacrificing.
57   Anna: Mhm. (2)
58   Caro: Xxx.
59   Anna: That's ok, I just need to stop writing.
60   Caro: Xxx.
61   Anna: Ok 'Self-sufficiency' versus 'Self-sacrifice'. Er xxx.
62   Caro: Xxx.
63   Anna: Ok. (2) so: do those things do they make sense to you, those being separate?
64   Caro: Yeah.
65   Anna: Yeah, ok right. Yourself in the past?
66   Caro: (2) Er:m number four.
67   Anna: Ok. And now?
68   Caro: I think two.
69   Anna: Ok. And in the future?
70   Caro: One.
71   Anna: Ok. And ideally?
72   Caro: One.
73   Anna: Ok. A Widow?
74   Caro: (2) One.
75   Anna: A Single person?
76   Caro: One.
77   Anna: Ok. A Housewife?
78   Caro: Five.
79   Anna: Ok. A Partner?
80   Caro: Two.
81   Anna: A Spinster?
82   Caro: One.
83   Anna: A Flirt?
84   Caro: (2) I think about a three.
85   Anna: Ok. A Career Woman?
86   Caro: One.
87   Anna: A Separated person?
88   Caro: One.
89   Anna: A Cohabiting person?
90   Caro: Two.
91   Anna: A Wife?
92   Caro: Five.
93   Anna: A Girlfriend?
94   Caro: Two.
95   Anna: A Mother?
96   Caro: Five.
97   Anna: A Divorcee?
98   Caro: (2) One.
99   Anna: Ok a Party girl?
100   Caro: One.
101   Anna: Ok (coughs) [paper noises] (2) xxx this but I'm not I don't ask you anything else
102   sometimes people thing I'm going ask you to do something else afterwards but it's <u>just</u>
103   this but hopefully for eight sets.
104   Caro: Ok.

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105	Anna: (26) Ok. (12) Ok. The similar thing about those two? {Career woman and Myself in the
106	future}
107	Caro: Erm. (1) Xxx.
108	Anna: Mhm, ok. (3) And what would be the positive things about that?
109	Caro: Erm (3) Probably [independence] for me.
110	Anna: Yes.
111	Caro: Erm xxx.
112	Anna: Mm. Ok. And the different reason? {Party girl}
113	Caro: Actually I think the xxx was better for it. (2) Responsibility.
114	Anna: Just generally being irresponsible?
115	Caro: Yeah.
116	Anna: Ok. (10) Yourself in the past?
117	Caro: (Laughs) Five.
118	Anna: Ok. And now?
119	Caro: Erm two.
120	Anna: Ok. In the future?
121	Caro: One.
122	Anna: And ideally?
123	Caro: One.
124	Anna: Ok. A Widow?
125	Caro: Er:m two.
126	Anna: A Single person?
127	Caro: (2) Four.
128	Anna: Ok. A Housewife?
129	Caro: One.
130	Anna: A Partner?
131	Caro: Two.
132	Anna: A Spinster?
133	Caro: One.
134	Anna: A Flirt?
135	Caro: Five.
136	Anna: A Career Woman?
137	Caro: One.
138	Anna: A Separated person?
139	Caro: One.
140	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
141	Caro: Two.
142	Anna: A Wife?
143	Caro: One.
144	Anna: A Girlfriend?
145	Caro: Four.
146	Anna: A Mother?
147	Caro: One.
148	Anna: Ok. A Divorcee?
149	Caro: One.
150	Anna: A Party girl?
151	Caro: Five.
152	Anna: Ok. (Caro coughs) (21) Ok. (2) Ok.
153	Caro: Erm these involve (.) being alone and also xxx being isolated. {Spinster and Widow}
154	Anna: (8) And this one? {Wife}
155	Caro: Erm being part of a family.
156	Anna: (6) Ok. (15) Right, Yourself in the past?

157	Caro: Er four.
158	Anna: And now?
159	Caro: Five.
160	Anna: And in the future?
161	Caro: Er (1) five.
162	Anna: And ideally?
163	Caro: Five.
164	Anna: A Widow?
165	Caro: One.
166	Anna: A Single person?
167	Caro: Four.
168	Anna: A Housewife?
169	Caro: Er:m one erm oh no, I mean five.
170	Anna: Ok. A Partner?
171	Caro: (1) Two.
172	Anna: A Spinster?
173	Caro: One.
174	Anna: A Flirt?
175	Caro: (2) Three.
176	Anna: Ok. A Career Woman?
177	Caro: (1) Two.
178	Anna: A Separated person?
179	Caro: One.
180	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
181	Caro: Four.
182	Anna: A Wife?
183	Caro: Five.
184	Anna: A Girlfriend?
185	Caro: Four.
186	Anna: A Mother?
187	Caro: Five.
188	Anna: A Divorcee?
189	Caro: One.
190	Anna: Ok and a Party girl?
191	Caro: Three.
192	Anna: Right. That's half way through. Would you like a break with the tape off to think?
193	Caro: Er I might [go for a cigarette] actually (laughs).
194	Anna: Ok, fair enough [tape stops and recommences]. (10) Ok.
195	Caro: Ok these two people {Flirt and Party girl} are kind of stigmatised (2) by society.
196	Anna: (5) Ok.
197	Caro: I suppose it's being not an appropriate (.) way for a woman to behave.
198	Anna: Ok. (10) And this one?
199	Caro: Housewife well (.) the classic norm (.) what a woman should be.
200	Anna: Ok. (11) Right this xxx some might find xxx difficult xxx but xxx. (18) Ok is there an
201	opposite I've added the term 'domestic' here as er it I because I think or xxx the
202	Housewife.
203	Caro: Yeah I xxx that.
204	Anna: So on this side would there be an equivalent other thing that you would associate with
205	these two rather than a housewife?
206	Caro: (10) They like having fun (.) xxx.
207	Anna: (Laughs) An interesting xxx (Anna and Caro laugh). Mm.
208	Caro: Xxx (Caro and Anna laugh).

209	Anna: Ok, ok so would it be better to have a 'Fun' versus a 'Domestic' or a 'Stigmatised',
210	that one.
211	Caro: Yeah I think it's more the kind of yeah, deviant versus normal.
212	Anna: Ok then. Yourself in the past?
213	Caro: Myself in the past (laughs) two.
214	Anna: This may not absolutely work. Yourself now?
215	Caro: Two.
216	Anna: Ok. The future?
217	Caro: Erm xxx.
218	Anna: Xxx.
219	Caro: Four.
220	Anna: Ok. And ideally?
221	Caro: Erm I'd give that a two.
222	Anna: Ok. A Widow?
223	Caro: (2) Five.
224	Anna: A Single person?
225	Caro: (2) One.
226	Anna: Ok. A Housewife?
227	Caro: Five.
228	Anna: A Partner?
229	Caro: Four.
230	Anna: Ok. And a Spinster?
231	Caro: One.
232	Anna: Ok. A Flirt?
233	Caro: One.
234	Anna: Ok. A Career Woman?
235	Caro: Erm two.
236	Anna: A Separated person?
237	Caro: One.
238	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
239	Caro: Four.
240	Anna: A Wife?
241	Caro: Five.
242	Anna: A Girlfriend?
243	Caro: (2) Two.
244	Anna: A Mother?
245	Caro: Five.
246	Anna: A Divorced person?
247	Caro: One.
248	Anna: And a Party girl?
249	Caro: One.
250	Anna: Ok. (51) Ok the similar thing about those two? {Divorcee and Widow}
251	Caro: They're seen as being older person.
252	Anna: (3) Ok.
253	Caro: (8) More worldly.
254	Anna: Mm. Xxx and the difference with that one? {Girlfriend}
255	Caro: Er a younger person. More inexperienced in terms of relationships.
256	Anna: Ok. And just out of interest xxx when you looked at those did you think of those as
257	people that had been in relationships or just thinking=
258	Caro: =Yeah it's more a kind of (.) it's like having a left a long term relationship they're more
259	(.) older. Xxx.
260	Anna: Yeah. Mm.

261	Caro: Yeah so at the end of a long term relationship and that's more at the start of a
262	relationship.
263	Anna: Mhm. (5) Right, ok. (14) I'm going to this is probably xxx it works xxx.
264	Caro: We can always try it (laughs).
265	Anna: Indeed (laughs). Ok, when you think of yourself {in the past}?
266	Caro: Five.
267	Anna: And now?
268	Caro: (2) That would be a two I think.
269	Anna: Ok. In the future?
270	Caro: Probably one (Caro and Anna laugh).
271	Anna: Ideally?
272	Caro: One.
273	Anna: A Widow?
274	Caro: One.
275	Anna: A Single person?
276	Caro: (2) Four.
277	Anna: Ok. A Housewife?
278	Caro: Two.
279	Anna: A Partner?
280	Caro: Two.
281	Anna: A Spinster?
282	Caro: (5) Xxx (laughs) I suppose a three because it's kind of.
283	Anna: A Flirt?
284	Caro: Four.
285	Anna: A Career Woman?
286	Caro: Two.
287	Anna: A Separated person?
288	Caro: One.
289	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
290	Caro: Two.
291	Anna: A Wife?
292	Caro: One.
293	Anna: A Girlfriend?
294	Caro: Five.
295	Anna: A Mother?
296	Caro: Two.
297	Anna: A Divorcee?
298	Caro: One.
299	Anna: Ok a Party girl?
300	Caro: Five.
301	Anna: Ok. [Paper noises] Two more. (5) Xxx those again xxx. (16) Ok. (6) Ok what about
302	those two? {Mother and Housewife}
303	Caro: This is because they're ones that have children (1) well I'd it associate with.
304	Anna: Yeah.
305	Caro: Those two.
306	Anna: And this one? {Spinster}
307	Caro: Is going to be childless. Xxx (Caro and Anna laugh).
308	Anna: Well I have xxx (laugh) no. (4) Xxx write it down. Yourself in the past?
309	Caro: Mm five.
310	Anna: Now?
311	Caro: Erm five.
312	Anna: In the future?

313	Caro: Mm one.
314	Anna: Ok. And ideally?
315	Caro: One.
316	Anna: Ok. When you think of a Widow?
317	Caro: (1) Two.
318	Anna: Ok. A Single person?
319	Caro: Four.
320	Anna: Ok. A Housewife?
321	Caro: One.
322	Anna: A Partner?
323	Caro: Four.
324	Anna: A Spinster?
325	Caro: Five.
326	Anna: A Flirt?
327	Caro: (2) Five.
328	Anna: A Career Woman?
329	Caro: Mm, I dunno (.) three?
330	Anna: Yeah. A Separated person?
331	Caro: Two.
332	Anna: A Cohabiter?
333	Caro: Four.
334	Anna: Ok. A Wife?
335	Caro: One.
336	Anna: Ok. A Girlfriend?
337	Caro: Five.
338	Anna: A Mother?
339	Caro: One.
340	Anna: A Divorcee?
341	Caro: Two.
342	Anna: A Party girl?
343	Caro: Five.
344	Anna: Right, one more to go.
345	Caro: (6) Xxx (laughs).
346	Anna: (50) Ok.
347	Caro: (7) Xxx no longer being in relationships they're really kind of [effects] them to almost
348	being against. {Divorcee and Separated}.
349	Anna: (2) Right, those two people (.) are less likely to be interested in relationships or?
350	Caro: Let's say in favour of (.) relationships, long term. Xxx.
351	Anna: Mm. (13) Ok xxx try xxx.
352	Caro: The Wife would be in favour. (12) Xxx.
353	Anna: Pardon?
354	Caro: In reality they might well be both 'Yes marriage is wonderful.' (laughs).
355	Anna: Erm right. Ok this could be (3) do you think you could do that? A 'Bitter/against'
356	versus 'Pro-commitment'. Would that be xxx?
357	Caro: Yeah, could do it.
358	Anna: (6) Right ok. Yourself in the past?
359	Caro: (2) Two.
360	Anna: Ok. And now?
361	Caro: Four.
362	Anna: Ok. In the future?
363	Caro: Four.
364	Anna: And ideally?

365 Caro: Five.
366 Anna: Ok. A Widow?
367 Caro: Five.
368 Anna: Ok and a Single person?
369 Caro: One.
370 Anna: A Housewife?
371 Caro: Five.
372 Anna: A Partner?
373 Caro: Four.
374 Anna: A Spinster?
375 Caro: (1) Er one.
376 Anna: A Flirt?
377 Caro: One.
378 Anna: A Career Woman?
379 Caro: Three.
380 Anna: A Separated person?
381 Caro: One.
382 Anna: A Cohabiting person?
383 Caro: Four.
384 Anna: A Wife?
385 Caro: Five.
386 Anna: A Girlfriend?
387 Caro: Two.
388 Anna: A Mother?
389 Caro: Five.
390 Anna: A Divorcee?
391 Caro: One.
392 Anna: A Party girl?
393 Caro: One.
394 Anna: Right ok. Have you anything you'd like to say on the tape?
395 Caro: Erm (1) I do tend to rely on (.) you do kind of xxx I think.
396 Anna: Mhm.
397 Caro: Xxx necessarily avoid them.
398 Anna: Yeah.
399 Caro: Yeah you kind of find yourself saying 'Yeah' and xxx.
400 Anna: Yeah. When you're is that xxx.
401 Caro: Yeah I think the idea xxx yeah.
402 Anna: Mm.
403 Caro: It's when you start putting them together and you start thinking about it that then you
404   start thinking 'Oh well actually that's it.' kind of. Having put the Divorcee and xxx
405   together with the Wife it's like well yeah not every wife really is going to be (.) well
406   she might not be happily married and not every divorcee goes around 'Never again.'
407   But yeah the initial xxx.
408 Anna: Mhm.
409 Caro: But that's it then you sit there and you start thinking 'Well actually.'
410 Anna: Yeah, it gets more difficult when you xxx.
411 Caro: Yeah.
412 Anna: Ok?
413 Caro: Yeah.
414 Anna: Ok.

1
2 Anna: Ok right.
3 Ant: Right.
4 Anna: (2) Ok.
5 Ant: Do you know I've probably xxx before but there we go. Right I've put Mother and
6   Career woman in together because if she's a mother and if she's a ca a career woman
7   she's actually (.) in these cards she's stating that she's got a role and she's (.) or she's
8   working basically so she's a mother she's looking after children and if she's a career
9   woman she's working but by stating she's a Wife (.) it's more stating (.) she's a
10   partner to someone but it's not saying anything about whether she works. Oh sorry
11   there it was! That's the card I was looking for.
12 Anna: Ok you can always change it if you want to.
13 Ant: Yeah sorry {Changes Wife card for Housewife}. Yeah well these two they're actually
14   asserting that they've got a role being a Housewife has still got (.) not very nice
15   connotations associated with it but being a househusband has surprisingly enough but
16   that's another issue. Right xxx watching GMTV this morning.
17 Anna: Why?
18 Ant: They were just saying that it's (.) if it's yeah it's alright to say yeah the insurance thinks
19   that men drivers are bad and stuff (.) women can get away with it because they've
20   been called crap drivers for ages but they just (.) but if you turn it around and put a TV
21   advertisement about how men's insurance costs less there would be uproar.
22 Anna: Ah.
23 Ant: Basically it swings from one way to the other and they were also saying that you
24   wouldn't get away with saying like White people are better drivers than.
25 Anna: No.
26 Ant: Black people so (.) that people say to get away with saying that women are better drivers
27   than men, is the short answer to the question but going back to this.
28 Anna: So ok these two are associated with a role.
29 Ant: Mm.
30 Anna: An:d associated with a role versus erm would you say that xxx had some not nice
31   connotations but (1) because presumably it's not an assertive role?
32 Ant: Yes.
33 Anna: It's just defining a person through a relationship?
34 Ant: Yep. (8) Xxx girlfriend so just I'm a xxx a nothing but (.) I shouldn't say that xxx.
35 Anna: That's interesting, xxx depends xxx. Ok on a more general scale you can say that.
36 Ant: Mhm.
37 Anna: It's easy enough to do these two and say are they (1) have they xxx is txxx to a role in
38   their life and the xxx relationship, erm with yourself (.) would you find it possible to
39   say for example in the past did you define yourself through a role? Did you ever
40   define yourself through any relationship?
41 Ant: Erm (.) no as far as I'm concerned that's a one.
42 Anna: Ok. Alright I'll just find xxx no I don't xxx ok presuming trying to apply this xxx
43   relationship xxx.
44 Ant: Mm.
45 Anna: Ok right.
46 Ant: Although xxx think is.
47 Anna: Ok. Yeah? No?
48 Ant: I was going to say perhaps in the future then I might (.) if I choose (.) I don't know
49   because a mothers still got a role ok no they're all ones.
50 Anna: Right when you think of a Widow?
51 Ant: Er: mm three.
52 Anna: A Single person?

53 Ant: Two.
54 Anna: A Housewife?
55 Ant: Five.
56 Anna: Partner?
57 Ant: Mm that's not really really that's (.) a three actually. Actually can I change my Single
58   then because if you're introducing yourself as single then the fact that (.) that would be
59   a four instead.
60 Anna: A Spinster?
61 Ant: Spinster that's four.
62 Anna: A Flirt?
63 Ant: I should give myself one so that's ok.
64 Anna: Career woman?
65 Ant: Career woman's one. Cohabiter? Mm three.
66 Anna: Wife?
67 Ant: Wife (laughs) I'll just put that as a two actually.
68 Anna: Ok Girlfriend?
69 Ant: Er:m (.) no she should just keep well I know it's about just about defining [myself] can I
70   put those two as fours? (laughs)
71 Anna: Which two?
72 Ant: Wife and Girlfriend.
73 Anna: Er ok.
74 Ant: An:d for Mother (.) is one.
75 Anna: Divorcee?
76 Ant: Divorcee (.) it tends to s three.
77 Anna: Party Girl?
78 Ant: One. [paper noises]. What were the two I just said?
79 Anna: Um:.
80 Ant: Xxx traditional xxx.
81 Anna: Xxx.
82 Ant: Ok erm stick opposite in this respect but then that's almost similar to the last question
83   because these two {Housewife and Girlfriend} are much too similar and I'm going to
84   say introducing themselves as someone else whereas <u>do you get what I'm saying</u>?
85   This one's (Career woman} asserting herself through ok it's asserting herself through
86   her career whereas these two are asserting themselves through their relationships.
87 Anna: Ok. Right we'll try that.
88 Ant: I'm <u>not saying</u> either's better or worse.
89 Anna: I know.
90 Ant: It's just xxx. (12) Quite interesting because when you go over this people they do people
91   do [contradict] what they're saying don't they.
92 Anna: Well xxx not very xxx.
93 Ant: I'm aware of myself doing it.
94 Anna: Yeah, yeah, you're aware of yourself doing it but (2) I don't usually I mean I'm always
95   contradicting exactly what's xxx going back. Quite likely I know when I did it that I
96   was sort of (.) I was doing that. (6) I don't really expect you to be consistent because if
97   I was (.) if I was xxx wanted to xxx.
98 Ant: It's hard to pick words that are <u>very</u> (.) from the similar categories whereas there are all
99   xxx similar.
100 Anna: Yeah. Ok do you see 'asserted through a relationship' versus is it just 'asserted through
101   a career' or things other than a relationship?
102 Ant: Erm yes it would be a career or other than a relationship.
103 Anna: Ok. Xxx.
104 Ant: Ok. Myself in the past, I was probably [one actually] and Myself now probably xxx so

| 105 | that's three. Myself in the future (.) probably three and My ideal self (.) probably two |
| 106 | actually. |

105   that's three. Myself in the future (.) probably three and My ideal self (.) probably two
106   actually.
107 Anna: Ok. And a Widow?
108 Ant: A Widow (2) They're defining themselves through a relationship so that's five.
109 Anna: A Single person?
110 Ant: Single er <u>again</u> I'll give them a four xxx a Housewife (.) again that's through yeah that
111   would be five.
112 Anna: Ok. A Partner?
113 Ant: Partner is <u>less</u>, it's it's more <u>constructive</u> so that would be a four.
114 Anna: Spinster?
115 Ant: Er:m (1) Spinster four.
116 Anna: Flirt?
117 Ant: Actually I quite see themselves through a relationship so I think (2) four ah yeah no five
118   actually 'cause it's just totally defining themselves through their xxx. Career woman if
119   you're going to define yourself that way that's one.
120 Anna: Ok. Mm.
121 Ant: Oh sh I've done it the wrong way round!
122 Anna: That's alright I just realised, that's fine.
123 Ant: (1) Yeah I've been instead of the relationships.
124 Anna: Yeah. I'm thinking, no, yeah. Ok erm.
125 Ant: Cohabiter er:m yeah sorry I will not xxx.
126 Anna: Ok up here for Yourself in the past erm.
127 Ant: As did I see myself doing my career or whatever rather than.
128 Anna: Yes, so you started with the other way, that's good. As long as I know it's all.
129 Ant: It's all through yeah.
130 Anna: Ok.
131 Ant: Cohabiter erm (1) four. Wife five. Girlfriend is five. Mother is actually giving herself
132   another role so I'm going to put her one.
133 Anna: Ok.
134 Ant: A Divorcee (2) is (.) through a relationship so five. A Party girl is actually (.) totally by
135   herself so that would be a one.
136 Anna: Ok.
137 Ant: I'd say I always go midway.
138 Anna: Right now you've got one more to do but first I'd guarantee that xxx 'cause there
139   obviously <u>are</u> because you're rating them differently xxx relationship versus xxx yep.
140 Ant: Xxx a difference (laughs).
141 Anna: There has got to be a difference else you wouldn't have xxx so between these two
142   pairs.
143 Ant: (3) That was more of a xxx. That was more that would be the connotations as well I'm
144   just (laughs).
145 Anna: Yeah, it's alright. (19) Erm ok.
146 Ant: I'll try and do something that's totally different for this one.
147 Anna: Ok.
148 Ant: (2) Ok when you're a single when people are single (.) you tend to associate them more
149   with being able to flirt whereas if they're <u>a girlfriend</u> then (.) I'm not saying it's
150   correct but then you tend to <u>assume</u> they should not <u>do that</u> since they are now with
151   someone so therefore they should be well-behaved. Again I'd (1) this is just my views
152   on the word 'girlfriend' xxx. <u>Although that's weird</u> because I will introduce (1) I will
153   say 'I've got a boyfriend' but I wouldn't like to be introduced as erm 'the girlfriend'.
154   Have you (.) er do you er (.) have you got a partner or er?
155 Anna: Yeah.
156 Ant: Just probably it's just me but if you notice that er (.) when someone (.) like this doesn't

157	happen any more but when I was younger it always happened they used to say 'This is
158	so-and-so and this is his girlfriend.'
159	Anna: Yeah.
160	Ant: So it used to be more 'Why does he get a name and I (.) [don't]' because <u>my</u> friends
161	would never do that which makes girls generally <u>don't.</u>
162	Anna: Mhm.
163	Ant: But yeah I had one friend who was like really [paying] all this extra xxx.
164	Anna: (laugh) xxx a person I had yesterday was saying that she didn't like the word girlfriend
165	xxx and she thinks it's because erm that she uses the word partner and she prefers that
166	but she feels that that's <u>better</u>=
167	Ant: =It's more equal.
168	Anna: Yeah whereas her boyfriend always uses the word 'girlfriend' and erm and I've had the
169	same experience really and I've said <u>somehow</u> erm it seems that the word 'partner'
170	always sticks in men's throats xxx difficulty and she suggested that it is because
171	'partner' has a is a in the eighties she suggested was used for gay and lesbian partners.
172	Ant: Yeah.
173	Anna: And that if they say '<u>girlfriend</u>' you know they if they kind of say 'I've got a <u>girlfriend</u>'
174	whereas other people xxx gay. Xxx?
175	Ant: Well yeah no I do remember that because er (.) my Dad's girlfriend <u>who I call</u> 'My
176	Dad's girlfriend' because she likes being called my Dad's girlfriend was applying for
177	a job and she was going to put the word '<u>partner</u>' down and then she decided that she
178	didn't want people to think she was (.) <u>gay</u> but she decided that she couldn't put
179	'girlfriend' down because she was how old now and you don't associate 'girlfriend'
180	with old people she was in a dilemma then. But yeah so.
181	Anna: So the 'Girlfriend' here (.) the association with the word is that it would be well would
182	not engage in flirting whereas 'Single' person or 'Flirt' erm might.
183	Ant: Yeah. So we're putting Single person and Flirt as one on one, yeah that's fine.
184	Anna: Yeah (laughs).
185	Ant: That <u>seems</u> simple. Ok, Myself in the past? That's probably two. And now xxx quite xxx
186	I'll put it at four {Myself now}.
187	Anna: And in the future?
188	Ant: I'll xxx three and My ideal self is probably a three. Oh a Widow well she probably can if
189	she had the [will] so I'll put two. Single's probably one. Housewife xxx probably five
190	she probably never gets near a man to have the chance. Partner mm (.) three. Spinster:
191	you don't imagine a spinster doing things like that do you four.
192	Anna: Right. Flirt?
193	Ant: Oh yeah she's one isn't she. Career woman (1) I think that's four actually cause xxx.
194	Cohabiter erm I'll give that four.
195	Anna: Ok. Wife?
196	Ant: Wife, I think I'll give her four, Girlfriend <u>five</u>, Mother a mother is quite respectable five.
197	Divorcee probably on the rebound and is one. (laughs) And Party girl is (.) actually
198	probably I'll stick it at three because just saying she's a party girl does not actually
199	mean (.) she wants to go out and pull.
200	Anna: No. Ok, right that's it. Ok. [paper noises] So was that all ok for you?
201	Ant: Mhm.
202	Anna: Unless you have anything to say shall I turn the tape off?
203	Ant: Erm no not apart from that I put myself as a four there {Myself now} but I'm thinking
204	that maybe I am just a three.
205	Anna: Ok. Now? Is that Yourself now?
206	Ant: Yeah because if I'm going to put like (.) 'Partner' as (1) yeah three then.
207	Anna: Ok.
208	Ant: Well I hope that was interesting for you.

209   Anna: It was yes. Thank you.

2   Betty: I wonder well (laughs). (2) I have to say a Mother and a Housewife are similar.

3   Anna: Ok.

4   Betty: And then a Career woman.

5   Anna: Ok I'll just note them down. (3) Ok the similar thing about these two?

6   Betty: (2) Er usually if you're a mother you're a housewife as well.

7   Anna: Ok.

8   Betty: (2) They stay at home. People want to stay at home with their children.

9   Anna: Ok.

10   Betty: And if you're a housewife you probably haven't got ooh I don't know! (laughs)

11   You've probably not got (.) er high career ambitions.

12   Anna: Ok.

13   Betty: Probably changed a bit now but more in the past.

14   Anna: Yeah.

15   Betty: A housewife.

16   Anna: (12) Erm you may notice that the idea is that I write down things that you say in the

17   way that you say them.

18   Betty: Right.

19   Anna: So (.) I may ask you to say obvious things like what differences there are even if they

20   are obvious because I can't write them down unless you say them. So what is the

21   difference between xxx and this one {Career woman}?

22   Betty: Erm if you're a career woman then you probably need to put a lot of time into your

23   career.

24   [Interruption: phone ringing]

25   Anna: Oh. I'll [tape stopped and restarted] alright erm so as a career woman you need to put a

26   lot of time into your career.

27   Betty: Mhm.

28   Anna: That's ok, is that ok? (laughs) That is the difference, ok. So: (2) so ok (3) mm (2) ok

29   erm ok on a scale of staying at home full time as one to putting all your time into your

30   career would be five. Where would you put Yourself in the past?

31   Betty: Um (.) I'm too young (laughs).

32   Anna: Well ok=

33   Betty: =So if I think of career as being like school.

34   Anna: So if it doesn't apply or if.

35   Betty: Yeah probably in the middle.

36   Anna: Yeah? Ok. And now?

37   Betty: Mm probably still in the middle.

38   Anna: Ok. And in the future?

39   Betty: Still in the middle! (laughs)

40   Anna: Right. And ideally?

41   Betty: In the middle I want to stay at home (.) and be like a housewife and have kids.

42   Anna: Ok. Right in a more general way when you think of a Widow do you think stays at

43   home or focuses on career?

44   Betty: (2) Probably focus on their career, four.

45   Anna: Ok. A Housewife?

46   Betty: Stay at home.

47   Anna: Is that a one a two?

48   Betty: A one.

49   Anna: Partner?

50   Betty: Xxx.

51   Anna: Just generally anyone who might call themselves.

52   Betty: Er:m.

53	Anna: But if it's not meaningful don't go for it.
54	Betty: Probably two.
55	Anna: Ok. A Spinster?
56	Betty: Four.
57	Anna: A Flirt?
58	Betty: (3) Four.
59	Anna: Ok. A Career woman?
60	Betty: Five.
61	Anna: Ok. A Separated person?
62	Betty: Four.
63	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
64	Betty: (2) That's a three.
65	Anna: A Wife?
66	Betty: Two.
67	Anna: Ok. A Girlfriend?
68	Betty: Three.
69	Anna: A Mother?
70	Betty: (2) Two.
71	Anna: A Divorced person?
72	Betty: Four.
73	Anna: And a Party girl?
74	Betty: Three.
75	Anna: Ok. Right, I'll put these ones back.
76	Betty: We missed Single.
77	Anna: Uh: (laughs) sorry. It's a good job you noticed.
78	Betty: Erm (.) four.
79	Anna: Ok. Right you can use the same cards again.
80	Betty: (11) Flirt and Party girl (.) are similar and Partner as different.
81	Anna: Mhm. So when you think of these two what's the similarity?
82	Betty: Erm people that (2) think about themselves more and (.) go out (.) looking for (.) really
83	looking for a partner (.) or a good time.
84	Anna: (9) Ok.
85	Betty: And in contrast to it I think a partner would be different because they would have to
86	think about (.) their partner a lot more.
87	Anna: Right.
88	Betty: (2) And choices have to be made together.
89	Anna: Ok. (12) Ok (11) Ok xxx in the interests of making this not quite as difficult because it
90	sometimes is um often this xxx and you think of something and you come up with a
91	couple of ideas to do with it. For example, I've written 'Think about themselves' -
92	'Have to think about the partner' as the thing to rate.
93	Betty: Yeah.
94	Anna: But you could also use 'Have to make choices together' – 'Make choices for
95	themselves' later on as a different one, so just in case later we get stuck. Self in the
96	past?
97	Betty: Number one (laughs).
98	Anna: Ok. Now?
99	Betty: Number five (laughs).
100	Anna: Ok. And in the future?
101	Betty: Five.
102	Anna: And ideally?
103	Betty: (1) Five.
104	Anna: Ok. And a Widow?

105 Betty: One.
106 Anna: Ok. A Single person?
107 Betty: (1) xxx {Five written down think means one}.
108 Anna: Housewife?
109 Betty: Four.
110 Anna: And a Partner?
111 Betty: Five.
112 Anna: And Spinster?
113 Betty: One.
114 Anna: Ok. And a Flirt?
115 Betty: One.
116 Anna: And a Career woman?
117 Betty: Three.
118 Anna: Alright. And a Separated person?
119 Betty: One.
120 Anna: Ok. And a Cohabiting person?
121 Betty: (1) Four.
122 Anna: And a Wife?
123 Betty: Five.
124 Anna: Ok. And a Girlfriend?
125 Betty: Four.
126 Anna: And a Mother?
127 Betty: Five.
128 Anna: A Divorced person?
129 Betty: (2) Can I change the Mother? (laughs)
130 Anna: Yeah, yeah.
131 Betty: To a three.
132 Anna: Ok. A Divorced person?
133 Betty: Number two.
134 Anna: And a Party girl?
135 Betty: (2) Three.
136 Anna: Ok great. [paper noises] Xxx. (20).
137 Betty: (Whispers) Scary! (laughs) {Puts Single and Myself in the past as different to Wife}
138   (5) This is quite a good time to do this actually, I'm getting married next year.
139 Anna: Really? Wow.
140 Betty: It's scary.
141 Anna: Yeah?
142 Betty: I want to do it but it's still really scary (laughs).
143 Anna: Well, it's a big thing. So when did you decide?
144 Betty: Erm well we've been engaged for about two years.
145 Anna: Ah: how sweet.
146 Betty: We always just thought we'd get married when (.) when we were when we graduated
147   and its just (.) its come too quickly! (laughs) So.
148 Anna: Have you started making plans yet?
149 Betty: No only basics getting in touch with vicars (Betty and Anna laugh).
150 Anna: Oh, how lovely.
151 Betty: Yeah.
152 Anna: Ok (.) the similar thing about these two? {Single and Myself in the past}
153 Betty: I used to be single in the past so (laughs).
154 Anna: Mhm. Which is different from this one {Wife} because?
155 Betty: It's different from that one because (.) a wife isn't single (laughs) and (.) in the past I
156   haven't been a wife! (laughs)

157   Anna: Ok, I may be forced to ask some irritating questions. Ok so what when you think of a
158   single person and then when you think of a wife erm is there anything you can think of
159   that (.) about they way they <u>live</u> or what they <u>do</u> anything you can think of about (.)
160   differences?
161   Betty: Erm (.) you probably have (.) more to do when you're a wife looking after your
162   husband because he's useless (Betty and Anna laugh) (.) probably jobs to do in the
163   house (2) what d'you call it housework (laughs) xxx. Whereas single people (2) might
164   not bothered xxx (laughs).
165   Anna: (5) Ok right (3) ok (1) so 'Freedom' on this side and what would be the kind of
166   opposite of the single freedom?
167   Betty: Obligations, sorry (laughs).
168   Anna: Ok. (2) Ok right, Yourself in the past?
169   Betty: (3) Two.
170   Anna: Ok. Now?
171   Betty: Four.
172   Anna: And in the future?
173   Betty: Five.
174   Anna: And ideally?
175   Betty: (2) Mm three (laughs).
176   Anna: Ok. A Widow?
177   Betty: One.
178   Anna: And a Single person?
179   Betty: One.
180   Anna: A Housewife?
181   Betty: (3) Five.
182   Anna: Ok. A Partner?
183   Betty: Four.
184   Anna: A Spinster?
185   Betty: One.
186   Anna: A Flirt?
187   Betty: One.
188   Anna: A Career woman?
189   Betty: (4) Five.
190   Anna: A Separated person?
191   Betty: One.
192   Anna: A Cohabiting person?
193   Betty: Four.
194   Anna: A Wife?
195   Betty: Four.
196   Anna: A Girlfriend?
197   Betty: Four.
198   Anna: And a Mother?
199   Betty: Five.
200   Anna: A Divorced person?
201   Betty: (3) Mm two.
202   Anna: And a Party girl?
203   Betty: [Two] (1) (laughs) I'm starting to think about them more now (.) xxx a flirt xxx.
204   Anna: (2) Mhm does that make it harder?
205   Betty: Erm well I was just presuming before now I'm looking through them and thinking (2)
206   'Hm' (laughs).
207   Anna: Well I am particularly interested in working ideas and also you could when if you

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208	looked through them and you think 'God well this word xxx' that makes it harder but
209	at the same time when you people use these words in conversation (.) <u>everybody</u>
210	knows what they <u>mean</u> so there is <u>a</u> meaning that is shared, if I don't know if that
211	helps but there is a shared meaning.
212	Betty: (29) (laughs) (17) [Mobile phone text message alert sound] (1) Xxx.
213	Anna: Xxx (Betty and Anna laugh). Right so about the similar thing? {Career woman and
214	Mother}
215	Betty: Career woman and Mother are likely to be very busy (1) and they've got (.) duties,
216	things that they <u>have</u> to do, responsibilities.
217	Anna: Ok. (15) Xxx ok.
218	Betty: A Single person (.) doesn't have as many responsibilities (.) children to look after (1)
219	or a demanding job.
220	Anna: (16) Ok right xxx (14) What's the opposite of having duties and responsibilities? I
221	could just put 'less responsibility'?
222	Betty: Mhm, ok. (laughs) Erm.
223	Anna: Xxx. (Betty laughs) Ok well (8) ok right, Yourself in the past? 'Duties and
224	responsibilities' or 'Less responsibilities'?
225	Betty: (1) Five.
226	Anna: And Now?
227	Betty: Three.
228	Anna: And in the future?
229	Betty: One.
230	Anna: And ideally?
231	Betty: (2) Two.
232	Anna: And when you think of a Widow?
233	Betty: (2) Two.
234	Anna: And a S=
235	Betty: =Oh no, I meant five.
236	Anna: And a Single person? While I just change this.
237	Betty: (3) Five.
238	Anna: Ok. And a Housewife?
239	Betty: (2) Two.
240	Anna: A Partner?
241	Betty: (2) Two.
242	Anna: A Spinster?
243	Betty: (4) Five.
244	Anna: A Flirt?
245	Betty: (2) Three.
246	Anna: Ok. A Career woman?
247	Betty: (2) One.
248	Anna: A Separated person?
249	Betty: One.
250	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
251	Betty: (3) Two.
252	Anna: A Wife?
253	Betty: Two.
254	Anna: And a Girlfriend?
255	Betty: Two (laughs).
256	Anna: Ok. A Mother?
257	Betty: One.
258	Anna: A Divorcee?
259	Betty: (3) Four.

260 Anna: A Party girl?
261 Betty: Four.
262 Anna: Ok. Ok right that's half way through would you like to have a break and have a drink
263   and the tape off (.) and a think? No, you're alright?
264 Betty: (1) Stop xxx (laughs).
265 Anna: Ok [Tape turned off and restarted]
266 Betty: Ok a Housewife and a Career woman and then a Single person.
267 Anna: (4) Right. The similarity?
268 Betty: They're similar because they've both made sacrifices. A career woman has probably
269   sacrificed (.) some aspects of family life (.) whereas a housewife has sacrificed a good
270   career.
271 Anna: (18) And the Single person in contrast?
272 Betty: The single person wouldn't have had to make as many sacrifices. (2) By staying single
273   they can just do what they want.
274 Anna: (12) Ok. (7) Yourself in the past? Someone who has had to make sacrifices or not?
275 Betty: (2) Mm no five.
276 Anna: Now?
277 Betty: Mm four.
278 Anna: Ok. In the future?
279 Betty: Two.
280 Anna: Ok. And ideally?
281 Betty: Three.
282 Anna: Ok. And a Widow?
283 Betty: (3) Two.
284 Anna: And a Single person?
285 Betty: (1) Five.
286 Anna: A Housewife?
287 Betty: One.
288 Anna: A Partner?
289 Betty: Two.
290 Anna: Ok. A Spinster?
291 Betty: (2) Five.
292 Anna: A Flirt?
293 Betty: Three.
294 Anna: A Career woman?
295 Betty: One.
296 Anna: A Separated person?
297 Betty: Two.
298 Anna: A Cohabiting person?
299 Betty: Two.
300 Anna: A Wife?
301 Betty: Two.
302 Anna: A Girlfriend?
303 Betty: (1) Three.
304 Anna: A Mother?
305 Betty: One.
306 Anna: A Divorced person?
307 Betty: (2) Two.
308 Anna: Ok. And a Party girl?
309 Betty: Four.
310 Anna: Ok. [paper noises] (36) Xxx.
311 Betty: Mm xxx.

312 Anna: Xxx. (4) Ok.
313 Betty: Er the Wife has got a strong relationship (.) but might not know (.) what it's like to not
314 have a relationship. (6) They've {Divorcee and Widow} both been married to xxx [but
315 now they're single].
316 Anna: (2) Xxx (4) (Betty laughs).
317 Betty: I'm sorry about that! (laughs)
318 Anna: That's ok there are lots of ideas that we could use like just as simple as having a strong
319 relationship or being single, xxx a relationship in the past or a relationship broken xxx
320 or a relationship xxx, more experience xxx.
321 Betty: If you use (.) if you use relationship broken up versus a strong relationship then the
322 scale will xxx.
323 Anna: (3) Well you can always say that if there was a relationship (.) relationship broken up –
324 relationship xxx stable then that would be not having a relationship at all.
325 Betty: Because you could have experienced break-up xxx.
326 Anna: Erm.
327 Betty: If I change Wife for Spinster?
328 Anna: Er: (laughs) you cou:ld.
329 Betty: Er or you could have (.) experienced break-up or oh that's too complicated! (laughs)
330 Anna: Ok let's just do the simplest possible xxx a stable relationship or not.
331 Betty: Yeah.
332 Anna: Which may be making (.) an over-simplification of you idea for which I apologise.
333 Betty: Yeah you could say instead of xxx (1) oh I don't know what you can do! (Betty and
334 Anna laugh) Oh well.
335 Anna: Yourself in the past?
336 Betty: Mm (laughs) (3) Two.
337 Anna: Ok. And now?
338 Betty: Four.
339 Anna: And in the future?
340 Betty: Five.
341 Anna: And ideally?
342 Betty: (2) (laughs) I better say five (laughs).
343 Anna: Ok. A Widow?
344 Betty: (2) One.
345 Anna: A Single person?
346 Betty: (4) One.
347 Anna: And a Housewife?
348 Betty: Four.
349 Anna: And a Partner?
350 Betty: Four.
351 Anna: And a Spinster?
352 [Interruption: Loud background noise, door shuts]
353 Betty: Hello!
354 Flatmate: Hello!
355 Betty: Oh [your boyfriend] says can you meet him.
356 Flatmate: Ok.
357 Betty: A Spinster? One.
358 Anna: Ok. A Flirt?
359 Betty: Two.
360 Anna: A Career woman?
361 Betty: (2) Three.
362 Anna: Ok. A Separated person?
363 Betty: One.

364	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
365	Betty: Three.
366	Anna: A Wife?
367	Betty: Four.
368	Anna: A Girlfriend?
369	Betty: Four.
370	Anna: A Mother?
371	Betty: Three.
372	Anna: A Divorced person?
373	Betty: One.
374	Anna: And a Party girl?
375	Betty: Two.
376	Anna: Ok right. Two more to go, ok. [paper noises]
377	Betty: (12) (laughs) xxx. (68) I think I might be a little bit stuck (laughs).
378	Anna: Ok. (4) xxx.
379	Betty: Xxx (laughs). Xxx I can think of xxx.
380	Anna: Ok. Are there any other ones that xxx?
381	Betty: Erm xxx.
382	Anna: Right, what was your choice?
383	Betty: Divorcee and Spinster.
384	Anna: (3) Ok right. Xxx but the idea of this is that it works well with this but it doesn't work
385	so well when xxx (.) but that doesn't mean you can't use the reason it's just that you
386	can't xxx. Erm you could erm using the mm xxx versus relationships and (.) you could
387	do that.
388	Betty: Xxx.
389	Anna: (2) 'Few relationships' on this side versus (.) xxx?
390	Betty: Xxx.
391	Anna: Um (2) Ok. Right Yourself in the past?
392	Betty: (2) Four.
393	Anna: Ok. And now?
394	Betty: (3) One (laughs).
395	Anna: And in the future?
396	Betty: One.
397	Anna: And ideally (laughs)?
398	Betty: One (laughs).
399	Anna: Ok. And a Widow?
400	Betty: (5) Two.
401	Anna: A Single person?
402	Betty: Erm One.
403	Anna: A Housewife?
404	Betty: One.
405	Anna: Ok. A Partner?
406	Betty: Two.
407	Anna: A Spinster?
408	Betty: One.
409	Anna: A Flirt?
410	Betty: (2) Erm four.
411	Anna: A Career woman?
412	Betty: Three.
413	Anna: A Separated person?
414	Betty: Three.
415	Anna: A Cohabiting person?

416   Betty: Three.
417   Anna: A Wife?
418   Betty: One.
419   Anna: A Girlfriend?
420   Betty: (2) Three.
421   Anna: A Mother?
422   Betty: One.
423   Anna: A Divorced person?
424   Betty: Two.
425   Anna: And a Party girl?
426   Betty: Five.
427   Anna: Ok, right one more. [Paper noises].
428   Betty: Xxx.
429   Anna: Ok that's ok. It's my job to do that, to do them.
430   Betty: Mhm.
431   Anna: (24) Ok. (6) Ok.
432   Betty: My ideal self (.) is similar to a Wife in that I would like to have that security from a
433   marriage. (8) And Separated is different because erm (.) the idea of being a wife is that
434   (.) it's forever (2) so if you're separated then (1) is was only a short-term relationship.
435   Xxx.
436   Anna: (36) Now ok there are two ways of doing this. Security and having a long-term
437   relationship xxx whereas this end could say 'Relationship xxx' or could say (.)
438   'Relationship xxx' or 'Less security'?
439   Betty: Non-permanent.
440   Anna: Relationship. Ok. (2) Ok in that case the middle would be no relationship at all. Ok,
441   Yourself in the past?
442   Betty: Four.
443   Anna: Now?
444   Betty: One.
445   Anna: And in the future?
446   Betty: One.
447   Anna: And ideally?
448   Betty: One.
449   Anna: And a Widow?
450   Betty: Five.
451   Anna: Is that because the relationship has finished?
452   Betty: Mhm.
453   Anna: Ok. A Single person?
454   Betty: (2) Erm (laughs).
455   Anna: Xxx it might well xxx.
456   Betty: It wouldn't, couldn't xxx really could it. I would say three.
457   Anna: (2) Three?
458   Betty: Mhm.
459   Anna: Ok. A Housewife?
460   Betty: Two.
461   Anna: A Partner?
462   Betty: (2) Three.
463   Anna: A Spinster?
464   Betty: (laughs) Er three.
465   Anna: A Flirt?
466   Betty: Four.
467   Anna: A Career woman?

468   Betty: Three.
469   Anna: A Separated person?
470   Betty: Four.
471   Anna: A Cohabiting person?
472   Betty: Two.
473   Anna: A Wife?
474   Betty: One.
475   Anna: A Girlfriend?
476   Betty: Two.
477   Anna: A Mother?
478   Betty: Two.
479   Anna: Divorcee?
480   Betty: Four.
481   Anna: And Party girl?
482   Betty: Four.
483   Anna: Ok, right that's it. Thank you very much for doing that. Is there anything else that
484   you'd like to say?
485   Betty: (2) Xxx (laughs)
486   Anna: Ok right thank you.

2   Anna: xxx could you choose two?
3   Ange: (2) Is there a time on this Anna?
4   Anna: No, no.
5   Ange: That's alright then, ok.
6   Anna: Take as long as you like.
7   Ange: Ok (1) I'm going to enjoy this.
8   Anna: (15) Ok. (5) Ok, now the similar thing about those two? {Divorcee and Myself in the
9   past} One thing, xxx I may ask you to say obvious things but the idea is the reason
10   that I write down, I don't write anything unless you've said it.
11 Ange: Ok.
12 Anna: Ok. Why did you put those two together?
13 Ange: (1) I put those two together, I think, because it was a contrast.
14 Anna: Ok.
15 Ange: To how I am now (.) and because I'm happy now I wanted to put that to me (.) is
16   misery.
17 Anna: Ok.
18 Ange: And I'm pleased that that (.) isn't.
19 Anna: Ok (3) and the difference with that one? {Flirt}
20 Ange: Now strangely Anna.
21 Anna: Mhm.
22 Ange: People would probably put those two together (.) because people tend to think that you
23   become a divorcee, you become available therefore you're quite overtly sexual and
24   that's something I've never, ever been and perhaps I've wanted to be. So I've felt
25   that's separate from me in any area.
26 Anna: Ok.
27 Ange: (2) It really is it stands on its own for me.
28 Anna: (3) Ok, so whereas this side would be associated with 'misery' would that be
29   associated with more positive things? Or is it just (.) different?
30 Ange: That's associated with things that I feel I have never taken part in.
31 Anna: Ok.
32 Ange: That's an enviable thing to me. That's a light lightheartedness that I've always wanted
33   (.) never had the confidence to be.
34 Anna: Ok. (6) Right, there are loads of ideas there so we can go back to some of them [if we
35   run out.
36 Ange: [Alright, yeah.
37 Anna: But what would be the central ideas that [underlie] the differences? From one extreme
38   xxx.
39 Ange: Now I don't quite understand this so am I pitching (.) these two to 'Myself in the past'.
40 Anna: No when erm I'm just looking for a way to summarise, for example, equivalent ideas
41   like if this was a more light-hearted situation that was a more serious situation.
42 Ange: Right.
43 Anna: So then we would rate those on how light-hearted or serious or if erm (.) this could be a
44   more confident situation and that would be less depending on.
45 Ange: Ok.
46 Anna: So picking out one of the ideas.
47 Ange: Xxx.
48 Anna: So would that be (.) which would be the most important idea?
49 Ange: I'm not following this Anna, sorry.
50 Anna: That's ok.
51 Ange: Explain that to me again I don't want to get this wrong. So we're trying to pitch this
52   like we did with your example?

53	Anna: Yeah, yeah.
54	Ange: So we're doing Myself in the past.
55	Anna: Yes, to draw out the thing that because you've mentioned quite a lot of ideas you could
56	use for example er a 'Light-hearted' as the word here and 'Seriousness' here or=
57	Ange: =Ok I think I'll go 'Misery' there.
58	Anna: Ok, yeah.
59	Ange: Yeah. (2) I think I'll go 'Enviable' here.
60	Anna: Ok. Alright, when you think of Yourself in the past which side?
61	Ange: Two.
62	Anna: Ok. And now?
63	Ange: Three.
64	Anna: And when you think of Yourself in the future?
65	Ange: (2) Four.
66	Anna: Ok. And ideally?
67	Ange: Four.
68	Anna: Ok. Now these are more general, when you think of a Widow do you think?
69	Ange: Two.
70	Anna: Ok. And a Single person?
71	Ange: Three.
72	Anna: A Housewife?
73	Ange: Two.
74	Anna: A Partner?
75	Ange: (4) Four.
76	Anna: Ok. A Spinster?
77	Ange: Three.
78	Anna: A Flirt?
79	Ange: Five.
80	Anna: A Career woman?
81	Ange: Four.
82	Anna: A Separated person?
83	Ange: Three.
84	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
85	Ange: Two.
86	Anna: A Wife?
87	Ange: Two.
88	Anna: A Girlfriend?
89	Ange: Three.
90	Anna: A Mother?
91	Ange: (1) Four.
92	Anna: A Divorcee?
93	Ange: Three.
94	Anna: A Party girl?
95	Ange: (2) Two.
96	Anna: Ok. [Paper noises] xxx. This is all there is to it [going through this.
97	Ange: Right. Same again now?
98	Anna: Yep.
99	Ange: Two similar (.) and one different.
100	Anna: (11) Ok. And the similar thing about those? {Party girl and Flirt}
101	Ange: Why have I chosen these two?
102	Anna: Yes.
103	Ange: Because of their similarity you mean.
104	Anna: Mm.

105	Ange: (2) I think they pretty much have the same meaning.
106	Anna: Ok.
107	Ange: (1) I like their irresponsibility. (8) Sort of grab life when you can, while you can
108	because that this situation is <u>not</u> permanent. This is a <u>temporary</u> lifestyle.
109	Anna: (9) Whereas this one? {Mother}
110	Ange: This is (.) serious responsibility and commitment.
111	Anna: Mm.
112	Ange: (2) Lots of joy (10) but it means that it leaves these behind, it's serious stuff. (9) I
113	haven't quite got quite got the flow of this yet.
114	Anna: Ok. Xxx choose the easiest.
115	Ange: Xxx description.
116	Anna: Would 'Serious commitment' be it?
117	Ange: I think 'Responsibility' I'll choose that one (3).
118	Anna: Ok. Yourself in the past?
119	Ange: Two.
120	Anna: Ok. And now?
121	Ange: Four.
122	Anna: And in the future?
123	Ange: Three.
124	Anna: And ideally?
125	Ange: (1) Three.
126	Anna: Ok. And when you think of a Widow?
127	Ange: Two.
128	Anna: And a Single person?
129	Ange: (3) Two.
130	Anna: Ok. A Housewife?
131	Ange: (2) Three.
132	Anna: Ok. A Partner?
133	Ange: (3) Two.
134	Anna: Ok. A Spinster?
135	Ange: I hate that word, isn't it an horrid word. Poor spinsters, because spinsters are probably
136	[meek and mild] two.
137	Anna: A Flirt?
138	Ange: (1) One.
139	Anna: A Career woman?
140	Ange: (1) Three.
141	Anna: Ok. A Separated person?
142	Ange: Three.
143	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
144	Ange: (1) Two.
145	Anna: A Wife?
146	Ange: Four.
147	Anna: A Girlfriend?
148	Ange: Three.
149	Anna: A Mother?
150	Ange: Five.
151	Anna: A Divorcee?
152	Ange: Three.
153	Anna: A Party girl?
154	Ange: Two.
155	Anna: Ok. [Paper noises]
156	Ange: Same again?

157	Anna: Yes please. (28) Ok, why did you choose those two together? {My ideal self and Wife}
158	Ange: Because (.) I'm a wife for the <u>third</u> time and this is the <u>first time</u> it has felt that this is
159	me (.) this is <u>right</u> for me, this indicates happiness to me.
160	Anna: Yeah. And this one? {Widow}
161	Ange: Strangely this now, because I'm happy now this indicates to me <u>utter despair</u> and
162	loneliness. With my last husband it would have meant relief. Not xxx (.) but that's
163	true. Tragic (.) for a week or two (.) followed by (.) relief and financial security <u>but</u>
164	<u>no:w</u> I'd be devastated. So there's a bit of a mixed (.) message there, so I'll do it as I
165	am now Anna because that's what I am now.
166	Anna: Ok.
167	Ange: I don't want you to get to me xxx.
168	Anna: Ok. So whereas erm this side could be (.) this was a=
169	Ange: Could you put 'Loneliness' over there.
170	Anna: Yes, yes sorry.
171	Ange: I think that's part of yeah.
172	Anna: So it would be possible to draw out 'Despair and loneliness' or 'Loneliness' on this
173	side.
174	Ange: Yeah.
175	Anna: Whichever. And on this side would be?
176	Ange: 'Contentment' actually.
177	Anna: Mm, yep.
178	Ange: I am getting the balance right aren't I? That this is the high end, this is one to five, one
179	to five this indicates.
180	Anna: Well they just indicate erm it depends where you put the words.
181	Ange: Ends of a scale, right ok yes.
182	Anna: So the opposite of 'Contentment' would be (.) 'Despair and loneliness'?
183	Ange: Yes, ok.
184	Anna: Ok.
185	Ange: I I st I still I'm (.) I know it doesn't matter because you're going to do statistics and
186	that sort of thing on it aren't you.
187	Anna: Not very complicated ones.
188	Ange: But I'm just thinking because I want to make sure that I understand this Anna.
189	Anna: Oh yes.
190	Ange: Because this is me now.
191	Anna: Yes.
192	Ange: And I'm extremely happy and content.
193	Anna: Mm.
194	Ange: So can I just pretend we're doing line two. Would this be a one or a five at its highest?
195	Anna: It would be a <u>one</u> because it would be <u>closer</u> to 'Contentment'.
196	Ange: Right looking at it yes I knew that, yeah.
197	Anna: Just because a lot ideas don't, don't fit with all of the words there has to be a middle
198	point.
199	Ange: The middle point I'm with you now.
200	Anna: Ok.
201	Ange: Yes, I'm ok. Myself in the past (2) four.
202	Anna: Ok. And now?
203	Ange: One.
204	Anna: And in the future?
205	Ange: One.
206	Anna: And ideally?
207	Ange: One.
208	Anna: Ok. And generally when you think of a Widow?

209	Ange: Four.
210	Anna: Ok. And a Single person?
211	Ange: Two.
212	Anna: And a Housewife?
213	Ange: (2) Three.
214	Anna: Ok. A Partner?
215	Ange: Three.
216	Anna: A Spinster?
217	Ange: Three.
218	Anna: A Flirt?
219	Ange: Four.
220	Anna: A Career woman?
221	Ange: (2) Two.
222	Anna: A Separated person?
223	Ange: (3) Four.
224	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
225	Ange: Two.
226	Anna: A Wife?
227	Ange: Two.
228	Anna: Ok. A Girlfriend?
229	Ange: Three.
230	Anna: A Mother?
231	Ange: (4) Two.
232	Anna: A Divorcee?
233	Ange: Four.
234	Anna: Ok. A Party girl?
235	Ange: Four.
236	Anna: Ok. [Paper noises]
237	Ange: It does make you think does it? Very interesting. Right. I'll have.
238	Anna: Ok. (8) Ok. (4) What was the similar thing about those two? {Partner and cohabiter}
239	Ange: Strangely, it sounds rather smug, but I tend to think that I put those together <u>now</u>
240	because I feel they're more temporary than marriage.
241	Anna: Ok.
242	Ange: (2) And I think they can be slightly <u>tenuous</u> relationships.
243	Anna: (22) Ok. This one? {Separated}
244	Ange: This to me is a clear-cut decision made. This is a bit of a calculated word (.) sort of erm
245	(.) it's a sad word. (2) Isolation.
246	Anna: (4) Ok so is it, is it was the connection or the difference between those would that be
247	that that was a decision and that was a (.) a less more of an in-between thing?
248	Ange: Could we put this {Partner and Cohabiter} down as 'Habit'.
249	Anna: Yeah, yeah.
250	Ange: Which is probably very cynical but I am, as you've probably recognised.
251	Anna: (Laughs) Ok.
252	Ange: I see this {Separated} as a sort of you know.
253	Anna: (1) As more of a choice a decision.
254	Ange: Yes, I feel that that's sort of maybe a sad choice but that's a clear cut calculated (.)
255	position to be in.
256	Anna: Ok. So would it be ok to have, say have 'Habit' there?
257	Ange: I think so.
258	Anna: And erm er.
259	Ange: 'Choices'?
260	Anna: Yeah. A chosen situation.

261	Ange: I can't think of the word for the moment I'll just try (2) there must be xxx clear-cut,
262	decision maker, a sad word, isolation, determined. You can be separated not through
263	choice but I'm doing it as <u>my</u>.
264	Anna: Yes.
265	Ange: I see that as (.) my past history as (.) sort of [something that's forced upon you] I do
266	think it's a terribly sad word 'separated' it's like a <u>coming apart</u>.
267	Anna: Yeah.
268	Ange: (2) What are we going to put here?
269	Anna: In contrast to this situation would the <u>choice</u> factor be the major thing.
270	Ange: I think so.
271	Anna: Or would it be the (.) the sadness.
272	Ange: Can we use 'clarity'?]
273	Anna: Yeah, yeah.
274	Ange: Is that alright?
275	Anna: Yeah that's fine.
276	Ange: That's how I picture it that is (.) even though you may not want to be it's clear.
277	Anna: Yeah.
278	Ange: You're not in this muddled relationship so it's clarity to it.
279	Anna: Ok. Yourself in the past?
280	Ange: One.
281	Anna: Ok. And now?
282	Ange: I'm stuck on that one because I'm not in either situation I'll have to go for three won't
283	I? Sorry to ask for your advice on that I'm now g.
284	Anna: Yeah, that's fine.
285	Ange: Ok.
286	Anna: And in the future?
287	Ange: I'll stay on three.
288	Anna: And ideally?
289	Ange: And I'll stay on three for that one too.
290	Anna: Ok. And when you think of a Widow?
291	Ange: (2) Four.
292	Anna: A Single person?
293	Ange: (3) Four.
294	Anna: A Housewife?
295	Ange: (2) Two.
296	Anna: A Partner?
297	Ange: One.
298	Anna: A Spinster?
299	Ange: Three.
300	Anna: A Flirt?
301	Ange: (3) An interesting one. (2) I'll have to say three because I can't make it go further.
302	Anna: Ok. A Career woman?
303	Ange: (1) Four.
304	Anna: A Separated person?
305	Ange: Five.
306	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
307	Ange: One.
308	Anna: A Wife?
309	Ange: Two.
310	Anna: A Girlfriend?
311	Ange: (3) Three.
312	Anna: A Mother?

313	Ange: (2) Three.
314	Anna: A Divorcee?
315	Ange: Four.
316	Anna: And a Party girl?
317	Ange: (3) Three.
318	Anna: Ok. [Paper noises] Right, that's halfway through did you want to have a break?
319	Ange: No I'm fine, no, lets crack on. Right (9) (coughs).
320	Anna: (8) Ok, the similar thing about those two? {Mother and Wife}
321	Ange: I think that's a combination of (.) expected happiness (9) I think also I'd like to use the
322	word 'fulfilment'. (3) I'd also like to use the word 'familiarity'.
323	Anna: (3) Ok. Xxx {Single}.
324	Ange: I think because when you're single there is the expectancy of ending up as those two
325	(laughs). Expectancy (.) towards permanence. (.) And also (.) another cynical
326	approach but that is <u>short (.) lived (.) fun</u>.
327	Anna: (2) Ok, alright ok. So whereas this the 'permanence' would be this situation and 'short
328	lived' on the other side, or erm.
329	Ange: In fact I think in a way 'expectancy' is quite a good description of that (.) in my well
330	that's how I see it because people (.) all single people (.) seem to me to be looking
331	towards when they're <u>not</u>.
332	Anna: Mhm, yeah. Ok so what would be the opposite of that?
333	Ange: So for that one (.) erm (.) I think (.) probably 'fulfilment'.
334	Anna: Yeah, ok.
335	Ange: Xxx expectancy xxx single.
336	Anna: Do you know how to spell 'expectancy'? (whispers)
337	Ange: Mm (.) A N.
338	Anna: A N?
339	Ange: Yep.
340	Anna: Ok, right, Yourself in the past?
341	Ange: How far back do I have to go because it varies. I've had (.) I've had it all so (.) this is
342	(.) is this up to me to pitch this where I want?
343	Anna: Yeah.
344	Ange: I'll take a one then.
345	Anna: Ok. And now?
346	Ange: (2) One.
347	Anna: And in the future?
348	Ange: One.
349	Anna: And ideally?
350	Ange: One.
351	Anna: Ok. And when you think of a Widow?
352	Ange: Two.
353	Anna: And a Single person?
354	Ange: Five.
355	Anna: A Housewife?
356	Ange: Two.
357	Anna: A Partner?
358	Ange: Two.
359	Anna: A Spinster?
360	Ange: Three.
361	Anna: A Flirt?
362	Ange: Four.
363	Anna: A Career woman?
364	Ange: (2) Three.

365	Anna: A Separated person?
366	Ange: Four.
367	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
368	Ange: (3) Four.
369	Anna: A Wife?
370	Ange: Two.
371	Anna: A Girlfriend?
372	Ange: Three.
373	Anna: A Mother?
374	Ange: Two.
375	Anna: A Divorcee?
376	Ange: (1) Four.
377	Anna: A Party girl?
378	Ange: Five.
379	Anna: Ok. [Paper noises]
380	Ange: (3) I want some new words.
381	Anna: (2) I started off, when I started designing the task with about thirty-nine words (.) but
382	erm it xxx if I'd used them I would have had the extra two pages of ratings.
383	Ange: Ah: (.) I might make that I think I may regret this choice.
384	Anna: Ok.
385	Ange: (1) It's a strange choice to make because I think (.) people see them as different but I
386	think they're actually identical so I think I'll have a go.
387	Anna: Ok. (3) ok, the similar thing about those two? {Party girl and Flirt}
388	Ange: (2) Perception of fun. (4) Irresponsible. (2) Enviable.
389	Anna: Ok. And this one? {Spinster}
390	Ange: A word of ridicule. (5) It's a sad, <u>pinched</u> word, can I say that? Can I say that it's a sad,
391	pinched word?
392	Anna: Yeah.
393	Ange: And I think it's wrongly perceived but (.) I'm going to have a go at this one.
394	Anna: Ok.
395	Ange: Alright.
396	Anna: So:
397	Ange: Now I can go back into my past way as far as I like for 'Myself in the past' because
398	I've been so many things (.) I can go back to being these things can't I?
399	Anna: Yes, of course. Erm (.) which=
400	Ange: =I'm struggle I'm going to struggle with this perhaps I've made a mistake but I'm
401	going to do it because (.) I think this is the word that should be <u>obliterated</u> from the
402	dictionary (Anna laughs).
403	Anna: Yeah.
404	Ange: Because what's the difference? (3) xxx different in our house see how xxx.
405	Anna: Ok, would you erm choose which things would you choose for here?
406	Ange: This is <u>my opinion</u> isn't it?
407	Anna: Yes.
408	Ange: I I'm a bit of [a] word person so I (.) I forget xxx might say xxx.
409	Anna: Yeah.
410	Ange: (3) Oh I sound really xxx don't I, choosing those words 'irresponsible' and 'enviable'
411	goodness. (3) Can we have 'fun-loving' as well?
412	Anna: Yes, of course yeah.
413	Ange: I want to choose that.
414	Anna: Ok.
415	Ange: I sound like a sour-faced Anna I seem to be sounding like one (Anna laughs) and I'm

416		actually <u>not</u>, so that's not really an honest [entry]. Ok erm (3) I can't say 'sad word'
417		can I? Yes.
418	Anna:	No.
419	Ange:	I can't do it in that way can I?
420	Anna:	No but erm it's not supposed to be completely, the task isn't supposed to be xxx the
421		cards, if you want to do something with the cards, for example, you can say 'thought
422		of xxx sad' it's possible to cross these out and remove these from this part or say
423		'miserable and lonely' or whatever spinster is thought of and get the word spinster and
424		then xxx not miserable and lonely.
425	Ange:	Oh we can do it that way, does that take up too much time? Perhaps I shouldn't have
426		chosen these because I <u>do think</u> this is a very, very unhappy word.
427	Anna:	Yeah.
428	Ange:	Probably describing real sexy ravers actually (.) and I mean would you ever use that
429		word?
430	Anna:	Erm now but probably only because I've read [specifically about this.
431	Ange:	[Because you're, yes. But I would say (.) 'She never married'.
432	Anna:	Yes.
433	Ange:	I would never say 'Paula is a spinster' I would say 'I've never married but gosh I've
434		had some good times.'
435	Anna:	Mhm.
436	Ange:	So there is (.) so we need to choose something for here don't we?
437	Anna:	Yeah. But this part, this part, I am considering these ideas separately to this.
438	Ange:	Oh are you.
439	Anna:	So so that stuff will be.
440	Ange:	Ok. I have to say it conjures up loneliness, I'm sorry Anna. Loneliness to me is what it
441		<u>but that's ridiculous</u> because that doesn't conjure up loneliness and there's no
442		difference.
443	Anna:	Ok so would it be for this part of the task would it be 'Fun-loving' and or and 'Lonely
444		and sad' here in which case you can=
445	Ange:	=Can we do it can you put 'Isolated' in there can we do it that way?
446	Anna:	Yes, yeah.
447	Ange:	Are we going to do this one slightly differently then?
448	Anna:	Well, if.
449	Ange:	I'm not quite sure y you ask me the questions and I'll see I'm not quite sure how this is
450		going to work.
451	Anna:	How it will work, ok.
452	Ange:	It's probably a bad choice.
453	Anna:	Well, it's worth a try. Now, Yourself in the past?
454	Ange:	Definitely one.
455	Anna:	Ok. And now?
456	Ange:	(1) Two.
457	Anna:	And in the future?
458	Ange:	Two.
459	Anna:	And ideally?
460	Ange:	(2) Two.
461	Anna:	Ok. And when you think of a Widow?
462	Ange:	(3) Four.
463	Anna:	Ok. And a Single person?
464	Ange:	(2) Three.
465	Anna:	A Housewife?
466	Ange:	(2) Three.
467	Anna:	A Partner?

468	Ange: (2) Two.
469	Anna: A Spinster?
470	Ange: Five.
471	Anna: A Flirt?
472	Ange: One.
473	Anna: A Career woman?
474	Ange: (4) Two.
475	Anna: A Separated person?
476	Ange: (2) Four.
477	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
478	Ange: Three.
479	Anna: A Wife?
480	Ange: Three.
481	Anna: A Girlfriend?
482	Ange: Two.
483	Anna: A Mother?
484	Ange: Three.
485	Anna: A Divorcee?
486	Ange: Four.
487	Anna: A Party girl?
488	Ange: One.
489	Anna: Ok. [Paper noises] Did that work out ok?
490	Ange: Yeah, not too bad actually. Right, I'll get to work [do you know] I wish I hadn't done
491	that one xxx how many more do we have to do?
492	Anna: Two. (19) Ok, why did you put those two together? {Housewife and Wife}
493	Ange: Safe.
494	Anna: Ok.
495	Ange: (2) Boring. Familiar. (3) Routine. (2) And to be fair contentment.
496	Anna: (1) Ok. (1) And that one? {Girlfriend}
497	Ange: Excitement.
498	Anna: Ok.
499	Ange: Expectations.
500	Anna: Ok.
501	Ange: Fun.
502	Anna: Right and choosing xxx.
503	Ange: 'Familiar' 'Familiarity' I think.
504	Anna: And here?
505	Ange: (2) xxx 'Excitement'.
506	Anna: Ok. (4) Yourself in the past?
507	Ange: (2) This is difficult for me because I've been both. I'll go further back.
508	Anna: Ok.
509	Ange: Two.
510	Anna: And now?
511	Ange: (2) I'm very lucky to be a wife and girl Four.
512	Anna: Ok. And in the future?
513	Ange: Four.
514	Anna: And ideally?
515	Ange: Three.
516	Anna: Ok. And when you think of a Widow?
517	Ange: (4) Two, I think.
518	Anna: A Single person?
519	Ange: Four.

520	Anna: A Housewife?
521	Ange: One.
522	Anna: A Partner?
523	Ange: Two.
524	Anna: A Spinster?
525	Ange: (2) Three.
526	Anna: A Flirt?
527	Ange: Four.
528	Anna: A Career woman?
529	Ange: (5) Three.
530	Anna: Ok. A Separated person?
531	Ange: (3) Four.
532	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
533	Ange: Two.
534	Anna: A Wife?
535	Ange: One.
536	Anna: A Girlfriend?
537	Ange: (2) Four.
538	Anna: A Mother?
539	Ange: Two.
540	Anna: A Divorcee?
541	Ange: (2) Three.
542	Anna: A Party girl?
543	Ange: Five.
544	Anna: Ok. [Paper noises] One more.
545	Ange: You never express surprise, have you heard things the same, do you find people have
546	the same sections or is it? Does it ever surprise you?
547	Anna: Yeah, most people surprise me most times.
548	Ange: Do they?
549	Anna: I I I'm used to be surprised. Sometimes when I'm doing this and I think it through I
550	think to myself 'I know xxx' or 'I xxx' but people always surprise me.
551	Ange: Do they. It's interesting isn't it Anna.
552	Anna: Yes.
553	Ange: Right so is this my last go then?
554	Anna: Yes, it is.
555	Ange: Ok. (6) I don't know why I've done this. This is going to be really sticky one but I'm
556	going to do it.
557	Anna: Ok. I don't think I've ever seen this one.
558	Ange: No, I don't know why I've done it but to me there's a great contrast so I thought I'd try
559	it.
560	Anna: Ok. (8) Ok, those two? {My ideal self and Myself in the future}
561	Ange: (3) More peace of mind.
562	Anna: 'Peace' as in P E A.
563	Ange: I E yeah sorry, 'Peace of mind' yeah sorry.
564	Anna: It's ok.
565	Ange: Utter contentment. I need you to put that [it covers everything really].
566	Anna: Mm.
567	Ange: (6) Self-esteem (.) renewed.
568	Anna: (2) Ok. This one? {Myself in the past}
569	Ange: Lack of confidence. (4) Play-acting life. (6) Duties as wife and mother, no don't put
570	mother because I love [my daughter]. duty as wife (.) boredom.
571	Anna: Mhm.

572	Ange: xxx that be an interesting one?
573	Anna: Ye:s (Ange laughs). Now how?
574	Ange: Right. Have we used 'con' can we use 'contentment'? Or did we I think we've done
575	that. We've done that haven't we?
576	Anna: [Paper noises] Erm I think we did. We've done 'Contentment' versus=
577	Ange: =Can we have 'Peace of mind' is that ok to have as many as that?
578	Anna: Yeah.
579	Ange: I'd like to have 'Peace of mind' then.
580	Anna: Erm.
581	Ange: (1) 'Low self-esteem'?
582	Anna: Yeah, yes. (2) Yourself in the past?
583	Ange: (3) Xxx. Five.
584	Anna: Ok. And now?
585	Ange: (2) Two.
586	Anna: And in the future?
587	Ange: (2) One.
588	Anna: And ideally?
589	Ange: One.
590	Anna: Ok. And a Widow?
591	Ange: (4) Two.
592	Anna: Ok. A Single person?
593	Ange: (2) Three.
594	Anna: A Housewife?
595	Ange: Four.
596	Anna: A Partner?
597	Ange: Four.
598	Anna: A Spinster?
599	Ange: (2) Two.
600	Anna: A Flirt?
601	Ange: (2) Three.
602	Anna: A Career woman?
603	Ange: (4) Two.
604	Anna: Ok. And a Separated person?
605	Ange: Four.
606	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
607	Ange: Three.
608	Anna: A Wife?
609	Ange: (2) Bye (name omitted)! Bye darling! See you in the week.
610	Friend, from another room: Bye Ange!
611	Anna: Bye!
612	Friend, from another room: Bye Anna!
613	Ange: Sorry I lost track there.
614	Anna: Ok.
615	Ange: Two.
616	Anna: A Girlfriend?
617	Ange: (2) Two.
618	Anna: A Mother?
619	Ange: (4) Two.
620	Anna: A Divorcee?
621	Ange: (2) Three.
622	Anna: A Party girl?
623	Ange: Three.

624 Anna: Ok, right. [Paper noises] (Ange coughs)
625 Ange: Is that it?
626 Anna: Yep. Ok, thank you for doing that. Is there anything else you wanted to say?
627 Ange: No that's fine. I really enjoyed it Anna, it was very interesting.

Pair 1: Spinster & Single
Not married.
=Not married.
Single 1: Wife
Has married.
=Has married.

Pair 2: Party girl & Flirt
Young, carefree.
=Young & carefree.
Single 2: Housewife
Old and staid.
=Old, staid.

Pair 3: Mother & Myself now
Have had a child.
=Have had child
Single 3: Myself in the past
Have not. Single.
=Not had child, single.

Pair 4: Mother & Wife
Would have responsibilities.
=Responsibilities.
Single 4: Party girl
Wouldn't have responsibilities.
=No responsibilities

Pair 5: Cohabiter & Partner
Have a life partner.
=Have life partner.
Single 5: Single
Alone.
=Alone.

Pair 6: Divorcee & Flirt
Less socially acceptable.
=Less socially acceptable.
Single 6: Housewife
Socially acceptable.
=Socially acceptable.

Pair 7: Party girl & Flirt
Less likely to have a firm goal.
=Less likely firm goal.
Single 7: Career woman.
Very focused.
=Very focused.

Pair 8: Wife & Housewife
Live with someone.

=Live with someone.
Single 8: Single
Don't.
=Don't live with someone.

1
2 Anna: Ok (10) Ok.
3 Marj: Well I just think that erm (.) you know it's not necessary any more to be either wives or
4   husbands so that (.) a Wife and a Partner would be the same thing.
5 Anna: Yeah. (3) Ok, well I have to ask you to say really obvious things because I'm only
6   supposed to write down <u>exactly</u> words you say.
7 Marj: Right.
8 Anna: So the similar thing about those two would be?
9 Marj: That if you were someone's wife or some (.) that would be the same as being
10   someone's partner.
11 Anna: That they're both involved?
12 Marj: In a relationship yeah.
13 Anna: Ok. (15) Whereas this person is different because? {Single}
14 Marj: Well this person (.) is single.
15 Anna: Yeah.
16 Marj: I mean they may have a boyfriend or a girlfriend but I don't see it as a particularly deep
17   relationship which you would with a wife or partner.
18 Anna: Yeah (30) Ok. (12) Xxx.
19 Marj: Xxx.
20 Anna: Mm xxx that one. This bit, if you can think of a (.) number on a scale for Yourself in
21   the past, Commitment or Not being in a deep relationship?
22 Marj: (1) One.
23 Anna: Ok.
24 Marj: I assume one is like the highest?
25 Anna: Yeah, if that side is commitment.
26 Marj: Yeah.
27 Anna: Yeah. And now?
28 Marj: (2) Three.
29 Anna: Ok. And in the future?
30 Marj: Is this now what I'm <u>hoping</u> for rather than (.) or where I.
31 Anna: Where you see yourself.
32 Marj: So not necessarily what I want but what I anticipate, erm four.
33 Anna: Ok and ideally?
34 Marj: Two.
35 Anna: Ok. And these are more general when you think of a Widow do you think of somebody
36   who's in a committed relationship or not?
37 Marj: (.) Do you mean <u>has been in</u> (.) a committed relationship?
38 Anna: Erm yeah [when you think.
39 Marj: [I mean I would assume I would assume that someone who is a widow would
40   presumably once have been in a relat yeah so one.
41 Anna: Ok a Single person?
42 Marj: Three.
43 Anna: A Housewife?
44 Marj: (1) Two.
45 Anna: A Partner?
46 Marj: (1) One.
47 Anna: A Spinster?
48 Marj: Three.
49 Anna: A Flirt?
50 Marj: Four.
51 Anna: A Career woman?
52 Marj: Three.

53	Anna: A Separated person?
54	Marj: Two.
55	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
56	Marj: Two.
57	Anna: A Wife?
58	Marj: One.
59	Anna: A Girlfriend?
60	Marj: Two.
61	Anna: A Mother?
62	Marj: One.
63	Anna: A Divorced person?
64	Marj: Two.
65	Anna: A Party girl?
66	Marj: Four.
67	Anna: [Paper noises] Ok, first one. Xxx.
68	Marj: Same sort of (.) two similar and.
69	Anna: Yeah.
70	Marj: Why are these ones in here? I wouldn't do anything with those would I 'Myself in the
71	future'?
72	Anna: Well some people use them for things like erm (.) one of the first people I spoke to was
73	very keen on er very keen on having children so she er used er that one with 'Mother'
74	or erm 'Ideal' with that because she saw that role as one she.
75	Marj: Right I see, yeah.
76	Anna: Or people have used that one {Myself in the past} if they see that they have changed
77	xxx.
78	Marj: Yeah. (15) This is quite difficult really isn't it. Xxx.
79	Anna: (17) Ok (9) ok the similar thing about those two? {Separated and Divorced}
80	Marj: Well I'm working on the assumption that someone who's separated is (.) on their way
81	to being divorced.
82	Anna: Yeah.
83	Marj: And I don't see a great distinction so.
84	Anna: Ok.
85	Marj: You know they've been in a relationship and aren't any more.
86	Anna: (12) Whereas this one? {Myself in the past}
87	Marj: Whereas in the past I was married.
88	Anna: Mhm.
89	Marj: And er (.) was in a stable relationship.
90	Anna: (30) Right, maybe this is oversimplifying this but just to use 'Married and stable
91	relationship' on that side.
92	Marj: Yeah.
93	Anna: It's difficult to incorporate the idea of xxx or just maybe not 'Not involved in a
94	relationship' xxx different er. Um.
95	Marj: 'No longer in a relationship'?
96	Anna: Yeah. So if (2) alright, we'll give it a go. Right, Yourself in the past?
97	Marj: So if I'm going to be married and stable I'd go that end.
98	Anna: Yeah.
99	Marj: Yeah five.
100	Anna: Ok. And now?
101	Marj: One.
102	Anna: And in the future?
103	Marj: (2) Three.
104	Anna: And ideally?

105   Marj: (2) Four.
106   Anna: And when you think of a Widow?
107   Marj: (3) Two.
108   Anna: Ok. And a Single person? (2) If that's (.) if that is difficult.
109   Marj: Go for three on that.
110   Anna: Yeah. A Housewife?
111   Marj: (3) Five.
112   Anna: A Spinster?
113   Marj: (2) Three.
114   Anna: A Flirt?
115   Marj: (2) Two.
116   Anna: A Career woman?
117   Marj: Two.
118   Anna: A Separated person?
119   Marj: One.
120   Anna: A Cohabiting person?
121   Marj: Four.
122   Anna: A Wife?
123   Marj: Five.
124   Anna: A Girlfriend?
125   Marj: Four.
126   Anna: A Mother?
127   Marj: Five.
128   Anna: A Divorcee?
129   Marj: One.
130   Anna: A Party girl?
131   Marj: Three. [Paper noises] (14) Am I allowed to use two words more than once?
132   Anna: Yes.
133   Marj: (6) I'm really going for it now.
134   Anna: Xxx. (10) Ok, the similar thing about those two? {Girlfriend and Partner}
135   Marj: That they're both in some sort of relationship.
136   Anna: (5) And they're different from this one in what way? {My ideal self}
137   Marj: Because I'm not. (1) But my ideal self I would be even though xxx I don't know.
138   Anna: Ok. (9) Xxx this [paper noises] (1) Ok in order to try and elaborate on the differences
139   um so what would be any advantages or things that you would associate with those,
140   that situation? {Girlfriend or Partner}
141   Marj: This situation?
142   Anna: Yes.
143   Marj: Erm having someone to share things with.
144   Anna: Mm.
145   Marj: Is that enough?
146   Anna: Yes. (23) And the opposite over here would be? Just not?
147   Marj: Yeah, being on your own.
148   Anna: Ok. (9) Right, ok, in the past?
149   Marj: (2) Two.
150   Anna: And now? [Phone ringing]
151   Marj: (2) Five.
152   Anna: In the future?
153   Marj: One.
154   Anna: Did you want to answer that?
155   Marj: Yeah [Tape paused and restarted].
156   {My ideal self, one}

157 Anna: Ok, sharing with someone xxx. When you think of a Widow?
158 Marj: Five.
159 Anna: A Single person?
160 Marj: Four.
161 Anna: A Housewife?
162 Marj: Four. (2) No sorry I'm going the wrong way aren't I, one.
163 Anna: One for (.) Housewife? Or one for?
164 Marj: The erm Partner.
165 Anna: Ok. Spinster?
166 Marj: Four.
167 Anna: Ok. Flirt?
168 Marj: Three.
169 Anna: Career woman?
170 Marj: Three.
171 Anna: Separated person?
172 Marj: Four.
173 Anna: Cohabiting person?
174 Marj: Two.
175 Anna: Wife?
176 Marj: One.
177 Anna: Girlfriend?
178 Marj: Two.
179 Anna: Mother?
180 Marj: One.
181 Anna: Divorcee?
182 Marj: Five.
183 Anna: Party girl?
184 Marj: Four. [Paper noises] (15) I'm xxx think I'm making an assumption here [but I mean].
185 Anna: Mm. (2) Ok so what was the thing about those two? {Mother and Housewife}
186 Marj: That they both have (.) responsibilities to care for other people.
187 Anna: Ok.
188 Marj: (10) Then I suppose I'm making an assumption that a Career woman doesn't do that.
189 Anna: (12) So were you uncomfortable about that?
190 Marj: Well after I'd done it I began to think there are career women who do (.) you know who
191   are mothers and housewives but I think if they (.) give their whole to their career it
192   might be difficult to do the other thing.
193 Anna: Yeah, ok. (2) Is it that when people call themselves that or call other people that that
194   they're talking about that maybe they do do things but that that's a priority.
195 Marj: Yeah, yeah and maybe they have to have other people help them do (.) do the other
196   things.
197 Anna: Ok.
198 Marj: Even something xxx help maybe xxx.
199 Anna: I think lots of people would say that I think (.) the things that people do. (29) So would
200   the er what would be the opposite of er 'Responsibility to care for others'?
201 Marj: (6) Independent? No. Erm you could say 'Having no responsibility' but that isn't true
202   because they have some responsibility, I don't know.
203 Anna: Well would saying that a 'Career' having 'Career responsibilities'=
204 Marj: ='Different responsibilities'.
205 Anna: 'Different responsibilities' ok. (11) Ok, Yourself in the past?
206 Marj: One.
207 Anna: And now?
208 Marj: Two.

209   Anna: And in the future?
210   Marj: (2) Two.
211   Anna: And ideally?
212   Marj: Two.
213   Anna: Ok. And a Widow?
214   Marj: (2) Two.
215   Anna: A Single person?
216   Marj: Four.
217   Anna: A Housewife?
218   Marj: One.
219   Anna: A Partner?
220   Marj: Two.
221   Anna: A Spinster?
222   Marj: (2) Xxx erm three.
223   Anna: A Flirt?
224   Marj: Four.
225   Anna: A Career woman?
226   Marj: Four.
227   Anna: A Separated person?
228   Marj: Three.
229   Anna: Ok. A Cohabiting person?
230   Marj: Two.
231   Anna: A Wife?
232   Marj: One.
233   Anna: A Girlfriend?
234   Marj: Three.
235   Anna: A Mother?
236   Marj: One.
237   Anna: A Divorced person?
238   Marj: Two.
239   Anna: And a Party girl?
240   Marj: Three.
241   Anna: [Paper noises] That's half way. Would you like a break and the tape turned off? (.) Or
242   do you want to carry on?
243   Marj: Er no I'll carry on.
244   Anna: Ok.
245   Marj: (7) Have I had Housewife and Wife together or are they too similar?
246   Anna: No, you can have it that's fine. (4) Ok, what was similar about those two? {Housewife
247   and Wife}
248   Marj: (3) That they're both (.) running a home.
249   Anna: (2) Ok.
250   Marj: And they're different to that one {Myself now} because I'm running a home but I don't
251   feel that I'm particularly housewifey and I'm certainly not a wife. So what can I add to
252   (1) well I suppose I see a housewife and a wife as perhaps doing nothing apart from
253   being a Housewife or a Wife.
254   Anna: Mm. (4) Whereas yourself?
255   Marj: Whereas I'm running a home but I'm not particularly housewife housewifey and I don't
256   I have a life outside of the home.
257   Anna: (36) Would the opposite of having a a life a life outside the home be (.) being focused
258   on the home or being or being [Dog barks, Anna laughs].
259   Marj: Focused on the home is alright, stop it [Dog barks 5 times, sound of door opening and
260   closing].

261 Anna: Ok. Yourself in the past, 'Focused on the home' or a 'Life outside the home'?
262 Marj: One.
263 Anna: And now?
264 Marj: Five.
265 Anna: And in the future?
266 Marj: Three.
267 Anna: And Ideally?
268 Marj: Mm two.
269 Anna: And when you think of a Widow?
270 Marj: Two.
271 Anna: A Single person?
272 Marj: Five.
273 Anna: A Housewife?
274 Marj: One.
275 Anna: A Partner?
276 Marj: Two.
277 Anna: A Spinster?
278 Marj: Two.
279 Anna: A Flirt?
280 Marj: Five.
281 Anna: A Career woman?
282 Marj: (1) Four.
283 Anna: A Separated person?
284 Marj: Four.
285 Anna: A Cohabiting person?
286 Marj: Three.
287 Anna: A Wife?
288 Marj: Two.
289 Anna: A Girlfriend?
290 Marj: Four.
291 Anna: A Mother?
292 Marj: One.
293 Anna: A Divorced person?
294 Marj: Four.
295 Anna: A Party girl?
296 Marj: Five. [Paper noises]
297 Anna: Ok. (29) Ok, the thing about those two? {Wife and Widow}
298 Marj: Well I would say they were the same because (1) er a widow has once been a wife so
299 has been in a married relationship. (14) And a Spinster has never been married.
300 Anna: (2) Ok.
301 Marj: Have we already done this?
302 Anna: No, no, I just wanted to check er xxx. (14) I guess this is xxx because you are
303 obviously the same (.) I suppose xxx been married in the future and married in the
304 past.
305 Marj: They're all one (.) the same as xxx. {Myself in the past, Myself now, Myself in the
306 future, My ideal self, all one}
307 Anna: Right. So when you think of a Widow? Are you thinking about a person xxx.
308 Marj: One.
309 Anna: A Single person?
310 Marj: Four.
311 Anna: A Housewife?
312 Marj: One.

313	Anna: A Partner?
314	Marj: (2) Two.
315	Anna: A Spinster?
316	Marj: Five.
317	Anna: A Flirt?
318	Marj: Four.
319	Anna: A Career woman?
320	Marj: Three.
321	Anna: A Separated person?
322	Marj: Two.
323	Anna: A Cohabiting person?
324	Marj: Two.
325	Anna: A Wife?
326	Marj: One.
327	Anna: A Girlfriend?
328	Marj: Five.
329	Anna: A Mother?
330	Marj: One.
331	Anna: A Divorcee?
332	Marj: One.
333	Anna: Party girl?
334	Marj: Five.
335	Anna: Right. Two more to go. [Paper noises]
336	Marj: (30) I think I need to stop now and have a think.
337	Anna: Ok, no problem [Tape paused and restarted] (29) Ok, what did you think about those
338	two? {Girlfriend and Partner}
339	Marj: Well I'm saying that Girlfriend is someone's Partner so they're both in some sort of
340	relationship.
341	Anna: (14) And Party girl?
342	Marj: I'm working on the assumption here that if she's a party girl perhaps she's not er (.)
343	with anybody in particular she plays the field.
344	Anna: (35) Ok right 'In a relationship' [versus] 'Playing the field'. That being xxx ok in the
345	past?
346	Marj: One.
347	Anna: Ok. And now?
348	Marj: Three. Three doesn't have to be I don't know does it?
349	Anna: Mm no. Yourself in the future?
350	Marj: (4) Two.
351	Anna: And ideally?
352	Marj: One.
353	Anna: Ok. A Widow?
354	Marj: Two.
355	Anna: A Single person?
356	Marj: Four.
357	Anna: A Housewife?
358	Marj: One.
359	Anna: A Partner?
360	Marj: One.
361	Anna: A Spinster?
362	Marj: Four.
363	Anna: A Flirt?
364	Marj: Five.

365   Anna: A Career woman?

366   Marj: Three.

367   Anna: A Separated person?

368   Marj: Four.

369   Anna: A Cohabiting person?

370   Marj: Two.

371   Anna: A Wife?

372   Marj: One.

373   Anna: A Girlfriend?

374   Marj: Two.

375   Anna: A Mother?

376   Marj: One.

377   Anna: A Divorced person?

378   Marj: Can I change that one to one? {Girlfriend}

379   Anna: Yep.

380   Marj: Erm, three.

381   Anna: Party girl?

382   Marj: Five.

383   Anna: Right one more. [Paper noises]

384   Marj: (3) I'm struggling with the difference between 'Cohabiter' and erm 'Partner'.

385   Anna: Um I think for some people, for some people it's xxx. I think some people, some
386   people think of 'partner' as something, some married people use the word 'partner'
387   xxx status, I think some people use that without cohabiting.

388   Marj: As in 'boyfriend' or 'girlfriend' 'partner'?

389   Anna: Yeah, mm.

390   Marj: (14) Have I had these two together?

391   Anna: Um I don't think you have (.) no you haven't. (4) Ok the thing about those two?
392   {Widow and Divorcee}

393   Marj: Well they've both been married but one of them, at some time, for different reasons no
394   longer are.

395   Anna: Ok.

396   Marj: But this one {Wife} still is married.

397   Anna: Right have to find out a way of putting that that's different from these ones. See we've
398   got 'No longer in a relationship' versus 'Married' and erm (.) we'll have to think of
399   some more differences between them. Is there anything else that's different about
400   when you think of those words? Any other xxx sort of associations with those?

401   Marj: Well I think the difference is in that erm (.) this one is no longer married (.) probably
402   not of her own choosing whereas this one probably was you know wanted no longer to
403   be married.

404   Anna: Mhm.

405   Marj: But that doesn't work when I put them together does it?

406   Anna: That's alright we xxx something. So when you think of 'Wife' or the word what
407   comes, anything that xxx or is it just?

408   Marj: That she's living with someone she wants to be with.

409   Anna: Ok. (10) Whereas the living situations of those two?

410   Marj: Would be more likely to be on their own.

411   Anna: Would they be more likely to <u>live</u> on their own?

412   Marj: Yeah.

413   Anna: Ok. (23) Right, Yourself in the past? 'Living on your own' or 'Living with someone'
414   that you want to be with?

415   Marj: Five.

416   Anna: And now?

417   Marj: (1) Well xxx living here xxx on my own I've got people who I'm sharing a house with.
418   Anna: I think so.
419   Marj: Then it's a one.
420   Anna: Ok. And in the future?
421   Marj: Four.
422   Anna: And Ideally?
423   Marj: Five.
424   Anna: Ok. And when you think of a Widow?
425   Marj: One.
426   Anna: A Single person?
427   Marj: Two.
428   Anna: A Housewife?
429   Marj: Five.
430   Anna: A Partner?
431   Marj: Five.
432   Anna: A Spinster?
433   Marj: One.
434   Anna: A Flirt?
435   Marj: Three.
436   Anna: A Career woman?
437   Marj: Three.
438   Anna: A Separated person?
439   Marj: Two.
440   Anna: A Cohabiting person?
441   Marj: Five.
442   Anna: A Wife?
443   Marj: Five.
444   Anna: A Girlfriend?
445   Marj: Two.
446   Anna: A Mother?
447   Marj: Five.
448   Anna: A Divorcee?
449   Marj: Three.
450   Anna: A Party girl?
451   Marj: One.
452   Anna: (2) Ok, that's all. Is there anything else you'd like to say before I turn the tape off?
453   Marj: No, I don't think so.
454   Anna: Ok. Thank you.