

CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY

Human Factors Group, College of Aeronautics

PhD Applied Psychology

Academic Year 1999 - 2000

Siobhan O'Malley

The Business Case For Equal Opportunities

Equality, Equity and Egalitarianism

Supervisor: Dr Rachel Asch

May 2001

Volume 2 of 3 – Study 1 Transcripts

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PARTICIPANTS NOS. 1, 2, 3 & 4 FOCUS GROUP

TRANSCRIPT

GROUP COMMENCES WITH PARTICIPANTS COMPLETING INFORMATION FORMS.

***INT: OK, SO DOES ANYBODY MIND BEING ASKED THOSE QUESTIONS?**

***ALL: No.**

***INT: HAVE YOU FILLED IN FORMS BEFORE THAT HAVE (..) THAT YOU HAVE OBJECTED TO?**

***P3: Yes. (inaud)**

***INT: WHAT MAKES YOU...**

***P2: Well just sometimes they ask for gender and (inaud) I don't mind if it's for monitoring purposes.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK THEY ARE USED JUST FOR MONITORING PURPOSES OR?**

***P2: I think for the most part they are yeah.**

***P3: Yes I do too, when I fill in job applications. I I don't mind so much on my age, they can work that out but it's when they ask like your marital status and I mean, how many children you have, which shouldn't be relevant at all. They still do it, I thought they'd actually stopped doing that (inaud).**

***INT: OK WHAT I'M GOING TO TRY AND DO IS ASK YOU TO REPHRASE THE THINGS THAT YOU SAY, OR THE THINGS THAT YOU'RE THINKING, STARTING WITH ONE OF THESE STATEMENTS (INDICATING A LIST OF STATEMENTS ON THE FLIP CHART) 'I WISH', 'I BELIEVE', 'I DON'T LIKE', WHAT EVER AND I'M GOING TO SCRIBBLE THEM UP AND SEE IF WE CAN**

PUT THEM INTO THEMES. SO, FOR EXAMPLE, YOU DIDN'T LIKE BEING ASKED IRRELEVANT INFORMATION, HOW WOULD YOU PHRASE IT USING ONE OF THOSE? (statements on the flip chart)

*P3: I don't like!

*INT: JUST THAT?

*P3: Yes.

*INT: I'M NOT TRYING TO CATCH YOU OUT, JUST TO USE THIS AS AN EXAMPLE.

*P3: No, that's fine.

*INT: KEEP TALKING WHILST I WRITE THIS UP BECAUSE IT WILL ALL BE RECORDED AS WELL.

*P2: I'd rephrase it as 'I wish all the questions were relevant'.

*P3: I suppose, I'm not being pedantic but I expect you can say 'I don't like something but I wish that in future' (inaud).

*INT: SO ARE YOU HAPPY FOR ME TO LEAVE IT LIKE THAT?

*P2 & 3: Yeah, yeah, yeah, that's fine.

*INT: HAVE YOU GOT ANY OTHER WANTS, OR DON'T LIKES OR ANYTHING ABOUT MONITORING?

*P1: Can we broaden it out?

*INT: YEAH.

*P1: I don't like positive discrimination.

*INT: OK (WRITES IT ON CHART)

*P1: Is that too wide?

***INT: NO, I'M GOING ON TO THAT LATER BUT I'LL WRITE IT UP NOW. AND YOU'D USE 'POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION' AS THE PHRASE, YEAH?**

***P1: Yeah.**

***INT: WHAT DOES EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MEAN TO YOU THEN, AS GENERAL ISSUE IF WE TAKE IT BROADER? WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND BY THE TERM?**

***P3: Regardless of your race, your gender, or age or anything, you you should be considered equally.**

***INT: RIGHT, BUT I MEAN LIKE THE LEGISLATION THAT WE HAVE ONLY COVERS SEX AND RACE AND LIKE MARITAL STATUS IS COVERED BUT YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO ASK THAT**

***P3: (inaud)**

***P4: It should, it should it should include everything (..) really. And that's the problem when you come to legislate against anything, when you have to define things in, things in words and in writing then it becomes very difficult to talk about an all encompassing phrase. When you have to really define it, it's it's difficult to do, and I think that's where the problems arise for you. (..) Various companies adopting equal opportunity policies and things like that, you have an idea of what you think it means but when you actually look at what it's meant to mean, or in law what it means, they're not always the same kind of thing. And also trying to put into practice an idea or or a thing that you have is quite difficult. It's like there are two sides to the to the issue: there's the (..) there's the thoughts and feelings you have about the issue, and there's the practical application. And it seems to be two separate things if you have to, or if you come to try and put the thing into practice.**

***INT: OK SO CAN YOU ENCAPSULATE THAT FOR ME IN A COUPLE OF STATEMENTS AS TO WHAT BEST REPRESENTS YOUR VIEW OF THE CURRENT...**

***P4: Well, I, 'I believe that putting equal opportunities into practice is very difficult'.**

***INT: OK AND WHY?**

***P4: Umm (..) Well, in simple terms because it's not (..)**

***INT: ...IF YOU CAN, LIKE 'THE BEST PRACTICE' MAYBE WOULD BE, OR YOU 'DON'T LIKE' CATEGORISING, OR (..)**

***P4: No, no, it's not that. It's not that I don't like or I don't, it's umm, 'I believe it's difficult to put into practice'.**

***INT: JUST THAT?**

***P4: Yeah.**

***INT: OK UMM CAN YOU SEE, CAN ANY OF YOU SEE ANY ADVANTAGES OF THE POLICY, OR THE LEGISLATION THAT WE HAVE AT THE MOMENT? LIKE DOES HAVING AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY BRING ANY BENEFITS TO THE ORGANISATION, OR TO YOU AS INDIVIDUALS?**

***P3: That's very difficult to prove (inaud). I mean somebody is (..) not employed for example, to actually prove that (..) that they are being discriminated against is (inaud).**

***INT: SO WHAT LEVEL OF DISCRIMINATION DO YOU THINK THERE IS AT THE MOMENT?**

***P3: (inaud) legislation about gender (inaud)**

***P1: It's easier when there's more job structure, like in the army or in the police force. It's umm easier to work out where discrimination starts (..) and is carried out. If you if you see two two people in quite a specific job structure and you see someone performing or not, it's going to be easier to prove than saying (inaud) it's quite subjective.**

***P3: They're allowed in a way to discriminate. Not not by race but they're not allowed to (..) kind of (inaud) there are certain things that they're allowed umm to do and not many (inaud) so yes it's very clear. (inaud).**

*P1: There's always this police chief thing isn't there. Women are are (..)

*P3: Yes I mean there's (inaud).

*P4: I think one, going back to your original question, I think one good thing about having an equal opportunities uhh (..) having an equal opportunities legislation is it does bring the issue into the general arena. I think before, I mean whether it's effective or not, or whether it's working very well or not, or whether it will have to be changed extensively or not, the very fact that it's there and people, you do hear people discussing these issues now, where I can't remember that happening ten, fifteen years ago, or even five years ago now. So I think, well, whatever, I mean my memory's not particularly good but umm I do think that people are more aware of these issues. I think the problem comes with (..)

*P3: (inaud) more careful.

*P4: Well, I think, in general, it does, but I think umm what, what can happen and what seems to happen in some situations is that (..) organisations decide that they have to have an equal opportunities policy and they adopt one but I'm not so sure whether they actually stick rigidly to it. Whether whether the commitment to it is there, I think that comes on a more individual level.

***INT: SO WHAT, THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE POLICY AND THE PRACTICE?**

*P4: Hmm umm. And I think some organisations can quite uhh cynically use issues such as equal opportunities to APPEAR to be doing something which they're actually probably not doing.

***INT: RIGHT, SO (..) IT'S COVERING UP ISSUES, OR?**

*P4: Well I think they can say yeah we're doing it and umm umm, there's, (..) I think policies like equal opportunities policies are seen as modern (inaud) things, so we ought, we ought to be doing it. Umm whether they really want to do it or not. And I think...

***INT: ...OK SO CAN YOU TRY AND PHRASE THAT IN TERMS OF BENEFITS AND COSTS BOTH TO AN ORGANISATION AND TO AN INDIVIDUAL? SO FOR EXAMPLE, UMM...**

***P4: ...Well a benefit to an organisation might be that umm they would be seen to be adopting good practice if they had an equal opportunities policy.**

***P2 or 3: Are you saying good practice (inaud)**

***P4: Well, good practice. I mean I'm sure they'd say good practice rather than not.**

***P3: I was going to say by law they have to.**

***INT: SO IF AN ORGANISATION HAD A GOOD PRACTICE, HAD A POLICY OR WERE SEEN TO BE ADOPTING GOOD PRACTICE, WHAT WHAT DOES THAT MEAN? WHAT...**

***P4: ...Well it, it...**

***INT: ...WHAT ADVANTAGES WOULD IT BRING AN ORGANISATION? (..) ANYBODY? (LAUGHS)**

***P4: Well within the organisation, within the organisation obviously it brings benefits to to individuals working for that organisation if they, if they umm if their practice, what they've adopted. Well one would assume that would happen anyway, that it would be of benefit to to the employees.**

***INT: OK, SO LIKE WHAT? CAN YOU THINK OF ANY TANGIBLE BENEFITS?**

***P1: Morale.**

***INT: MORALE. SO INCREASED STAFF MORALE OR SOMETHING?**

***P1: Yeah, I suppose so.**

***P2 or 3: (inaud) a small company of racists and (inaud) a black person because it's equal opportunities (inaud)**

*P4: (laughs)

*P2: So I'm just saying it depends on what, on what the basis of people there (inaud)

*P1: That's right, yeah. It can increase their image in terms of like, I don't know, like with a company like the Co-op and they won't invest in that, I'm sure that will increase their.

*P4: On the costs it could, I suspect, decrease flexibility. I'm thinking in terms of, some of the areas where I think it might be uhh difficult to put into practice, however much of good intentions are, where as if you're a small outlet then you use (..) umm (..) although (..)

*INT: IS THAT, SO THAT'S A COST TO THE ORGANISATION OR TO THE INDIVIDUALS?

*P4: Well, to the organisation. I'm just thinking of instances where traditionally you might use a person or a couple of people to do a particular job but not (..) say for instance three months but if don't if you don't directly employ, I'm just wondering how an equal opportunities policy would affect that situation. So for instance if you didn't have an equal opportunities policy and you were sort of working with people on an on-off basis, and then you adopted a policy, would you then have to say, 'right, the next time I want this work done, I'll have to put it out to separate people' or do you continue to use the one or two people that you've built up a relationship with?

*INT: SO ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT FULFILLING QUOTAS ALMOST?

*P4: Yeah, yeah. Getting the job done. I'm just wondering (..)

*P1: It would make recruitment harder for a small company if they have to go through a lot of equal opportunities stuff when they're recruiting it will be much harder, (inaud).

*INT: OK (WRITES ON BOARD).

*P1: On the other hand, we wouldn't bin an application based on, well we look at our cases fairly wouldn't we? So...

*P2: Well, yeah, yes that's what I was going to say, I'm not sure (inaud) equal opportunities certainly exist out there so we don't actively do anything about it, we don't (inaud) have a job vacancy and advertise it and people apply for it and then we look at the (inaud) for it. (..) You don't then say well, none of these are black and disabled, sort of, we've got to go and (..) we just. It's not something that we actively go out and do...

*P4: ...I suspect there are...

*P3: I'm sure no-one does, with all due respect, I'm sure no-one there says oh well we haven't, you know, we're going to re-advertise.

*P2: We can't...

*P3: You can't, because then you're discriminating (inaud).

*INT: SO WHAT DO YOU THINK OF POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION THEN? WHERE YOU CAN SAY THIS GROUP HAS BEEN UNDER-REPRESENTED THEREFORE I'M GOING TO ENCOURAGE THEM - LEGALLY AT THE MOMENT YOU CAN ONLY ENCOURAGE UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS TO APPLY BUT WHEN IT COMES TO SELECTION YOU CAN'T SAY I'M GOING TO TAKE YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE A BLACK PERSON, OR BECAUSE YOU'RE A FEMALE, OR WHAT EVER THE MINORITY GROUP IS...

*P4: I think it depends on the issue at the time. I think umm (..) if the situation arose and as a group (..) say if you were a group, if we a group of good employers in this room and we said this job's coming up, we haven't got any disabled people working in this company and this job could (..) be adequately done, or you know what ever, by by a disabled person, and we agreed it would be a good thing for the group to have, uhh to to positively encourage disabled people to apply for that job, then I think that's probably fine.

*INT: WOULD YOU GO SO FAR AS EMPLOYING SOMEBODY PURELY BECAUSE THEY WERE DISABLED, AGAINST OTHER CANDIDATES?

*P4: Well I don't know. It's difficult to talk about that in, in the abstract. I mean I could see situations arising where that, somebody might, I don't know.

*INT. P2 & P3: (INAUD -ALL TALKING TOGETHER)...

*P4: ...There's no point, there's no point in employing anybody for any job if they're not going to be able to do it. So there's no point in saying, 'right, uhh, we're going to employ this disabled person because they're disabled' and then find out they're not able to do the job.

*INT: OK SO IF YOU'VE GOT TWO CANDIDATES GO FOR A JOB AND ONE'S BLACK AND ONE'S WHITE, OR ONE'S DISABLED AND ONE'S NOT, EQUALLY CAPABLE OF DOING THE JOB IN EVERY SINGLE WAY BUT THOSE GROUPS ARE UNDER-REPRESENTED. WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE ABLE TO CHOOSE THE UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUP?

*P4: Possibly yeah.

*INT: YOU WOULD?

*P2: Because I think the companies (..) any company can benefit (inaud) if you don't have any black people in the company (inaud) black people, (inaud) disabled people (inaud)...

*P1: ...Different cultural perspective.

*P2: Different culture, different cultural perspective (inaud)

*INT: SO YOU WOULD LIKE TO WORK WITH A WIDER MIX OF PEOPLE?

*P2: Yeah.

*INT: OK WHAT DO YOU THINK HAVING A DIFFERENT CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE OR HAVING A MIX OF PEOPLE AT WORK, WHAT, WHAT BENEFITS DO YOU THINK THAT WOULD BRING?

*P2: (..) It could bring different ideas in.

*P1: Yes, the team-working could be fantastic.

*INT: YEAH, WE'VE GOT BETTER TEAM WORKING (WRITES ON BOARD)

*P2: Education benefits (inaud)...

*P4: ...To the individual (inaud)

*INT: SO 'INCREASED IDEAS' OR SOMETHING?

*P4: Yeah.

*P2: I think the thing is...(inaud)

*P1: ...The thing about the police force is (inaud)...

*INT: SORRY?

*P3: I was just saying I think (inaud).

*INT: OK (WRITES ON BOARD). SORRY WHAT WERE YOU GOING TO SAY THEN?

*P1: Well the police force is quite good to, you know, for their representation of the population.

*P3: I was just going to say I think for certain professions, I mean it's actually very important that you get (..)

*P2: ...Social services (inaud)

*P1: I think encouraging umm groups to apply for jobs is fair enough but when it comes to actually making a decision based on that, that's where I start to not (inaud)

*INT: SO YOU'D GO FOR (INAUD)?

*P1: Yeah, if at all possible, yeah.

*INT: OK HAVE YOU GOT ANY OTHER COSTS OR BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH DIFFERENT SORTS OF PEOPLE? (..) I MEAN THERE HAVE BEEN SOME STUDIES THAT SAY IF YOU'VE GOT (INAUD) BACKGROUND THEN YOU'RE BETTER AT PROBLEM SOLVING BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT (INAUD) PERSPECTIVE AND THERE ARE OTHER STUDIES THAT SAY PEOPLE DON'T LIKE WORKING WITH PEOPLE THAT ARE DIFFERENT FROM THEM. I MEAN THERE ARE LOADS OF WAYS, WHAT DO YOU PERSONALLY FEEL? ARE YOU HAPPY WORKING WITH (..) PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT AGES OR SEXES OR RACES?

*P1, 2 & 4: (Inaud - all talking together)

*P4: (inaud) I agree, I think it is better to have a, a varied background.

*P3: You get a better balance of ideas because you (inaud)

*P1: It all depends what kind of work you're doing. When I worked (inaud) but certainly ideas were part of the business, so.

*INT: SO ABOUT IN TERMS OF THE HIERARCHY; WOULD IT BOTHER YOU IF YOU, IF YOU HAD A FEMALE BOSS...

*P1: We have! (laughs)

*INT: (LAUGHS) OR IF YOU HAVE, I MEAN A LOT OF PEOPLE, I'M NOT SAYING THAT ANY OF YOU DO SPECIFICALLY BUT THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO WOULD, MIND HAVING A BLACK MANAGER OR A WOMAN MANAGER OR? (..) DO YOU THINK THAT WOULD BE A PROBLEM?

*P2: That's their problem! (laughs)

*P1: Some people would, I think some people would.

*P3: Yeah (laughs) but it's their, yes.

*P4: I certainly wouldn't. I think I'm, you know.

***INT: DO YOU THINK YOU ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GENERAL POPULATION THOUGH?**

***P4: Difficult, it's difficult to say, I think...**

***P3: ...(inaud) (inaud).**

***P1: We're a bit weird!**

***P4: In in my experience I think umm (..) this, our country's quite a racist country. I think you know, if you just scratch the surface, it's fine but uhh, you know, you're going along in your woolly, liberal way, you think everybody thinks like you do and you very quickly, in certain situations, you find out that's not the case. And yet we're quite uhh, a multi-cultural society now, so it's, it's worrying that uhh, you maybe the indigenous population is finding it difficult to come to terms with that, especially...**

***P2: ...Not exactly seen as (inaud)**

***P3: (laughs)**

***P4: Well, well there you go, yeah, well that's yeah, that's the big thing about America, (inaud) but umm (..)**

***INT: SO YOU DO THINK THERE ARE PEOPLE OUT THERE THAT WOULD HAVE A PROBLEM WITH IT?**

***P4: I think there are a lot of people.**

***INT: A LOT? SO LIKE THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE DO YOU THINK, OR EXCEPTIONAL GROUPS?**

***P3: No.**

***P2: (inaud)**

***INT: HOW ABOUT WITHIN THE WORK PLACE OR ARE YOU TALKING IN GENERAL TERMS?**

*P4: Well I think...

*P2: ...In general terms. (inaud).

*INT: HAVE ANY OF YOU EVER SUFFERED ANY DISCRIMINATION LIKE THAT?

*P2: It's hard to say really. (..) I often...

*P3: ...I've, I have actually when I worked over at the university.

*P2: ...I've been refused a job on the grounds of (inaud).

*INT: HAVE YOU?

*P2: Hmm.

*P4: (inaud)

*P1: They always wanted a girl in this department and I went (inaud)!

*P2,3 & 4: (laughs) (inaud)

*P1: No it was Operation Research actually. They'd never had a girl in that section and they made it quite clear.

*P3: No I mean only recently has (inaud) had a job for a girl, but she went along for the interview and the company actually told him unofficially that they didn't have it because she was a girl she wouldn't want to get her hands dirty.

*INT: (INAUD) QUITE A LOT OF DISCRIMINATION THEN?

*P2: ...(inaud) unofficially....

*P3: ...There's a lot of women in engineering (inaud)...

*P2: ...(inaud) that tell people. There's a lot of discrimination but I think it's getting harder to prove because people are aware of legislation. Like the (inaud) who was told

unofficially where as maybe ten years ago they may have felt quite happy to say (inaud).

***INT: SO HOW MUCH CONTROL OVER BEHAVIOUR DO YOU THINK A POLICY CAN (..) CAN HOPE TO HAVE?**

***P2: I think (inaud) it raises awareness (inaud)...**

***P1: ...(inaud)...**

***P4: ...I think it also depends on how the top management structure view that policy. Because if you've got several people at the top of the structure who are umm very keenly aware (inaud) the policy, then people below that, if they, if they know that, they'd be more likely to adhere to it. Where as, where as if they felt that the (..) you know, the people above them weren't that umm weren't that umm interested in it then they might, if if they didn't feel uhh in their hearts of hearts that it was a good thing then they might be willing to let it slide. So it depends. I think people, yeah, in a work situation, it all depends on how it fits in with the people who are, you know your manager and things like that.**

***INT: (INAUD)...**

***P1: (inaud)...**

***P4:...So whether, so whether a policy works because you, you know, the individuals agree or whether it's because the boss (..) says it should happen is another thing.**

***INT: YEAH. RIGHT.**

***P4: But it does, I think, you know, it does raise awareness.**

***INT: SO IT'S LIKE AN INFORMAL SET OF RULES AS WELL AS THE OFFICIAL POLICY?**

***P4: Although traditionally, you see I've always worked in areas where things like that haven't been, I've, I've, I've worked in an entertainment background, where, you know, umm (..) how would you put it, more liberal people (..) tend to congregate and**

issues aren't strong. Umm for instance, sexual orientation, which is a big thing in certain areas, you never have much of a problem in theatre or television or things like that because you know, people, there there tends to be umm a large mix of orientation and if you disagree with it, then you're you're probably in a minority.

***INT: OK SO...**

***P4: ...I think it depends uhh it depends on umm where you're working, who you're working with and what your, what your job is.**

***INT: SO IF YOU COULD DESIGN THE MOST SUPERB POLICY IN THE WORLD, WHICH GROUPS WOULD YOU, WOULD YOU DESIGN THE POLICY FOR...**

***P4: School kids! (everybody laughs)**

***INT: IN TERMS OF YOU'VE ALREADY, WE'VE ALREADY GOT SEX AND RACE AND DISABILITY CATERED FOR. YOU'VE ADDED SEXUAL ORIENTATION, YOU'VE ADDED AGE, ARE THERE ANY OTHER GROUPS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE INCLUDED, ACTUALLY SPECIFIED FOR?**

***P4: Well I, well I, I'd like to see equal opportunities going down not just raw groups like that but just in the general uhh interaction with people, just being polite and being sensitive to people's needs and wants. I think, you know, it all stems from that kind of.**

***INT: WHAT KIND OF ADVANTAGE DO YOU SEE AN ORGANISATION GAINING FROM ADOPTING THAT ATTITUDE?**

***P4: Well in the end the, the people who are working together might relate to each other in a more positive way perhaps than than they do already. I mean you'll always get situations in work places where you know, X won't speak to Y because you know, this that and the other uhh, just general interaction. It's diff, the the problem with equal opportunity policy is when you bring them in fresh. And that's part of the problem we have these days. It's a new, it's still a fairly new concept understandably. And that's why I mentioned education. I think really these issues should be taught at a very early age, so that by the time you get into the work place it comes as second nature.**

***INT: OK WHAT I'M TRYING TO DO NOW IS THINK (..) FOR AN ORGANISATION TO ADOPT A POLICY OR TO RAISE AWARENESS, OR TO INVEST IN ANY OF THIS, THEY NEED TO KNOW THAT THEY'RE GOING TO GET A BOTTOM LINE BENEFIT BASICALLY. IS IT GOING TO COST THEM MORE TO DO THIS THAN THEY'RE GOING TO GAIN FROM IT? SO CAN YOU THINK OF ANY WAY THAT THIS IS ACTUALLY GOING TO IMPROVE THE BOTTOM LINE FOR THE COMPANY? I MEAN IS IT THAT PEOPLE WOULD BE HAPPIER, WOULD IT INCREASE YOUR JOB SATISFACTION, WOULD IT MAKE YOU WANT TO STAY AT A PLACE LONGER IF YOU GET ON WELL WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES DOES? WHAT DOES, WHAT BENEFIT, WHAT ADVANTAGE COULD IT BE TO YOUR COMPANY?**

***P4: Well, it it could (..)**

***INT: THAT'S A GENERAL QUESTION! (LAUGHS)**

***P2: I think it's quite hard to define what (inaud)**

***P1: If you have a customer based company like a bank or something and you've got a mix behind the counter, you can relate to the customers well, so that gives you positive benefit and customer satisfaction. It's all about customer service.**

***INT: RIGHT, SO YOU COULD SEE IT JUST FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE INDUSTRIES?**

***P1: (inaud) banks (inaud) can relate to (inaud) as well.**

***INT: SO IF YOU'RE NOT DEALING FACE TO FACE WITH THE PUBLIC CAN ANYBODY THINK OF ANY ADVANTAGES?**

***P2: (..) Well costs.**

***INT: WHAT, WOULD IT COST A COMPANY AN AWFUL LOT OF MONEY TO PUT SOMETHING INTO PLACE FOR THE (INAUD)?**

***P3: (inaud)**

*P1: Well if we had a disabled person, I think it would cost...

*P2 & 3: Oh yes (inaud)

*P1: ...for the wheelchair.

*P3: (inaud)

*P4: Well I could, I could see areas where it might cost you, if you're, if if you're dealing with uhh (..) clients or customers who umm aren't umm (..) positive towards these kinds of policies. I mean if you employed say a black person and uhh a company you were working with are are a racist company then it might affect your, uhh your relationship with them. (..) I mean, you know, just looking at a possible disadvantage.

*P3: (inaud)...

*P4: ...Well well OK if if...

*P3: ...If a company is racist (inaud)...

*P4: ...But if you're dealing with individuals, at a business level, who are racist then you know, it could adversely affect.

*P2: (inaud) black person, disabled person (inaud) iron out ones' prejudices, what are you going to get at the end? (inaud)

*INT: TO THE ORGANISATION?

*P2: To the organisation and to the individual. (..) To try and remove bias from (inaud).

*INT: RIGHT. ALTHOUGH THERE'S A MOVE IN THE US AT THE MOMENT THAT'S TAKING THINGS AWAY FROM THE GROUPS, LIKE YOU WERE SAYING EARLIER. INSTEAD OF LOOKING AT INDIVIDUAL GROUPS, LIKE YOU ARE BEING DEFINED BY YOUR RACE, OR YOU ARE BEING CATEGORISED BY YOUR SEX, INSTEAD OF DOING THAT JUST SAYING WELL EVERY SINGLE INDIVIDUAL IS A UNIQUE PERSON AND THEY BRING THEIR OWN PERSONALITY TRAITS IN. WHETHER DIFFERENCES OF

EDUCATION, OR CLASS, OR ACCENT, OR, A WHOLE HOST OF DIFFERENT TRAITS COULD BE, ARE WITHIN EVERY DIFFERENT PERSON AND TO STOP TRYING TO PUT THEM INTO CATEGORIES AND START VALUING THE DIFFERENCE. DO YOU THINK THERE'S ANY BENEFIT IN ADOPTING THAT PATH? DO YOU THINK THAT'S HELPFUL OR USEFUL OR?

*P1: (inaud) groups of people (inaud) ?

*INT: sUMM YEAH, PRETTY MUCH JUST SAYING OK WE'RE GOING TO VALUE THE DIFFERENCE OF INDIVIDUAL PEOPLE. WE'RE NOT GOING TO SAY, YOU KNOW, I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU SPECIAL ACCESS BECAUSE YOU'RE BLACK. BECAUSE THEN THAT'S NOT AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IF YOU'RE HAVING EXTRA ACCESS, OR EXTRA THIS THAT OR THE OTHER.

*P1: In theory that sounds fine but that a bit naive isn't it.

*INT: IN WHAT WAY?

*P1: There is a group of blacks out there who are going to get discriminated against. It's, again it's a great theory about individuals (inaud) but...

*P2: I think it would be a great theory but the fact that it doesn't get introduced (inaud) if you introduced it a very early age but maybe not the next generation but the generation after (inaud). So I think it's a good theory. They just haven't thought about bringing it in. It's got to be brought in at an early age.

*P4: I think that's...

*P2: (inaud)

*P3: (inaud) you can't change people (inaud)...

*P4: ...Well I think you can change people. I think it's harder to change adults perceptions than it is young people.

*P3: (inaud)

*P4: Well, I think in the end, you've got to say, do I believe in this or not? If you believe in it then you've got to say well sod it I'm going to do it and you, you know, you've got to, it's, it depends, you know. Do you want to sit on the fence or do you want to get off the fence? And I think, but it depends, it depends again I think on your position in an organisation. I mean, if you're quite low down in an organisation and it's an organisation who perhaps don't have the same feelings as you about issues like that then it's probably more difficult for you to make an issue of it because it might threaten your (..) your job ultimately. If you're higher up and you're in a position to change things and you feel that you know, very strongly about certain things, I think in the end, as an individual, as a human being, you should say right I'm going to go for it because you know, if I don't do it, then who else is in this group is going to?

*P1: Oh it's a lot of management influence (inaud) been discriminating against them then he would be in real serious trouble.

*P4: Yeah because the person at the top who's, that that shouldn't happen. And if the person at top didn't give a monkeys then (..) you know.

*P1: That's right, it wouldn't make a difference.

*P4: It doesn't mean to say that the people down below still wouldn't do, they still might do.

*INT: SO (INAUD)?

*P1: (Inaud)...

*P4: ...In in in the work place it does.

*INT: SO THIS IS ALL SOUNDING QUITE NEGATIVE, LIKE POLICIES AREN'T GOING TO MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE UNLESS YOU HAVE PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN IT SOMEWHERE ALONG THE WAY. THAT YOU CAN'T MAKE ANY CHANGES...

*P4: ...Well it is quite (inaud)...

***INT: ..EXCEPT IN CHILDHOOD. SO IS THERE ANY HOPE FOR THE WORK PLACE AS IT STANDS TODAY? DO YOU THINK? I MEAN IF A COMPANY WAS GOING TO SAY WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A REALLY DETAILED POLICY, PUT SOME MONEY INTO IT, FIND OUT THE BEST WAY TO DO THIS, WOULD YOU ADVISE THEM TO DO SO OR WOULD YOU SAY IT'S NOT GOING TO MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE AND THEREFORE...**

***P4: ...No I think if the if the group decided that then I think...**

***P1: ...You've got a bit of interest haven't you (inaud)...**

***P4: ...I think it's more likely to happen than if a group of uhh ground floor workers say (..) at at a company meeting or something, we think that you lot should adopt a policy.**

***INT: SO YOU NEED SOME CLOUT BEHIND IT?**

***P4: I think so. In in the work place you do certainly./**

***INT: SO IF YOU'VE GOT THE CLOUT BEHIND IT AND YOU'VE GOT (..) SOMEBODY UP THE TOP HAS THE DESIRE FOR AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ENVIRONMENT TO EXIST, DOES IT MATTER WHAT LEVEL OF DETAIL THERE IS IN THE POLICY?**

***P3: (inaud) (laughs) it makes any you know to refresh people's memory to what that actually means. And if you just have a general thing, 'we are equal opportunities employer' (..)...**

***P1: ...(inaud)...**

***P4: ...(inaud)...**

***P2: ...(inaud) detail in that.**

(THE ABOVE QUESTION WAS MET BY A GENERAL CONSENSUS THAT SOME DETAIL WAS NEEDED. THERE WAS LOTS OF HMM, YEAHING BUT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO DECIPHER THE SPEECH ONE PARTICIPANT BY ONE.)

*P4: Even if it's just a mission statement saying what it means to you.

*P1: Yeah that's right.

*P3: What it means, yes. (..) It gets included...

*P4: ...Or you may have to do it by degree. Maybe you have to start with a mission statement and then (..) a little way down the line reassess how this newly introduced policy has taken on and then decide you know, is it working, is it not working. If it is working, how do we continue to back it up? If it's not working how do we make...

*INT: ...SO YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT AN EVALUATION OF THE PROCESS THEN?

*P4: I think you'd have to do something like that. (..) I think you'd do with anything anyway wouldn't you? I mean if you (..) you know, you can't just say right we're going to do this and write it in the minutes and then think it's going to happen, I think you have to...

*P3: ...(laughs)

*P4: No but you can't. I know people try! (laughs).

*INT: (WRITING ON FLIP CHART) OK IF YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ENVIRONMENT, CAN YOU GIVE ME A LIST OF WORDS OF THINGS THAT YOU NEED, THEN PRIORITISE THEM. LIKE YOU'VE SAID YOU NEED A CHAMPION, AND A MISSION STATEMENT AND (..) WHAT ELSE DID YOU SAY?

*P4: You might well need some kind of umm educational input. You might need to back up your mission statement with some kind of...

*P2: ...(inaud) part, some part of a training course. It's got to be, each individual has got to be (inaud). (..) It also depends on the, the attitude of the individual (inaud).

*P4: Yeah I mean it might be, if you're a smallish company and and and it might be every individual in that company is, has got positive feeling towards that kind of policy

anyway, it might just be that you need to discuss it. (..) Make up a mission statement and then everything's plain sailing. In in another issue it might be you know, quite a number of people involved might be negative towards that so you might have to put some extra time and effort in.

***INT: OK, YOU PEOPLE AS A GROUP NOW, IF YOU HAD TO, I'M GOING TO ASK YOU TO PRIORITISE THESE STATEMENTS (ON FLIP CHART NOTES) A1, A, B OR C. FOR THESE.**

***P2: A.**

***P3: Umm A because I think leadership comes from the top.**

***P2: I would have said that individuals (inaud)**

***P3: I think you know, if it doesn't come from the, if at the top they're not believing in it or doing anything positive about it then that makes it a lot harder.**

***INT: WOULD YOU PUT ANYTHING ABOVE THIS?**

***P2: What do you mean, another A?**

***INT: WELL I'VE GOT AN A1, AN A, B AND A C (INAUD).**

***P4: Well, commitment.**

***P2: (inaud) available!**

***P1: Available.**

***P4: You have to have...**

***P2: What, I mean what I'm saying is A1, there's got to be a forum for a person who, if they think they're being discriminated against, that they can go and (..) air their views basically. Because people can be racist without knowing they're being racist...**

***P1: ...Oh yeah, that's what I was thinking actually....**

*P2: ...The person sat next to you who who is (..) a different culture might think that you (..) that there is a problem.

*INT: SO HAS THAT GOT TO DO WITH THE COMMITMENT?

*P2: Commitment, yeah.

*P3: ...That they know that it's actually followed up, if they (..) not just...

*P2: ...Because there's no point somebody at the top saying (inaud)...

*P4: ...Well that might be (inaud) training and evaluation. I mean part of the evaluation might be individual assessments as it were....

*P2: ...If you do have a complaint, there is an issue, there's no point the top person saying (inaud) if it's not followed up, it's a waste of time.

*P1: (inaud)

*P3: (inaud) It's the same with training people. You can train everyone, yeah but that doesn't mean to say that they actually take in on board, does it. (..) You can train people but it still doesn't mean anything.

*P2: (inaud)

*P3: (inaud)

*P1: How about subconscious discrimination? (inaud) When you go into it and you go de de de, situation where you've got two people and you can't decide and you decide one rather than the other based on (..) not quite sure what - feelings of what that person's about. You might be discriminating and not realising it. So do you have procedures that say if you're going to recruit someone, you should do these procedures to make sure that...

*P4: ...If it comes down to that in the end (..) I mean how do you decide? I mean somebody's going to be discriminated against.

*P1: On a recent recruitment right, one person was (..) at the management centre, I shouldn't say that (laughs)...

*P3: Come on, go on!

*P1: They can't recruit this person, he's just too big.

LAUGHTER ALL ROUND.

*P4: So the custom (inaud)...

*P3: Oh I heard one though, because it's somebody reminded them of somebody else! (laughs).

*P2: But like that kind of thing you can never ever get away from.

*P3: No because we're we're all guilty about, whether we think we're not, we're we're all guilty to a certain extent. It's prejudice (inaud)

*P2: But all these kind of comments come out in a group (inaud)

ALL PARTICIPANTS TALK OVER EACH OTHER AGAIN.

*P2: (inaud) might turn out not to be the best person..

*P1: ...He wouldn't.

*P2: (inaud).

*INT: ALL RIGHT SO THIS IS AN IDEAL WORLD THEN, IF WE DIDN'T HAVE INDIVIDUAL PREFERENCES! OUTSIDE OF THAT, I WOULD STILL LIKE YOU TO TRY AND RANK THESE IF YOU COULD.

*P1: I want champion to be an A1. Anybody else?

*INT: DO YOU? ANYBODY ELSE?

*P4: I think I...

*P2 & 3: Yeah.

*P4: Yeah I think I could go for that.

*INT: ALL RIGHT. MISSION STATEMENT?

(INAUDIBLE DISCUSSION ENSUES BETWEEN THE PARTICIPANTS)

*P4: But does that fall in with the champion bit or is that extra to?

*P3: Well it's just that on the (inaud) as you were saying, they'll know that if they go to any one that it will be generally be taken seriously.

*P4: Well then that that could be A.

INAUDIBLE DISCUSSION OF PRIORITIES CONTINUED - SEE LIST FROM CHARTS FOR PRIORITIES GIVEN

*P3: I would give that a B.

*P1: I would put it higher personally.

*P3: What than a B?

*P1: Because if you think of, if you, you can explain it to people here OK., you're going to go for equal opportunities and you've got to explain that to say Ken, right. They wouldn't get what it meant.

*P2: But (inaud) mission statements are. Mission statements per company seem to be very much the same.

*P1: It's not for the company, no it's not a mission statement for the whole company, a mission statement for the policy.

*P2: See I think a more detailed, a mission statement is so irrelevant, it's just...

*P4: ...I I don't agree, well then that mission statement doesn't work. I mean I think mission statement should state clearly the aim of that particular issue...

*P2: ..You see I think the company policy is more important where as, the mission statement...

*P4: ...And they should be a touch to go back to...

*P2: ...A mission statement tends to be a long term thing like we're going take twenty percent of the market...

*P1: ...No no no, not a company mission statement, a mission statement for the policy. The policy is that, you know, 'we choose people on merit, blah blah blah' it's just an explanation, it's more like an explanation of what the policy is.

*P2: (inaud)

*INT: SO WE'VE GOT A BIT OF A SPLIT HERE THEN HAVE WE?

*P3: Yeah, we're just saying that with a mission statement (inaud) that you write down and then so what?

*P1: It's not supposed to though is it. I know they always end up that way but...

*P3: ...I was just thinking about recent mission statements...

*P2: (inaud)

*P1: All I mean is a summary of like what the policy is.

*P2: A mission statement has to be a general guideline. We don't want a general guideline, we want a specific list, a company list (inaud) equal opportunities...

INAUDIBLE DISCUSSION BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS AGAIN.

*P1: I think that explains to every one what that means, in like you know three in like sentences, what that means. It means that if you get an application from a disabled person, you've got to look at it the same as if you get one from an abled person. Put it down in black and white what that means.

*P2: But I think that's specific company policy.

*P1: Oh well stick it there then. I don't care what you call it.

*INT: OK SO CAN I HAVE A RANK FOR MISSION STATEMENT THEN?

(LAUGHS)

*P4: Well, well now are we substituting company policy for mission statement? (..) Or are we keeping them both?

*P1: The trouble with policy is like they're normally a ten page document of legal jargon and it's not what I'm thinking about. Three sentence mission statement.

*INT: ...ALL RIGHT, YOU THINK, WHAT WOULD YOU GIVE MISSION STATEMENT AS AGAINST POLICY?

*P1: A1.

*P3: OK WHAT WOULD YOU?

*P3: Mission statement. I would give it a B I think, in favour of company policy.

*INT: OK WHAT WOULD YOU TWO GIVE IT?

*P4: Well, what P3 said really, if we're going to have company policy then (..) A1 to the company policy and (..)

*P3: (inaud)

*P1: What do you mean by company policy then? Do you mean like...

*P3: ...B, mission statement, mission statement was a B...

*P4: ...Well, the the (..)

*P1: The booklet?

*P4: No, well, it oughtn't to be. The definitive description of what this (..) of what the intention...

*P1: First of all they won't read it, you know.

***P2: I think that you should have a good (..) summary to a policy...**

***P3: ...A policy's actually not...**

***INT: WHAT WOULD YOU GIVE A POLICY THEN?**

***P1: A. (..) But people wouldn't read it.**

***INT: SO IS IT ANY USE AT ALL IF PEOPLE WON'T READ IT?**

***P1: I think you need it there. It's like the law, you have to have it there, so that you know, you know where you stand. But I don't think it ultimately decides that people, if you're going to recruit, these are the three sentences you should bear in mind.**

***INT: OK, SO HAVE I GOT EVERYBODY REPRESENTED? (ON THE CHARTS) WE'VE GOT COMPANY POLICY AND MISSION STATEMENT. OK EVALUATION. WHAT DID YOU DECIDE ON FOR EVALUATION?**

***P4; Well umm checking on what (..) having uhh having a (..)**

***P3: Is it the same as follow up?**

***P4: Check, checking, yeah, probably, yeah.**

***INT: WHEN YOU DESCRIBED IT EARLIER, EVALUATION WAS CHECKING THAT THE POLICY WAS WORKING ALONG THE WAY. FOLLOW UP WAS THAT THERE WAS SOME KIND OF COME BACK...**

***P4: ...Oh that was for, yeah, so, yeah so evaluation is umm making sure that uhh or checking the progress, checking the progress of of of the policy and then addressing the issues that come out of that evaluation. So you might say every two months or every three months, it comes up on the agenda to discuss.**

***INT: AND HOW IMPORTANT IS THAT?**

***P4: I think that's probably A.**

***INT: ANY MORE VOTES?**

*P3: (inaud) because that's a way of making, ensuring that it's actually...

*P2: ...I think if you have commitment from the top, whether (inaud)...

*P1: ...Starts getting into the realms of hassle though doesn't it now.

*P2: Pardon?

*P1: It starts getting into the realms of hassle, the costs of, not just evaluating a policy...

*P4: ...Why?

*P1: Because I don't think we do discriminate but we don't evaluate policy. We don't...

*P2: ...(inaud)...

*P3: ...(inaud)...

***INT: SO YOU'RE GOING INTO COSTS AND BENEFITS THEN AREN'T YOU?**

*P1: Yes.

*P2: (inaud) we don't have any disabled person (inaud)...

*P1: ...No but no but if one sent an application in we would look at it...

*P2: ...Neither do we have any black people but I mean that's something that (..) you don't know if a black person walked into this department what what perception an all white, what what perception we would give to other companies, all white and we may not even think of it, I mean that's quite a big thing that someone would notice that maybe we won't. And you know, how would a black person feel working here? Would they feel (inaud)...

*P1: ...If we got an application in for a black person or a disabled person, we wouldn't chuck it out on the basis of that. (..) (inaud) what what impression they gain from the company...

TAPE ENDS AND IS TURNED OVER HERE

*P1: ...Well it's the area as well isn't it? It's the area as well it's like that.

*P3: Don't get many people enquiring...

*P2: ...Well this is where we should be putting our job adverts (..)

*P3: (inaud)

*P1: Do you know how much words cost in a job advert?

*P2: Well (inaud) that's the kind of attitude that we really want to (..)

*P1: ...No I'm just saying, imagine a Guardian advert...

*P2: ...(inaud)...

*P3: ...(inaud)

*INT: OK WELL LET ME JUST WRITE THESE UP. THIS IS COSTS AND BENEFITS THAT DIDN'T COME UP EARLIER, REALLY ISN'T IT? (..) SO YOU'RE SAYING YOU NEED A MIX OF PEOPLE, (..) THE ADVERTISEMENT COSTS, (..)

*P3: I think (inaud) of adverts, (inaud) to say (..) we need a, I mean we we do advertise everywhere.

*P2: (inaud)

*P4: What would you put? Something like we're an equal opportunities employer or?

*P2: Well I don't know if that (inaud) but something like that that would SAY to (inaud) perceptions of people (inaud)...

*P1: ...People with one leg preferred...

*P2: ...Maybe it's just that kind of area (inaud)...

*P4: ...You might put all, all...

*P2: ..But we should actually make, because...

*P4: ..All, all, all ...

*P3: ...I think there's a difficulty (inaud)...

*P4: ...relevant applications...

*P1: ...(inaud)...

*INT: (LAUGHS) OK I'VE GOT TO TRY AND TRANSCRIBE THIS, SO IF YOU CAN TRY AND DO IT ONE AT A TIME, THAT WOULD BE REALLY HELPFUL!

*P2: But I think it's something that we should actually do.

*INT: OK SO DO YOU THINK THE BENEFITS THAT YOU WOULD ACCRUE FROM THAT WOULD BE OUTWEIGHING THE COSTS OF THE ADVERTS AND THE EVALUATION PROGRAMMES AND (..)

*P2: Definitely.

*INT: WHY? WHAT WOULD IT DO?

*P1: You might get more applicants.

*P2: Hmm, more applicants, a wider choice of (inaud)

*P1: You might get more applicants out to prove themselves (inaud)

*P3: Well, it (..) I don't know. I don't think that the way that we advertise is actually preventing that.

*P3: (inaud)

*INT: OK TRAINING. HOW IMPORTANT IS TRAINING?

*P2: It's essential. A1.

*P1: I I don't think...

*P3: ...I was going to say I have problem with training...

*P1: ...I mean how far can you train people when (inaud). You can train them a bit, on policy but ...

*P3: ...Yeah.

*P2: ...I think it's quite important. It's very important if somebody joins the company...

*P4: ...Well, I, I think it's certainly an A...

*P2: (inaud) equal opportunities policy, that (..) like racism, sexism...

*P3: ...Educated people should know that any way...

*P4: The set up of this company now, decided to make an issue of it, there are certain people in the company who WOULD need some equal opp...

*P3: ...But education wouldn't CHANGE them...

*P1: ...That's right, it wouldn't. Some people are SO...

*P3: That's what I feel with education when you're dealing with supposedly intelligent adults...

*P4: ...Well I, I, what it do would be maybe explain to them what would be expected of their performance within the company. Changing them as an individual is something else and and I mean...

*P1: ...Yeah, on that level yeah...

*P4: ...And, you know, then they can argue what business is it of a company to talk about a person's individual things but within the company, if you decided you want a certain kind of behaviour, then uhh, you may well have to invest some time in to training people, who uhh formally haven't displayed that behaviour.

*P1: So you're not trying to change attitudes you're just trying to say...

*P4: ...Well you are in a sense.

*P3: ...It's policy though isn't it. It's back to the company policy...

*INT: ...SO WHAT WOULD YOU...

*P4: ...Yeah but you still, if you, I mean it doesn't matter, don't it? In the end if you want to adopt a policy of equal opportunities then you're going to have to make sure that everybody within the company.

*INT: OK SO YOU'VE GIVEN IN AN A, YOU'VE GIVEN IT AN A, YOU'VE GIVEN IT AN A AND YOU'VE GIVEN IT AN A AND YOU SEEM TO BE HAVING A BIT OF A DILEMMA HERE!

*P3: (LAUGHS)

*P1: I think it should be limited. Training should be limited to try and tell people what the company policy is and that's the end of the training. Not like trying to change people's attitude. I don't think you can do that.

*INT: SO JUST TRAINING IN THE POLICY. AND THAT'S IMPORTANT?

*P1: Yeah.

*P4: I would hope, I would hope that there...

*P2: ...(inaud)...

*P4: ...I would hope though that you would...

*P2: ...(inaud)...

*P3: ...Yeah, it's not a major issue...

*INT: ARE YOU ARGUING FOR LIKE TRAINING IN ATTITUDE CHANGE OR SOMETHING?

*P4: Well I think it does come into that. I think people's attitudes in the way they relate to things like equal opportunities (..) I mean

*INT: ...(INAUD)...

*P4: ...It's no good, it's no good having somebody uhh saying (..) ohh, literally all right this is an XYZ person and they go in that...

*P2: ...We'd need a resident psychiatrist (laughs) (inaud).

*INT: ALL RIGHT, CAN WE SPEED THROUGH THESE A LITTLE BECAUSE WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME. FORUM FOR DISCUSSION, HOW IMPORTANT IS THAT?

INAUDIBLE DISCUSSION FOLLOWS AS TO THE PRIORITY LISTING OF THE REMAINING PHRASES. - SEE THE LISTS TAKEN FROM THE CHARTS IN MAIN TEXT.

*P4: Is this the, when, did you say that, if you've got, if you feel you're being discriminated against?

*P3: That's the follow up isn't it?

*P2: You should feel (..) no there should be a forum for you to go and air your views. The follow up is umm ...

*P1: ...Within a company or...

*P2: Within a company...

*P4: ...Well then that's, well then that's...

*P2: ...You should feel...

*P4: ...A or A1...

*P2: ...Quite free to go and say look I think (inaud)...

*P3: ...Oh sorry I thought that was follow up, well then...

*P2: ...Follow up was then that if that case is (inaud)...

*P3: ...Well then they're both A1 then aren't they. That's (..) that's something that someone's got to do something positive about.

***INT: IT'S LIKE A GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE THEN IS IT, THE FOLLOW UP?**

***P1: Hmm hmm (inaud)...**

***P3: ...So then I can make a (inaud)...**

***P1: ...But if you go for an interview and you get rejected and you want to follow that up I think you're a bit stuffed then aren't you.**

***INT: PARDON?**

***P1: If you go for an interview and you get rejected and you think it's based on race or sex or disability, you know, how do you (..) (inaud)...**

***P4: Well no, you do it...**

***P2: ...(inaud) legislation (inaud)...**

***P1: Oh I thought that's what you meant.**

***P4: No.**

***P1: Umm that's right. So forum for discussion (inaud) it's just an A1 I think.**

***INT: SO WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU MEAN BY A FORUM FOR DISCUSSION THEN? ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT JUST A GROUP OF PEOPLE THAT MEET TO DISCUSS OR?**

***P2: No, I mean I mean, on a general concept that you should feel uhh quite free to go and discuss issues with who ever.**

***INT: SO ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT HAVING EQUALITY PEOPLE TO ...?**

***P3: ...(inaud)...**

***INT: SOMEBODY WHO'S IN CHARGE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES?**

***P1: Yeah.**

***INT: OK WELL THAT'S PRETTY MUCH IT. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE.**

***P3: As I say, they're all things that are obviously essential. If you want to make it work then they've all got to be essential because if you fall down on one of them (..) if the law wasn't there to back you up, there'd be no point.**

***INT: OK IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU'RE BURNING TO SAY THAT WE HAVEN'T COVERED?**

***P1: I'm quite concerned that we are, I think we are quite an equal opportunities employer but if we adopted that it would cost us a lot of work (inaud) .We're only quite, only about twenty people in the company so recruitment is a bit of an effort anyway.**

***P2: (inaud)**

***P1: But it's an industry like that as well isn't it. It's a white male industry isn't it.**

***INT: SO THAT'S IT? WE'VE GOT COSTS HERE AND BENEFITS HERE. ANYMORE FOR ANY MORE? NO? OK WE'LL LEAVE IT THERE THEN. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.**

FOCUS GROUP CONCLUDED.

PARTICIPANTS NOS. 5, 6, 7 & 8 FOCUS GROUP

TRANSCRIPT

***P7: When you're talking about discrimination, a lot of it depends on the person. If you're oversensitive, you tend to take a joke as discrimination, about sex or age. I mean I get a lot of jokes about my age but it doesn't worry me. It depends a lot on the person concerned. Or I can take it as a joke, turn it into a joke and take offence and state it as discrimination. But I have known people who, as I say, seem to take it not as a joke but take offence at it.**

***INT: THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT I WANT TO HEAR ABOUT: WHAT PEOPLE THINK THE MAIN ISSUES ARE, OR WHETHER PEOPLE ARE BEING OVERSENSITIVE, WHETHER THERE IS AN ISSUE HERE OR NOT, OR WHETHER IT'S BEING TAKEN TOO SERIOUSLY OR NOT. I HAVE A VAGUE OUTLINE OF TOPICS THAT I'D LIKE TO TRY AND COVER. I WON'T TAKE TOO LONG. THERE ARE A FEW THINGS THAT I WOULD LIKE TRY AND LIST OUT ON THE FLIPCHARTS BUT I'LL TELL YOU MORE WHEN WE GET TO THAT POINT. SAY ANYTHING THAT COMES TO YOUR MIND. FEEL FREE TO CONTRADICT YOURSELF, TO SAY SOMETHING CONTROVERSIAL, OR TO CONTRADICT EACH OTHER. I'M NOT HERE TO JUDGE OR TO LEAD THE CONVERSATION PARTICULARLY, JUST TO FACILITATE YOUR IDEAS, SO ANYTHING THAT SPRINGS INTO YOUR MIND, FEEL FREE TO SAY IT. IF YOU WISH TO LEAVE AT ANY POINT, YOU ARE FREE TO DO SO.**

WHAT I'M TRYING TO LOOK AT IS THE LINK BETWEEN ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES: HOW IT AFFECTS YOUR QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE; IF IT HAS ANY IMPACT OR NOT.

I'LL START WITH THE MONITORING FORMS. WHAT IS YOUR VIEW OF MONITORING PRACTICES? HAVE YOU FILLED IN ANY FORMS THAT HAVE BEEN IRRELEVANT TO YOU, FOR EXAMPLE?

***P8: What at (company name)?**

***INT: ANYWHERE. YOU DON'T HAVE TO USE JUST YOUR EXPERIENCE FROM HERE.**

***P8: What I would say...(Interrupted)**

***P6: Most occupation forms seem to have some questions to find out who you are at the end of the day**

***P8: Yeah, well mostly the policy, most companies have an equal opportunities section at the back and they state that they are an equal opportunities employer. I think they do that to cover themselves and also they do that so that they can, if they want to increase or decrease their quota, because most companies now do. Companies have got, you know, certain percentages of ethnic minorities they want to employ, or disabled perhaps, in their PR policies. Then they can put their facts on the back page, and if you're one with a disability that's a tick on the disability listing so they can say they employ 5% disabled and that's a start.**

***INT: SO YOU CAN SEE A REASON BEHIND IT?**

***P8: Yeah, it's a quick of doing it for them. They haven't got to meet you in the Interview and say, right, he's a one-legged lesbian or something that we're employing and that would be a few ticks then!**

***P6: But that's something that you don't normally get asked, is it, if you're gay or whatever, so that's still kept out of the issue.**

***P7: But that should be nothing to do with it.**

***P6: But you are normally asked as to whether you're married or not. And if you're a woman, for joining pension schemes and things like that, you've always got to produce your marriage certificate whereas a bloke wouldn't have to.**

***P8: That is funny, isn't it.**

***P7: Don't they? I thought they did.**

***P8: Do they? I lost mine on the second day!**

***INT: DO YOU OBJECT TO BEING ASKED THESE QUESTIONS THEN?**

***P6: No I don't particularly object but it just seems a bit strange that they need to know for a woman but not for a man, 'cos it's not equal then is it because you're saying that the man's pension is possibly more important and, you know, is the woman's actually essential or something.**

***P8: I'm a bit perplexed about that really. I'd be pretty pissed off if I was asked to produce my marriage certificate and my wife wasn't. Perhaps it might be something legal, the way the pension laws still work because I think there is some differential still. Perhaps - but I'm not that sure.**

***P6: We're certainly taxed differently.**

***P8: Yeah, I mean I've given Ang my married man's allowance because I wasn't employed when we got married so she's got the man's, the large, the man's, the married man's allowance. I'm trying to get that back but it's not worth anything anyway.**

***INT: SO CAN I JUST TAKE IT BACK AGAIN BECAUSE WE'RE GOING INTO PENSION STRUCTURES HERE, BACK TO WHEN YOU'VE ACTUALLY HAD TO APPLY FOR JOBS, WHEN YOU FILL IN THESE FORMS. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO SAY ABOUT THE CONTENT OF THEM OR WHETHER YOU THINK IT'S NECESSARY TO MONITOR.**

***P7: Not about the contents of the actual form. It's when they advertise for things and then they say only experienced people may apply. The point is you can't get the experience unless you've had the job and a great many people who might not be experienced but are able to pick a job up quickly and would then, could get the experience. But until you get the experience you can't get the job and until you get the job you can't get the experience. That is the only thing. And a great many firms do this and say only experienced people may apply.**

***P8: Well they do that, don't they, as a self-sorting mechanism because they don't want to have 400 applicants. They don't want 400 applicants so they always. I mean you**

must remember I expect about 25% of jobs advertised, they're not real jobs anyway. They've probably been taken in-house by someone else but they've got to be advertised for their company policy.

*P7: Oh yeah, I know that.

*P8: So 25% of your job applications are going in the bin immediately because there's not a job there. And then the other 60% when they're asking, they always ask for the guy that just left because he would be the perfect chap. And what they do, they always ask, you've got to be able to you know, programme in C+, speak Swahili, do flip-flaps, you know, whatever.

*P7: Unless, it is slightly discriminating...

*P8: And then they only get 20 application forms that can do that, don't they.

*P7: ..Discriminates against unexperienced people.

*P8: But there's 3 million inexperienced, there's 3 million of us.

***INT: SO YOU DO SEE THAT AS A FORM OF DISCRIMINATION?**

*P8: A slight one, yes, because obviously you can't get experience 'til you get into a job, so it is very slightly.

***INT: OK, SO CAN I PICK UP ON THE DISCRIMINATION PART. DO YOU THINK ANY OTHER GROUPS OF PEOPLE ARE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST IN THE WORKPLACE IN GENERAL.**

*P5: Anybody outside the age of 25 to 35! Already I'm discriminated against at 37. It's amazing, I hadn't really thought of it before.

*P8: Again they're always looking for the guy that just left, aren't they. They're always looking for the guy that just left.

*P5: People are probably interviewing and an aspect of us feels threatened, expecting at 35, you want somebody dynamic, you know, who you can tell what to do, with

sufficient experience to be say over the age of 25 so who knows a bit about it and knows how to use it effectively.

*P8: Well I think they may lose a senior engineer because he's gone to another position. He may of left on £30K, gone to a job on £35 but they only want to pay £25. Right, so they all want to pay a guy who's senior, I suppose coming up to his 40s, without a family, so they'll reduce the age gap to try and cut it down so even though you may get as competent an employee they feel that your aspirations on your salary would be lower and so they always try..

***INT: SO IS DISCRIMINATION JUST A FORM OF ECONOMIC CONTROL?**

*P8: I think everyone, I think, apart from Internal prejudices that everyone carries around in their baggage anyway, I think most discrimination when applying for jobs is all governed by finance. They always want to pay the least. They want to get the best guys for the least money on the worst terms.

***INT: BUT MAYBE THE CHEAPEST LABOUR WOULD BE PROVIDED BY THOSE GROUPS THAT ARE CURRENTLY UNDER-REPRESENTED. WHY THEN DO WE NOT SEE POSITIONS FILLED BY THESE PEOPLE? I WOULD IMAGINE, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT PEOPLE FROM AN ETHNIC MINORITY MAY HAVE LOWER EXPECTATIONS OF SALARY.**

*P8: Well you've still got to get someone to do the job. The most expensive thing is...To pay someone £4 thousand a year more when they're being paid £20, is nothing if they do the job rather than if they don't do the job. They've still actually got to rock up and do the 40 hours a week of practical work for you, so there is a line where you will have diminishing returns.

***INT: BUT YOU STILL SEE IT PURELY IN ECONOMIC TERMS?**

*P8: I think it's all done in that way. I don't think there's any benevolence anywhere.

***INT: DOES ANYONE ELSE HAVE AN OPINION ON THIS?**

*P5: I think older people would be willing to take less money if they can get a job.

***P6:** Yeah, but it depends on their mortgages and things like that. If they've paid their mortgage up or whatever, I'm sure they can take less money. Or if they've got a wife or a husband who's got the better paid job then they can be prepared to take less money.

***P8:** But the perception of the advert wouldn't, expect the person, they want a real go-getter, between 25 and 35 and if they get a guy that's gone, who's a chap who's gone and got and he's aged 41 and he's very experienced, they wouldn't even interview him because he'd rock into the interview and ask for £8000 more.

***INT:** SO IS EXPERIENCE WORTH PAYING FOR OR NOT?

***P8:** I think it is worth paying for. I think it's probably the most underrated asset.

***P6:** I don't think this company is very good at paying for experience because I've taken quite a large drop in salary coming from another company within the last couple of months, really.

***P7:** But that was your choice, wasn't it.

***P6:** No it wasn't choice. I was pushed to do it many ways because I hadn't had much choice. My husband has been working down here since May, so I needed a job. So you look around and you get offered a job so you say, right, fine I can take it. I'm not actually losing money because Matthew has got a bigger salary or whatever, but, if I'd stayed with (company name) for example, I'd have carried on moving up the salary scale. Things like that.

***P8:** But then they'll use that against you won't they.

***P6:** Yeah, some companies are basically, seems to have, the smallest amount they can get away with, definitely.

***P8:** Which is all business, to keep costs down.

***INT:** SO IS THIS DISCRIMINATION ONLY TAKING PLACE AT THE LEVEL OF SELECTION THEN?

***P8:** No I think the moment you're in a small to medium size enterprise, like we are now, I don't think, there's not really a specific career path you can get on. You'll get thrust responsibility if you're prepared to take it but your salary will not go up with that because they know how much it costs to move. So they'll build into your package the inertia factor of how much it will cost for you to go and so there has been significant occasions here where people will be in charge of other people that have come in on more money because at a time we've had a need, and the market rate has been higher than his salary but a subordinate has actually come in above him, even though, because the open market rate is higher than what they can get away with paying here because obviously there is a reasonable amount of inertia to leave a position, when you've got, I mean, you know, I wouldn't want to leave unless I was going to get an increase in salary of maybe 20% with a reasonable relocation package because of the blatant cost problems. I may lose years on my pension, etc. etc. So they've got you in a Catch 22 situation, whereas if you're in a larger company, they tend to produce your - you're much less in control of what you're doing but you tend to be on. career paths.

***P6:** And also there's often more opportunity to move within a company. To do something completely different within that company and get your pay rise at the same time or whatever.

***P8:** Yeah, 'cos I mean here it's a dead man's shoes. You know you only move into dead man's shoes, or people that are obviously leaving, unless another business appears underneath you and then you get sucked up with it. If you're in a business area already and there's 3 or 4 married men above you with kids, roots here, or married women, roots here, that's it. If they're not going, you're not going.

***INT:** LET ME PICK UP ON ANY SEX DIFFERENCES HERE. DO YOU HAVE ANY WOMEN IN HIGHER LEVEL MANAGEMENT?

***P8:** Yeah, on the management team there's one, isn't there, Director of (company name).

***INT: DO YOU THINK AS EASY FOR WOMEN TO MOVE, OR FOR PEOPLE FROM MINORITY GROUPS TO MOVE WITHIN THE COMPANY AS IT IS FOR THE MAJORITY?**

***P8: This company is slightly different to a more fluid company because I mean, I think when we were made from an Association to an Independent Limited Company, the people on the management team were offered special shares, so the Directors, the major directors have a special type of share, so they own the company. So no matter what I'll ever do, you know, no matter how many times I get jobs in, I'm never going to become a director, unless I buy shares.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK THAT'S TRUE IN GENERAL TERMS, FOR OTHER ORGANISATIONS, IS IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR WOMEN TO MOVE UP?**

***P6: Yes on the whole, because I mean (company name), for example, there is nobody anywhere close to the main board who is female. There's very few people on what we call the A-list management, who are like the top management scale, I think there might be either one or two (women) world-wide. Below that you do get a lot on the Intermediate management, there's no problems there at all but I do feel that a lot of your higher management people still feel with a younger female coming in, they will say, right, she's going to get married, she's going to leave, have kids, maybe she'll only want to work part-time after that. So there is a bit of kind of discrimination there, as to how far you will get in a company like that.**

***P8: Even though they may not pay lip service to it. I think Barclays Bank got done for that didn't they? About between 5 and 10 years ago, even though they had an equal opportunity policy, once you actually looked at the statistics of standard income, standards of people coming in, O levels, A levels or degree, the women just didn't do as well as the men and they had equal....**

***P7: I think women still now and always have had to, you've got to be better at the job than a man. I mean when I worked at the police station, years ago, before women's opportunity came up, women were still doing work, there were certain women that were**

higher up but they were better than the men and you still have, I think, got to be better than the men at the job.

*P8: I think they lose out on the networking side of it because they, you know, they lose the, you know, the old boy network, you know the old boy network is the classic old school tie job but the old boy network works in all situations. You get to know people and it's all networking and contacts, whereas I think obviously if you're another sex, it's slightly more difficult for you to do that. You can't go out on the piss with the lads on a Friday and go and play squash with them or whatever, so you don't necessarily know about the opportunities. I think basically the nature of people tend to promote people, or put people up for jobs who they know.

***INT: IS IT PEOPLE THAT ARE LIKE THEM OR PEOPLE THAT THEY KNOW THAT ARE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY?**

*P8: Both the same, you know, people that they're familiar with.

*P7: People crawl quite often to get the jobs.

*P6: So I crawled to get this job then did I?

*P7: No but I do know people who have got jobs through getting in with the top manager really.

*P6: Yeah, well, I mean at (Company name) it was a case of if the senior manager knew you and knew your work, then he was very good at shouting for you, so you got your promotions. But some senior managers were hopeless and they just ignored their group completely and it was all for themselves. So I mean a lot of it does actually depend on who...

*P8: your mentor is.

*P6: Yeah.

*P8: In the (organisation name) it used to be like that because I was at base when I did my PhD at (organisation name), engineering labs in Southampton and I had all the old

stories of it and the reasons why people came in at sort of Graduate Engineer and then had meteoric rises, because they played golf with the boss. And when I was a sponsored student with [company name], I was offered a job there as a management trainee or whatever, the first thing I was told was to buy a set of golf clubs. Don't worry about your work, but a set of golf clubs, Matt. Go out and play golf.

***INT: DO YOU THINK THIS IS TYPICAL THEN? IF WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES FOR THE SEXES HERE, DO YOU THINK THE SAME SORT OF THINGS APPLY IF YOU COME FROM AN ETHNIC MINORITY GROUP, OR IF YOU'RE DISABLED, OR IF THERE IS SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT YOU FROM YOUR AVERAGE EMPLOYEE?**

***P6: I think disabled is actually a very difficult one. Because, I mean, somewhere like here, it would be just about impossible for anything because it's all steps and everything, so if anyone is actually wheelchair bound, yes, they could possibly work on the ground floor but you wouldn't be able to do any lab work, because you wouldn't be able to get the access into the lab. Particularly safely anyway. Things like that.**

***INT: IN TERMS OF PEOPLE BEING DIFFERENT IN TERMS OF DISABILITY, IT DOESN'T JUST MEAN WHEELCHAIR BOUND, BUT ALSO PEOPLE DIFFERENT IN TERMS OF RACE OR AGE. YOU WERE SAYING THAT WOMEN HAVE TO BETTER AT A JOB THAN MEN. DO YOU THINK THAT WOULD BE TRUE FOR PEOPLE FROM ETHNIC MINORITIES?**

***P7: Possibly, I don't know. Although now we're sort of over discriminating in a lot of ways. For them, because I read in the paper, this was only what I read in the paper, some bloke, he was British, white British, and he was putting in application forms in his own name and also as though he was an Asian person, and every one of the Asian ones he got an interview but he didn't on his British one. We're over discriminating.**

***P8: But that's looking straight off the statistics on the back page, that's looking straight off the statistics on the back page, they've got to..**

***INT: THERE HAS BEEN A ANOTHER STUDY AS WELL WHERE SOMEBODY HAS USED AN ENGLISH NAME AND THEN AN AFRICAN NAME, AND THE**

AFRICAN NAME APPLICATIONS DON'T GET PICKED AND THE ENGLISH NAMES DO.

*P7: Well, he got the Interviews and they offered a couple of jobs, but that was on an Asian name.

*INT: DO YOU THINK STEREOTYPES OF ASIAN PEOPLE WORKING HARDER, OR BLACK PEOPLE BEING LAZY OR WHITE PEOPLE BEING....

*P7: That depends...

*P6: They do (inaud) that's the name on it I guess.

*P8: I think there are, I think there are.

*P7: (inaud) Nationalities do (inaud)

*P8: You must remember that the first person that you see, the first person that sees your CV or your application form, is the lowest clerk in the personnel department. And she's got a pile of application forms there. And the best way of filing, getting rid of half of it, is you pick the first half up and chuck it in the bin. And so you..

*P7: I don't know, nowadays they put them in a computer thing don't they. Computers...

*P8: They won't put mine in a computer, they wouldn't be able to read my writing.

*INT: CAN I PICK UP ON SOMETHING ELSE THAT YOU'VE SAID THEN, ABOUT HOW PEOPLE ARE OVER PICKING FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES - THAT'S POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION, WHICH IS ILLEGAL BASICALLY UNLESS YOU'RE DOING IT AT THE APPLICATION LEVEL.

*P7: Well they did suggest that didn't they, after those riots?

*INT: WELL YOU CAN ENCOURAGE UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS TO APPLY FOR CERTAIN JOBS IF THAT GROUP HAS BEEN UNDERREPRESENTED FOR THE LAST 12 MONTHS BUT AT THE POINT OF

SELECTION YOU CAN'T. IN THE US YOU CAN, THEY HAVE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, WITH TARGETS AND QUOTAS AND PERCENTAGES OF THE WORKFORCE FOR CERTAIN GROUPS.

*P5: Same in South Africa, same in South Africa.

*INT: WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS? DO YOU THINK YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO POSITIVELY DISCRIMINATE?

*P7: No, I just think they should pick the person most capable of doing the job, whether they're black or white or whatever, they should choose the person....

*P6: ...You always feel that there should be a screen, you know when someone actually comes for Interview, you should always be nameless, you should just have a number or something like that, so that they don't even know who you are. They don't know as to whether you're male or female. They should have a voice thing so that it changes, so you can't tell whether it's female or male again. Because then you can find out as to how good somebody is because it should really count on how good that person is. It shouldn't count on anything else at all.

*P8: Yeah but the thing is, the majority of your contact with people, you know, the majority, of the way in which you work with someone else is mostly to do with communication skills and are you attracted.....

*P6:Yes, but I'm saying that you're

*P8: ...Most of your communication skills, a lot of it is your visual appearance, irrelevant of how technically brilliant you are. I mean I knew guys that were technically brilliant at [company name] and they were a complete waste of time. They were brilliant at doing what they did, but they couldn't communicate with anyone.

*P6: Yeah, OK but I'm not saying that for your Interview it's got to be completely technical, you've still got to get somebody who's communicating well, haven't you. Especially if you can't see them, you've got to communicate extra well!

***P8:** But the majority of communication is, you know, that's why phone conversation is so much shorter than you know face to face conversation because you communicate, you know, you lose about 80% of the mechanism for communication on the phone than you do. If you wave your arms about you drop the phone don't you! I mean, that's the end of that!

***INT:** OK SO WE'VE GOT A NO VOTE FOR POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION ACROSS THE TABLE THERE, DO WE HAVE ANY...

***P8:** ...No I think positive discrimination is good for the society. It might not be great for the job and the individual but if, I think there is a need for discrimination because there are large differentials in society, then I think that positive discrimination is a tool that perhaps should be used at the right time.

***INT:** TO DO WHAT?

***P8:** Well, let's say, if the stereotype works the other way, let's say we all think Afro-Caribbean males are completely useless at doing technical work and they start to believe it as well because none of them get engineering jobs or jobs as doctors and such like. We tend to alienate a significant section of society and you know, you don't do yourself any favours in the long run. You tend to have an alienated section of society which perhaps won't behave very well. And that costs us far more in the long term than actually having a, I mean that's what happened in the States. They knocked the black civil rights on the head but have been increasing the middle class of coloureds in the States even though the majority of blacks probably aren't that much better off than they were in the 50s.

***INT:** SO ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT A SOCIAL ENGINEERING THING RATHER THAN ORGANISATION...

***P8:** Yeah, fair enough it might not be better for the company because you may have to employ someone who's slightly not as good at the job.

***P7:** So are you agreeing with the police when they made their entrance examination slightly easier so that more black people could get in. Do you think that is right?

*P8: I think that is right, it's a mechanism you should be able to use at the right, at certain times in history, because I think that we are now a multicultural state and we are inherently prejudiced against each other because of the way we're made. Now you can either live with it...

*P7: ...no prejudice, it was just that black people weren't getting through the entrance examination so they've made them easier, they're now getting more...

*P5: ...I would question

*P8: ...I'm not saying that, I'm not saying it's right that they should be able to not get, I'm saying that the way in which to make everyone feel a little bit more, a bit more that you know, everyone's the same, is that, you know, all minorities have got people to look up to, people that have made it.

***INT: SO IT'S PUTTING PEOPLE IN THOSE POSITIONS?**

*P8: Alright, fair enough, you might only have 2 black superintendents in the country but you've still got 2 blacks who are superintendents not none. Fair enough they may not be just as good as a white one, or a female one, or whatever but...

*P6: They may be better though.

*P8: They may be better. You don't know.

***INT: THEY MAY HAVE TO BE BETTER TO GET THERE AT ALL..**

*P7: ...But then in that case they....

*P8: But, but that's right, but I mean but if you think, let me try and, I mean, I'm just trying to put, I mean I'm in, I'm in the mass pool aren't I of white, a white young male. So I've, you know, I'm probably the least prejudiced against.

***INT: DO YOU THINK THERE WILL BE A BACKLASH BY WHITE MALES,
WHITE MIDDLE-CLASS MALES, IF YOU LIKE,**

*P7: Yes eventually.

*P8: Well,

*INT: IF YOU STARTED TO TAKE (INAUD)...

*P5: To take (inaud) away, I think there is an undercurrent there, if you think about it....

*P8: But it's for, yeah but there's reasons, reasons, I mean I think people should be explained why you use positive discrimination. I don't think it should be used all the time, I think it should be used at certain times in history to try and equalise...

*P5: I mean it's the same with the police force; I don't know what the entrance examinations for the police force actually entail, what sort of questions there are, but I mean...

*P8: But, it used to be the opposite way around, if you were coloured you just didn't get in. It just wasn't...

*P7: Yeah, you did get in if you could pass the exam. The whole point is we've got to educate them that bit better.

*P8: I know quite a few policemen and I wouldn't like to have been a coloured policeman at the training college with them.

*P6: I mean some things count as well - the area of the country that you're talking about is going to count a lot, because where I was living before, you've got practically no coloured people at all. Yes, you did in the city, like Liverpool and Manchester but between, there's practically nobody, so, there's no point in having positive discrimination saying we have got to have an ethnic minority person in this job, because there's nobody there to start with. You're actually pulling somebody into the community who doesn't belong.

*INT: SO ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT HAVING...

*P6: You've got to look at, umm, what the community is like to start off with, in some ways.

*INT: SO REPRESENTING THE COMMUNITY?

***P6: Yeah, you've got to do that, as much as positive discrimination against somebody who doesn't belong in the community.**

***P8: But the problem is, is where you get a large, a very high percentage of ethnic minority, policed by a very high percentage of Caucasian males**

***P6: Yeah exactly, that's...**

***P8: and that's where you get massive differentials, so all**

***P6: That's, that's when it**

***P8: all the coppers are white and all the people being policed are black.**

***P6: That's obviously when it's wrong, to have...I mean then, you almost, you do need to go for the, the coloured cop or whatever, because then it makes sense but it doesn't in certain areas at all.**

***INT: OK, SO CAN I MOVE THIS ON A STEP THEN? WE'RE TALKING ABOUT HAVING A REPRESENTATIVE SERVICE FOR THE COMMUNITY. WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF HAVING A REPRESENTATIVE WORKFORCE?**

***P8: I think you've got the understanding. I think most white males in the police force are all, in all aspects, were incredibly ignorant of everyone else's cultures. I think there are significant (inaud) I mean, I am.**

***INT: SO, INCREASED AWARENESS WOULD YOU SAY THEN, OR?**

***P8: Well, yeah, if you think, you have increased appreciation of it and you're not so unfamiliar with people.**

***INT: SO WHAT ADVANTAGES DO YOU THINK THAT COULD BRING TO AN ORGANISATION, IF YOU HAVE AN INCREASED FAMILIARITY AND INCREASED AWARENESS OF OTHER CULTURES?**

*P8: Well if you ever had to do, if you ever have clients that were of another race, perhaps you wouldn't feel so uncomfortable because you'd know people of other races already.

*P7: That is the only benefit that is, is for the fact that they can be all black people. If they're black, they can be with black people,

*P8: Well I mean, are you, but if you feel more comfortable

*P7: it doesn't actually benefit the police themselves, it just benefits the ones, the people in the community....

*P8: Well I'm not, I'm not, yeah, but undoubtedly black policemen probably have experienced racism in their own private life, so they would appreciate,...

*P7: Yeah but they do...the ones that are in

*P8: It's like having having female policemen dealing with rapists, isn't it, rape victims.

*P7: Yeah but they do, the ones that are in the police force, they experience. The ones I understand are in the police force experience racism from their own race. They don't like black men around the police force and they experience..

*P8: Well, you always, yeah but I mean I'm not great friends with most white policemen (laughs). They don't tend to be the most trustful lot. (laughs)

***INT: SO WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER SIDE? ARE THERE ANY DISADVANTAGES, ANY COSTS, TO HAVING A REPRESENTATIVE WORKFORCE?**

*P7: There shouldn't be, as long as they do their job as well as anybody else.

*P8: I think there is costs in policing that. I'm sure, you know, that in calibrating, in correlating the results and doing this type of work, to see, you know, essentially your funding, and people like your funding and other (inaud) like your funding to see how these changes in our behaviour will affect our global behaviour and our global well-

being. So I think there will be a cost there but obviously there will be a benefit, a larger benefit.

***INT: SO DO YOU THINK THE COSTS OUTWEIGH THE BENEFIT OR THE BENEFITS OUTWEIGH THE COSTS?**

***P8: I think the benefits probably outweigh the costs if you can reduce racial tension and increase more the (pause)**

***INT: SO TAKE IT OUTSIDE OF RACISM IN THE POLICE FORCE, CAN YOU THINK OF ANY ADVANTAGES OR DISADVANTAGES OF HAVING A DIVERSE WORKFORCE OVER HAVING ALL WHITE MALES?**

***P8: I can't really see how any advantages of having all white males in the police force really.**

***INT: BUT WHAT ABOUT OUTSIDE OF THE POLICE FORCE?**

***P6: It probably keeps the language a bit cleaner (laughs).**

***INT: YEAH?**

***P8: I don't know about that! (laughs)**

***P6: It does sometimes.**

***P7: Don't think the police behave like those do on the shows on the television, because they don't. They don't stand there shouting at one another and using bad language.**

***P6: No, it's not necessarily just the fact that there's a woman there. If that woman is strong enough, she will complain about what language somebody else is using, if they're using really bad language. And people start to learn. If somebody won't tolerate it then.....**

***P8: They have to swap offices!**

***P6: Yeah! (laughs) It doesn't, it doesn't actually. In some ways, that doesn't really matter as to whether its male or female, it's the type ...**

***P7: ...Some of the females can use worse language than the men! (laughs)**

***P6: Yes I know**

***INT: SO WHAT ABOUT WOMEN IN A STANDARD COMPANY - OR ANY KIND OF AN ORGANISATION RATHER THAN A PUBLIC SERVICE ORGANISATION?**

***P7: I can't see any benefits at all except that as long as they're better at the job than the men...**

***P8: ...I think in open, that that the geography of the offices make a huge difference. If you've got open plan offices where everyone can hear everyone else, you don't, I think the language is toned down.**

***P7: Maybe.**

***P8: Whereas if you've got, you know, a closed door, then you can swear at your colleague about another colleague, you do (laughs) I do! (laughs)**

***INT: CAN IT TAKE IT DOWN ANOTHER DIRECTION THEN, IF YOU'VE GOT A WORKFORCE THAT'S LIKE A TEAM, A PRODUCTION TEAM OR SOMETHING THAT'S MADE UP OF MEN AND WOMEN, YOUNG PEOPLE, OLD PEOPLE, BLACK PEOPLE, WHITE PEOPLE, JUST A WHOLE MIX, DO YOU THINK THAT GROUP OF PEOPLE WILL OFFER MORE IDEAS BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT THE MIX OF PEOPLE, OR DO YOU THINK THEY WILL NOT OFFER AS MANY IDEAS BECAUSE THEY DON'T WORK TOGETHER SO WELL?**

***P6: I think they should work as well. I mean where I came from, I was actually working in a department, and all the men in it, because it was all men, were as old as my dad. And it meant that there was an incredible pool of experience, so if I was stuck about anything, there was, you know, 5 or 6 people who I could speak to, because they'd done it all before. And I think, you know, when you have got the people with the experience and you've got the inexperienced, the inexperienced sometimes has a brilliant idea and then talks to the experienced person and they say, 'no you can't do**

this, but you could say do it this way instead', and I think then, especially if you've got people who are prepared to listen, because I mean sometimes they say 'oh, young people, no good, they don't listen, they're always kind of running off and doing something or other', but if you have got people who are prepared to listen to the people with experience, you actually get a better kind of mix of things. You will get the new innovations and things like that because everyone will work together and you will get the ideas and the experience, and working them together you'll get the finished product which will (pause) you know.

*P8: I think it does depend on the product though.

*P6: Oh yeah.

*P8: It does depend on it, I mean, if you've got, and and it depends on the number of people. I mean you do need a significant amount of experience, I mean that's one thing we lose here. We have quite a high staff turnover, so the moment someone gets good at something, they tend to go because you know by the time they do three or four years and they've hit, they suddenly realise they're on

*P5: A plateau

*P8: Yeah, they suddenly realise that they're not going to get a career really in a small company, they're good at what they do, they've got some expertise in something, and they start looking about for jobs for a significant step change, salary and career. And so you will lose that. And if you continually have that, I mean this is the bane of all small companies is high turnover, because you lose your core expertise and you keep on having to retrain your engineer and that's very expensive.

***INT: SO WE HAVE THE DIMENSION OF EXPERIENCE, ARE THERE ANY OTHER DIMENSIONS THAT YOU THINK WOULD ADD TO A GROUP OR DETRACT FROM A GROUP, LIKE HAVING MALES AND FEMALES (INAUD), DO YOU THINK THAT WOULD MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE?**

*P6: I don't think that matters. It shouldn't make any difference. I mean sometimes you end up with people who refuse to work with them. Those people are beginning to disappear because they haven't got any choice.

*P5: It depends what you're trying to do.

*P6: Well we had some before.

*P5: If we were a construction company for instance and we had to go out and build the hotel over the road, we would need a different mix of people than we would be talking about sitting here designing the next plastic telephone or whatever. Because you sit there and think, right, when we've finished talking about it, someone's going to have to go and build that thing over there, because it means you're going to have to lump bricks around and mortar and windows and things, or do you spend the money up front and have some mechanical device which enables you to do it. So you might have somebody about my size in weight, well is he going to be good at lumping bricks, or this guy down the road, Barry, who's six foot five and god knows what else, he can lift twice as many bricks as me, in which case I'd be discriminated against. .(inaud)

*INT: BUT DISCRIMINATION IS

*P8: I'd say discretion I think is (inaud)....

*INT: VERY INDUSTRY SPECIFIC

*P5: Yeah, I think

*P8: I think discrimination is across the board throughout society, in everything we do

*P5: It's classless

*P6: Yeah

*P8: In everything we do. You get on the bus and you see where there are chairs open and you look around and you see the people that you'd rather sit next to and you make a massive mini-quick decision, no I'm not going to sit next to him, I'll sit next to her; or sit next to that kid there because I'm not going to feel so threatened or whatever. Or

you walk into a pub in the middle of Glasgow, you open the door and you go, I'm not going in there. So you discriminate against those people!

***INT: WHAT BASIS ARE YOU MAKING THESE DECISIONS ON THOUGH? WHAT MAKES YOU GO AND SIT WITH SOMEONE IN A CANTEEN RATHER THAN ANOTHER.**

***P5: So many different things, that's that's the trouble. The bus analogy's very good. You might see an old man in a raincoat right, in one seat, an attractive young girl in the other, now...**

***P8: ...I know where Mark would sit, he'd sit on the girl! (laughs)...**

***P5: ...No, well no, you don't, you'd probably sit there and look at somebody who you would classify as normal. You don't want to sit against the old man. You'd like to sit against the attractive girl but you don't because you know if you sit against her, she thinks you're sitting next to her because you want to chat her up. Maybe that particular morning you can't be bothered with the agro, so you want to sit somewhere out of the way and just get to work.**

***INT: SO YOU WANT TO SIT WITH SOMEONE THAT'S NORMAL?**

***P5: Yeah, but the next day...**

***P8: ...a familiar stranger...**

***P5: ...the next day the sun's shining, you think, I feel like a real good mood, I'm going to sit next to her today, I'm going to make polite conversation because I fancy, I fancy having a chat.**

***INT: ALRIGHT THEN, CAN I EXTEND THAT THEN AND TAKE IT BACK TO THE WORKPLACE AND TALK ABOUT PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT RACES. WOULD YOU FIND IT EASIER TO SPEAK WITH SOMEBODY OF YOUR OWN RACE OR WOULD YOU SEE IT AS A CHALLENGE TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE OF A DIFFERENT RACE, DO YOU THINK OF IT TWO DIFFERENT THINGS OR AS THE SAME THING?**

*P8: I think it's totally one...

*P5: ...As long as I can communicate with them, I do not have a problem, you know...

*P7: As long as you can understand them it doesn't really matter...

*P5: You know you might get somebody, we all have language problems, I mean I've got an accent but I don't know it because it's the way I talk. If you get someone going "eh man, get down" (in a Jamaican accent) such and such, by the time you've cut through he's actually on about, the next time you talk to him you know exactly what he means.

*INT: SO ARE YOU SEEING THIS AS A THEM AND US OR WE'RE...

*P5: ...No, not at all. I quite like talking like them sometimes, if you can get on alright, a bit of my language goes his way and a bit of his language comes my way

*P8: I think it does, I think you are bound to be more at ease initially with someone of the same peer group, whatever you want to describe it socially or whatever, because it takes a whole area of conversation, a politically sensitive area of conversation out of the equation. You haven't got to worry about anything.

*INT: WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU FEEL MORE AT EASE THOUGH, IF YOU HAD TO THINK, IS IT SOMEBODY OF MY OWN AGE, SOMEONE OF MY OWN EDUCATION, SOMEONE OF MY OWN RACE, SOMEBODY OF MY SEX, WHAT ROUTE WOULD YOU AFFILIATE YOURSELF BY?

*P8: I think it would be a, I think it would be very difficult to say. I think obviously, I think race would have, would be the biggest flag but you can have, you can have, education perhaps would be, you know, you could feel slightly, you could perhaps feel slightly inferior to someone you thought that, you know, private school and (inaud) had £30,000 spent on his, you know, A level education, you think, ooh, he's going to be, he's going to be well sharp isn't he, or whatever, and you feel a little bit...

*P5: ...No

***P7: That wouldn't worry me in the slightest.**

***INT: NO?**

***P7: As long as I could communicate with them...**

***P8: ...That's what I'm worried about - I find out how much I don't know! (laughs)
(inaud)**

***P7: In this case, in this case, I would like to say to Glaswegians that I cannot understand them!**

***P6: Yeah, they talk too fast normally.**

***INT: COMMUNICATION THEN?**

***P7: It's just communication. As long as I can communicate, understand them..**

***P6: I think it's easier to work with somebody if you've got some common, common kind of thing or, I mean talking to people, if you can find something that you know you're both interested in, it's so much easier to talk to that person, than to some people that you don't know anything about at all.**

***INT: YEAH...**

***P5: ...I think it's common values as well. I think that's important. You know some people sort of say 'guess what, tonight I'm going out with Felicity and John. We're meeting, we're having friends, we're going out, we're going to have a little drinkies' (in a posh upper-class English voice) , and I'm instantly turned off. I think why don't you go into the garage and do something constructive! You know. (laughter)**

***INT: SO IF YOU HAD A MIX OF PEOPLE AT WORK, THAT WOULD GIVE YOU EXPERIENCE, SO YOU INSTANTLY WOULD HAVE SOME COMMON GROUND. WOULD YOU LIKE TO WORK WITH PEOPLE LIKE THAT SO THAT YOU DO LEARN ABOUT DIFFERENT SORTS OF PEOPLE?**

***P7:** I suppose we do have to here, 'cos you have to go where they tell you to go, whichever office they tell you to go.

***INT:** BUT IN AN IDEAL WORLD, WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO WORK WITH SIMILAR PEOPLE?

***P5:** You don't get much experience if, if, it's a bit like Groundhog Day, isn't it. Everybody is the same. The nice thing about working here is they could turn around and say, right, next week you're in Japan for a week, and you don't say, oh sorry I can't go, I don't like Japan, you know. You'd go there and make the most of it and you'd be forced to communicate with people from a completely different background. Mainly the only thing that you do have to compromise...

***P8:** ...You mean like eating cold fish in Japan!

***P5:** Yeah, I don't want that, yeah. By the way, I'm not used to taking my shoes off.

***P6:** I know you have to be very careful, yeah you have to be very careful with Japanese. Certain...

***P5:** ...Because of their culture.

***P6:** Yeah but there's cultural differences. When you don't understand the cultural, you know, the culture, it's very difficult to know as to how you should behave. I mean, my kind of thing would be, I'd say, right I'm English, I'm going to act as if I'm English. I'm not going to do all these little bows and, you know, looking at your business cards properly, and all sorts of things like this, which is what you're supposed to do with the Japanese. But, you know, to me, I find that, that's completely false. So long as you're polite, and you're of your own culture...

***P7:** ...That depends (pause). On the other hand.

***P6:** I mean I don't communicating with...

***P7:** That depends on whether you're going to Japan. If you go to Japan, you SHOULD behave as they expect you to...

*P8: ...I mean it is polite just to appreciate a certain, certain, obviously, you haven't got to...

*P7: ...But if you're meeting a Japanese in this country, no OK, you accept the (pause) the rules of this country.

*P6: Yeah but they still expect...

*P7: I mean the Japanese there, they don't expect it to, well I've never found it anyway, (pause) accept our culture.

*P6: It depends I think on who...

*P7: ...Well it depends on who they are, naturally.

*P8: I'd say, without a doubt, that, that they've got a very, umm

*P6: Different culture from us.

*P6, P7 & P8: (inaud)

*P8: They've got a saying in Japan (pause) for the children, they teach the kids this from about the age of four or five and it's, 'if the nail's sticking out, it needs to be driven in'. So they're rather conformist (pause) culture.

*P7: Yeah but if you go to their country, I think you should behave according to their culture.

*P6: Yeah, yeah.

*P7: For politeness. The same as in Saudi Arabia, they have lots of different rules, and if you're in their country then I accept you should behave in the way that they say...

*P6: ...But I mean...

*P7: ...But when you're over here...

*P5,6,7&8: (inaud)

*P6: Well one of my, somebody I know, his daughter went to Japan, she's tiny, she's about five feet tall. She had this enormous suitcase with her because she'd just been to Australia for four weeks. The taxi driver will not lift it into the car for her, there's just no way he'll do it, so she struggles away with it and manages to get it into the boot eventually. She's walking along the road and these Japanese men just keep walking into her. Apparently a woman should give way on the pavement to a Japanese, you know, to the men, so the men just walk straight into you. And to me that's not even common courtesy, things like that.

*P8: Yes, yeah but you must give a ...

*P7: ..Yes but if they (inaud) their country...

*P5: ...Yeah but...

*P6: ...But things like that it starts getting very very difficult...

*P7: But if they, if they did it over here, you'd be quite annoyed, to say excuse me but I...

*P8: ...Smack 'em!...

*P6: ...But I mean...

***INT: BUT BASICALLY IF YOU WORKED WITH SOMEBODY JAPANESE, THEN YOU'D BE MORE AWARE AS TO WHAT THE CULTURE WAS?**

*P6: Oh yeah.

*P5: There's always the first time for everything.

*P6: I mean I find it very...

***INT: WOULD YOU WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH DIFFERENT TYPES OF PEOPLE ?**

*P5: Yeah. To an extent it's a bit like going away on site. It's interesting for the first week or two, after that, you know, (inaud)

*P8: (inaud - agreeing with P5)

*P5: It depends whether you like a challenge or not.

*P8: (laughs) One of the, uh, one of my colleagues at college, he works for a company that makes radiators and they're owned by a Japanese multi-national, and they had, he works in Swansea, and they had a Japanese engineer over for a few months, and they took him out fishing. And, um, he got this fish and before he'd even degorged it - took the hook out - he'd cut a slice off the fish and was eating it, and it was still alive and, 'cos it was fresh. (laughter all round) And and my friend, who's a rather large lad, and he had to restrain all the other fishermen from chucking this guy in the sea! (laughs), 'cos they weren't too chuffed with him.

*P5: It is, it is difficult, I mean we had a Chinese working for us, Mr. [X], his name was, and his English was only just about understandable but technically he was very very competent. But it meant that if we wanted to do some consultancy, for instance we had a contract with [company name], I had to go with him. Not only to be able to drive him up there and drive him back but to act as a, as an intermediate, umm, so I could, if you like, be the front man and Mr [X] was the kind of technical one behind and I could translate what he was saying and eventually come up with a solution. If I'd have sent him on his own, he wouldn't have known what to do, pertinently, he wouldn't have known really how to communicate. I mean I'm not saying I knew Chinese, I didn't but I I...

*P6: ...You'd go used to him, yeah...

*P5: I knew what he was trying to get over.

*INT: YEAH.

*P5: So that, you know (pause) OK we got it...

*P6: ...It's hard work...

*P5: It was. That was (pause) that was very difficult, and when jobs came in for instance, you'd sit there and think, Bob knows how to do that and I can give that to

Andy, Mr [X], crumbs, what the heck can I give him today? You can't just give him the problems that nobody else can do, that would, (pause) very specific.

*P8: Well that was his own personal limitation on his language though wasn't it.

*P5: Yes, yeah.

*P8: I mean you're going to have that anyway aren't you.

*P7: Will you excuse me, I have to leave now.

*INT: YES OF COURSE, THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME.

*P7: OK. (P7 leaves the room)

*P8: But I think you (pause) I think we're we're all reasonably prejudiced in all aspects of our life. We all make decisions (pause) which are not really based on fact, you know, they're just sort of, (pause) instinct.

*P5: Well that's right.

*P6: Yeah, some people you instantly like or dislike, or kind of (pause)

*P8: Yeah and I think...

*P7: ...you're very wary of, you know and you don't even know why often, do you.

*P8: Yeah and I think you put, you put flags on people whatever flags you like and I think race is just another flag. And it's just a big, a bloody big flag (pause) for some people. And some people cannot step back and say well I'm (pause) we, we're, we are this way but in reality we, you know, we should, even if we're not the same, which is debatable, I think we probably are, we should be treated the same.

*INT: SO THERE IS A MOVE AT THE MOMENT, COMING OVER FROM THE US AGAIN, TO TRY AND MOVE POLICY WITHIN COMPANIES AWAY FROM JUST TAPPING SPECIFIC MINORITY GROUPS, I.E. AWAY FROM SEX AND RACE, INTO VALUING THE WORKFORCE, THE WHOLE DIVERSITY OF THE WORKFORCE AND GAINING A COMPETITIVE EDGE BECAUSE YOU ARE

VALUING THE DIFFERENCES. DO YOU THINK THAT'S A USEFUL MOVE TO MAKE?

*P5: It's a very organic process that is. It's very, it's very easy to pigeon-hole people based on a snapshot of past experience and it's very difficult to keep reviewing that snapshot, if you want to call it that, to go with the times. I mean it sounds like a very good way of doing it but ultimately it would be very difficult (pause) because people change, they have the ability to change.

*INT: THEY ARE DOING DIVERSITY TRAINING RATHER THAN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TRAINING SO THAT YOU DO GET A CHANCE TO FIND OUT ABOUT THE DIFFERENT CULTURES AND...

*P5: ...The downside, I mean everybody likes to be versatile, and to be able, therefore to work on diverse projects, you, you tend to lose some of the focus. I mean, OK, it's not good to be a specialist in one very dedicated area. It's like (inaud) but having said that, you can become too diverse; so much picking stuff up, not doing the job properly, doing half of that and then looking for an expert just to finish off the five percent...

*INT: OH NO, I'M NOT TALKING DIVERSE AS IN ...

*P8: ...Specific..

*INT: DIFFERENT TYPES OF INDUSTRY, BUT ABOUT A DIVERSE GROUP OF PEOPLE.

*P5: Oh it's nice to be able to draw on a bigger data bank. (inaud)

*P8: (inaud)

*INT: TURNS OVER TAPE

*P8: I've got some German friends that I went to college with and I've been over to Zeebrugge, which is just on the French/German border, in the Alsace region, and um, you know, we went to see the First World War trenches, just in the Verdun Valley and when he was describing to me the way in which the French and the Germans actually

dealt with each other, up to sort of like 1910, you know, there was a line in the field. One side was Germany and they spoke German and the other side was France and they spoke French. And you know, I couldn't really perceive that. I can understand why we speak, you know the island monkeys speak a different language, because there was a bloody great pond between us but (pause)

*P5: Yeah but if you thought the only way to learn German was to get shot I don't think it's good! (laughs)

*P8: Yeah but I was just amazed that just, you know, a border, a land-locked border made such a huge differential between them because, I hadn't, you know, I hadn't really been to Europe until I was about twenty, seen a lot of Europe. And I was amazed at the difference between them and one of the reasons why, with all that with the politicians with, what was his name (pause), the Kaiser and the French could manage to kick seven bells out of each other in the First World War was because the populations didn't like each other, didn't know each other. They, all the personal stereotypes...

*INT: ALRIGHT, 'THEY DON'T KNOW EACH OTHER, THEY DON'T LIKE EACH OTHER, CAN I TAKE THAT BACK INTO AN ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT AND SAY IF YOU'RE GOING TO DESIGN A POLICY SO THAT PEOPLE CAN WORK TOGETHER, WHAT WOULD THAT POLICY NEED TO CONTAIN? OR HOW WOULD YOU MAKE THAT POLICY WORK? YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT EDUCATION EARLIER, WE WERE TALKING ABOUT HAVING A DIVERSE WORKFORCE, YOU KNOW, TRY AND DRAW ALL THAT INTO WHAT A POLICY WOULD REQUIRE FOR IT TO WORK?

*P8: I think the first thing is for small companies like ourselves is that you've got to employ the person that can do the job, otherwise you're not going to exist any more.

*INT: OK, SO YOU'RE TALKING SELECTION ON MERIT?

*P8: Selection on merit initially because we haven't got, you know, small to medium enterprises like ourselves really haven't got the resources to have (pause) to be able to employ someone who's not as good, because we want to get our statistics up.

***P5: Well we can always go looking on the Internet for anything we don't have.**

***P8: Yeah. I think, I think that's (pause) all well and good for someone like Nuclear Electric or British Steel or someone like that, to start beating their chest over the fact they're employing 3 percent ethnic minorities. I mean they can probably carry that because they're large, because of the large markets that they hold. Either way.**

***INT: OK, WHAT ELSE?**

***P8: Umm, I think what it should, (pause) perhaps we shouldn't have, in our application forms, race or name. You haven't got a name until, you know, you don't need to know they're not Anglo-Saxon, or they're Afro-Caribbean or whatever.**

***INT: SO YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO...**

***P8: Yeah, then you'd be able to get away from the fact that they would turn up for the interview, whether they were Indian, Hispanic or whatever. You wouldn't know, would you. So a male, twenty-five with this degree with this experience, you wouldn't need to know, you know, their name gives you a clue of their race. It does give you a small clue sometimes.**

***INT: SO LIKE A BLIND APPLICATION?**

***P8: Yeah, so therefore you'd have to get to the interview wouldn't you and then the people that would be interviewing...**

***INT: ...SO THAT'S ALL PART OF SELECTING ON MERIT?**

***P8: Yeah, and then, the people that would have to interview would have to be (pause) perhaps, you know, people that you would think were (pause) stable and level headed, with the least, I mean they're going to be prejudiced in some way, I don't think you can get rid of all (pause)**

***INT: OK, SO FOR THE PEOPLE THAT ARE ALREADY WITHIN A COMPANY, THEY'VE BEEN SELECTED, THEY'VE BEEN EMPLOYED, HOW ARE YOU GOING TO STOP DISCRIMINATION OCCURRING WITHIN THE**

ORGANISATION? WHAT COULD A POLICY CONTAIN? WHAT WOULD YOU NEED?...

*P6: You have to have more than one person making the decisions, because one person can always (pause) kind of overrule everybody else, it's got to be team work...

*P5: (laughs)

*P6: Well I mean, yeah, it's (pause) it's got to be team work, you can't even say committee work because committees never work. You've got to have more than one person making decisions.

*INT: OK, GENERAL DECISIONS OR ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT A TEAM OF PEOPLE SPECIFICALLY TO DEAL WITH EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES?

*P6: Umm (pause)...

*P8: ...I mean what they do, what they do in say, the councils, something like that.

*P6 & INT: (inaud)

*P8: ...What they do, they assess your, they assess your progress in your career and they say, right if you're, let's say in in, in the (pause) that's a major council would have been taken to court a few times on race discrimination or ageism or discrimination against someone who was ill, or such like, what they do, to, to protect themselves, is that periodically they assess, they take a snapshot of progress of, let's say, myself and Tyrone (a black employee in their company) let's say, if he was in here, and we would say, right well, our, you know, our, our skills are (pause) similar, our (pause) what, let's say we're similar in every way and our progress has been similar, we're just as well liked. Why have I gone on and he hasn't? And so, that, that sort, sort of (inaud) is, is always held over all of the people that actually promote you or don't promote you, to make sure that they know that there's a potential for all of their decisions to be examined from a statistical point of view, so if they, you know, I mean, it's a bit difficult in this company because we're small, so you haven't got a large pool of ethnic minorities to pull from and say well how does their career actually develop? And so you can actually say well there is essentially an algorithm that monitors your career

development. And if it turns out that there is a sub-set of people that are from an ethnic minority and their careers do not develop as well, even though they've got equal (pause) equal, uhh, end of year reports, equal (pause) such and such.

***INT: SO ARE YOU JUST TALKING ABOUT HAVING SOMEONE TO CHECK IT, EVALUATE IT?**

***P8: It's monitored then, and if that is then (pause) advertised as being monitored, even if it isn't monitored, but people think it is monitored, then they would naturally make sure that you don't get one manager that will never ever promote an Indian.**

***INT: ALRIGHT, SO DO YOU NEED SOMEBODY DEDICATED TO THE CAUSE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN AN ORGANISATION OR NOT?**

***P8: Depends on the size of the organisation, I suppose.**

***P6: Yeah.**

***INT: DO YOU NEED A MENTOR, TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS WITHIN AN ORGANISATION?**

***P6: That can be quite good, just for, in particular I think, for new people coming in (pause) because, if you've got somebody who's experienced within the organisation, you know where to go. Umm, and if you've got problems, (pause) it's good having somebody like that, experienced, to speak to.**

***P8: I think you tend to develop them anyway...**

***P6: ...It depends on the person as well,**

***P8: You develop friends, don't you. You develop friends and colleagues that aren't necessarily in your line management system. So I'm in charge of you, in charge of your career and you'll have a, you know, chat to them about their careers but basically I'll chat to Mark and we're on separate flows completely. See I've got nothing to do with Mark's job and Mark's got nothing to do with mine really, so I'll chat about the history of (company name), how it's going.**

***INT: SO ALL OF THIS THAT HAS BEEN SAID SO FAR SEEMS TO BE VERY INDIVIDUAL SPECIFIC. DO YOU THINK YOU CAN EVER HAVE A POLICY TO CHANGE INDIVIDUAL'S BEHAVIOUR OR IS IT NOT GOING TO WORK? DOES HAVING A POLICY CHANGE SOMEONE'S BEHAVIOUR?**

***P8: I think...**

***P5: It could go the wrong way.**

***P8: Yeah it could work the wrong way but if you said that uh, that a line manager had not been, you know, in production line perhaps and over repeated occasions had not been giving ethnic minorities promotion (pause) that would be pulled up on his appraisal. Perhaps, and that would mean he wouldn't get his incremental rise, or etc. or actually be demoted or disciplined for it. And perhaps would be encouraged to take counselling or something like that, to try and figure out is he actually racist, is he prejudiced, not racist, is he prejudiced in himself and doesn't know it? Is he just, you know, 'cos most people, I mean we all are a little bit, but.**

***INT: SO, IT WOULD BE THERE AS A CHECK UP RATHER THAN STOPPING IT INITIALLY?**

***P8: Yeah, well I mean I don't think you can stop it initially unless you give everyone a counselling course and I don't think that's feasible. And most, most people wouldn't perhaps need it and how would you ring fence it? (pause) I mean it's like treating people for something they don't know that's wrong with them. I mean, you know, I think everyone is, everyone has got it wrong with them, it's just how much they allow it to affect their judgement.**

***INT: RIGHT, SO EVERYONE HAS A LEVEL OF PREJUDICE, IT'S JUST A THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

***P8: ..I think it's just a, it's just a manifestation of our (pause) natural behaviour.**

***P5: Yeah (inaud) everyone has them, if an alien walked through that door, with suckers on its fingers and god knows what else and asked to be a typist...**

*P8: ...I'd say bloody hell (inaud) (laughter)

*P5: One; yes we haven't got any aliens in the company, good grief, let's employ one. Umm, secretary, secretary, err what's it going to cost to space the buttons further out on the computer and the typewriter so that his fingers don't hit two at the same time, sorry he or she, (laughter). Then there's got to be toilets, toilets would have to be completely changed; diet, you know, canteen would need other food, get vegetarian on there as well, you know...

*P8: It's easy, we hate everyone when it comes to canteens - we haven't got one!

*P5: You know, in principle, first of all, yes INSIDE we feel as if we ought to be offering that alien the job BUT it's a mountain to actually get over. Then we've got the acceptance of the rest of the staff.

*INT: DO YOU THINK THEN THAT THIS IS AN ISSUE THAT'S GONE TOO FAR, THAT'S BEEN TAKEN TOO SERIOUSLY?

*P5: I think if people are normal. If everybody was NORMAL then there wouldn't necessarily be a problem. It's a bit like your, your production line analogy; if the boss and his supervisor and the people that work for him were all normal, you'd get on hunky dory. What actually happens is that the boss turns round to the supervisor and says your goal is to make as many widgets as you can. He says right, I run about then for as much production as I can get out of the people that work for me. The people that work the fastest are the people that are going to get paid. If however then the other parts of the workforce work slower because they feel that there's a differentiation there, overall his production might go down. We have to do something to make the other lot work (pause) then everybody works about the same level and they make them feel happy as well, then the other lot will complain and say well, hold on a minute but we were always been producing more widgets than they are. So it goes backwards and forwards.

*P8: Yeah, I think there is always, there is always, cycles of people's behaviour, people's perception of differential...

*P5: ...You can't have everything, that's the problem...

*P8: ...But I mean (pause)

*INT: IF YOU WORKED FOR A COMPANY WHERE YOU FELT THEY WERE MAKING THE EFFORT, THIS GOES TO EVERYBODY, WHERE THEY HAD GOT A DECENT POLICY, THEY HAD TRAINED PEOPLE TO BE AWARE OF DIFFERENCES OR THEY'D ENCOURAGED UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS, YOU KNOW, IF THEY'D DONE EVERYTHING THAT A COMPANY COULD DO, WOULD YOU, UMM, WOULD YOUR IMAGE OF THAT COMPANY (PAUSE) IMPROVE?

*P8: Yeah, I think so, I think

*P5: Yeah

*INT: WOULD IT MAKE YOU STAY IN THE JOB LONGER, WOULD IT MAKE YOU HAPPIER, WOULD IT MAKE YOU MORE SATISFIED, WOULD HAVE ANY ACTUAL INDIVIDUAL IMPACT ON YOU IF YOU KNEW THAT THE COMPANY WAS DEDICATED TO...?

*P5: ...It obviously depends upon the size of the company. It obviously depends a heck of a lot as well on the sort of business that you're in. Umm, (inaud) you know, a very small company making castings or something, it's probably not applicable. If we're a go ahead company with credit cards or Barclays or something like that, then, (pause) a big company, then that's good. If they can afford to be doing it they should be doing it.

*INT: SO WOULD IT INFLUENCE YOUR...

*P5: I think somehow people are expecting it already, aren't they?

*P8: I think you'd feel that the companies were far more benevolent. Whereas if you feel that the company is going to do the MINIMUM it can, let's say it's a very profitable high-tech company that does the minimum it can all the time and has massive profits (pause).

***INT: WOULD IT MAKE YOU ANY MORE COMMITTED TO YOUR COMPANY...**

***P8: ...No, I mean it would make me, it would make me, as as mercenary as they are.**

***INT: BUT IF THEY HAD DONE...**

***P5: ...If they had, it would give you that feel good factor, which is something that everybody (inaud). If you've got that FEEL-GOOD FACTOR, then if they're going to make you feel good, then should make everybody else feel good, then overall it helps.**

***INT: SO IF EVERYBODY IN AN ORGANISATION WHO WORKS FOR THE ORGANISATION HAS THAT FEEL GOOD FACTOR BECAUSE THEY'VE GOT THESE MEASURE IN PLACE, WHAT BENEFITS WOULD THE ORGANISATION GAIN FROM YOU FEELING GOOD?**

***P8: Well I think that at the end of the day, you'd you'd respond to enquiries, whereas if you don't, you won't, will you. I mean if you get (pause) unless (pause), the major reason why people work is for (pause), to survive. And the major stick, how people make other people work, is by standing over them and looking at them, saying get on with it otherwise you'll be out. Now there's. there's a couple of ways of doing that. One is to make you want to do it, and you haven't then got to supervise them and they do a better job and they, they'll stay behind and finish the job on time and they'll get the proposals out on time and they'll come in on Sunday without quibbling and they'll get the job, get the job done and everything goes well. It's quite a happy place and you know, you don't tend to leave that. You don't have a high turnover of staff (pause). Or the other is you're, you're just an educated thug. And you just, you just threaten people until they knuckle down and do it anyway. But the moment they get half a chance to buck the system, they will, without getting caught. They'll be as obstructive as they can be to each other because they're all bloody fighting to get to the top in a very rough place and the moment they get an offer better, somewhere else, they'll be gone (pause) and I think there is, those are the two extremes, but I think, I think...**

***INT: YEAH, SO IT DOES HAVE AN IMPACT THEN, WHAT THE ORGANISATION IS DOING FOR YOU DOES HAVE AN IMPACT ON HOW YOU RELATE BACK TO...**

***P5: Hmm (in agreement)**

***P6: Yeah.**

***P8: Yeah, I mean if you talk to, I've I've got a friend who works for (Company Name), and he, you know, he might have the odd beef with the odd personality at (company name) but he's, he's, you'll never ever hear him say a harsh word about the overall organisation and the way in which they treat their staff (pause) because they've got excellent packages and wages and salaries and such like, pension, sports facilities, good holidays, very flexible, proper career (pause)**

***INT: DO YOU THINK THAT MAKES THEM LESS LIKELY TO LEAVE?**

***P8: It, well, he's been there, he's been there since he left university and most most most students leave after three years of their first appointment. He's on a proper career path, you know, he's seen quite a lot of the world with them.**

***INT: SO THERE SEEMS TO BE QUITE A LOT OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LARGE AND SMALL ORGANISATIONS...**

***P8: ...Well, good or bad organisations. I think you can have good small organisations and bad big ones. I think, what was it, I think BA were, (pause) umm, BA's Executive were, were described as 'educated thugs' weren't they? And I mean if you go to work with someone you don't want to be with, it's a long time to be with people you don't like.**

***INT: I'M GOING TO HAVE TO LEAVE IT THERE BECAUSE I'VE TAKEN UP MORE OF YOUR TIME THAN I SAID I WOULD. THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED FOR YOUR HELP.**

***P6: Alright.**

*P8: No worries.

*P5: I mean it's alright for us to turn around and say yes it's a good idea now because it's not going to impact us, but I think we should look at it, but of course then when I say we've got a profit related pay scheme and by the way we're going to plough five percent of this company's profits into making sure that we have a, you know, a discrimination type policy, everybody's going to say, oh, we don't need it. (pause) let's, let's have it in our pay packets, Christmas is coming.

*P8: It's a different thing though isn't it. It is a different thing.

*P5: It should there instilled in us from birth.

*P8: Yeah, it's a cultural, it's an education more than anything. We wouldn't need it if people weren't (laughs and pauses) so narky with each other.

*P6: I hope that was helpful for you.

*INT: YEAH, THAT'S BEEN REALLY GOOD ACTUALLY THANK YOU...

*P5: I thought we were going to talk about sex and women and we didn't!

(laughter all round)

INTERVIEW CONCLUDES AND PARTICIPANTS LEAVE.

PARTICIPANT NO. 9 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

***INT: WHAT DOES EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MEAN TO YOU?**

***P9:** Umm, I think basically the possible players got to give all candidates the same opportunities or the same chances as each other. Umm, irregardless of umm experience, race, sex or colour. They should be judged on basically how the interviewer, I mean the interviewer or the employer, actually feels that person is right for the specific job, rather than thinking, well being, OK, being a woman, she could have this and that (inaud). They take too many, too many things into considerations, which (..) there is a limit, I think there is a line that perhaps yes you should, up to a point, should be things that are taken into consideration but beyond that point you're just guessing. It's hypothetical, and saying, 'oh, in a year's time this lady might have children, she's going to have children, or umm this guy he might go back to his own country, if someone was a foreigner, so, I think there's a line there, where they should draw to consider things that could happen in the future that may not. That's guessing and hypothetical.

***INT: YEAH. DO YOU THINK OF IT IN TERMS OF AT SELECTION LEVEL THEN?**

***P9:** Umm, selection and then once in the job umm (..) Speaking from personal experience, inside jobs, maybe I've been fortunate. Only one or two occasions have I really felt that I haven't been treated fairly when it comes to equal opportunities but generally speaking in my jobs, it's been OK. It's been OK but umm that's probably personal, but I've heard cases and even in working environments where I've worked, I've seen that somebody else is, work colleagues, where they haven't been treated fairly, equal opportunities just hasn't been brought in and (..) they know it, the person knows it and you know has maybe made a point to the employer about (inaud) or obviously an excuse to say, well because you're black, you're, or because you're a lady, or blah blah blah. I feel, OK personally that's probably, just personally it's been, I've been OK but I have witnessed and a couple of times it's happened to me where equal opportunities haven't been equal.

***INT: SO WHAT, THEY'VE HAD A POLICY AND THEN HAVEN'T ENFORCED IT, OR?**

***P9: Yeah, they've got a policy and then say they're equal opportunities, you see the sign, or the advert. Yeah more than a few times, it happens, I've seen it happen to work colleagues. And maybe once or twice it's happened to me but it's maybe has been such a little thing that it didn't really bother me too much. Perhaps if it was more of a career prospect or a career job, or important, then yeah, I would have made a bit more. It would have touched me a bit more deeply but being that it was, I mean, O.K. it was a part time job and I didn't think much of it but I witnessed it.**

***INT: SO WHEN YOU'VE SEEN IT BEFORE, IT'S BEEN EXCUSED AS SOMETHING ELSE?**

***P9: Yeah, it's always been excused, as though umm, there's never really been an apology; it's been a case of, well, you know and an excuse has come up and we'll try to make it seem genuine like it was really (inaud).**

***INT: SO WHAT SORT OF FORM DOES IT TAKE THEN? IS IT PEOPLE THAT DON'T GET PROMOTED, OR COMMENTS THAT ARE MADE, OR OPPORTUNITIES THAT AREN'T OFFERED, OR?**

***P9: Yeah, possibly opportunities that aren't offered umm for example, umm OK taking an example, my last summer I was working for [company name]. It was a new project, so, there was lots to do. After the first few, well after the first month, they started to delegated work to certain employees and where, there was a team of about seven, seven or eight of us and predominantly it would always be given to about three of us, like myself and these two other workers. The other two were not getting some, they were looking and they thought well, you know, I can do it, how come they're always asking you? Because they've given, for example, they might have given me two or three tasks over a couple of days. They've been given one task, maybe a simple task, and so they've just made a little point of it but the person said well, oh, we just done it out of random, we just didn't think about it before hand but umm we've then heard, it's come back to us, we've heard them talk it over, 'give it to so and so because he'll get it**

done' (inaud) where as they THINK maybe the other person won't get it done because maybe they talk a bit too much or (..) they maybe if they're late once or twice but they haven't actually given him or her the actual chance that's actually. It's not a case of them giving him or her the work and it's been done wrongly, or been handed in late, they just say well, in what they've seen, or from what they, their umm impression, they're not going to give the person that equal opportunity to do the work, and obviously, that will just hold them back in their job.

***INT: SO THEY'VE JUST FORMED A NEGATIVE IMPRESSION AND THAT'S IT?**

***P9: Yeah, first impression. Either they've come in late, or they've talked a bit too much and that's it. And I think that's pretty, yeah it is pretty unfair because, it's their work, if their work hasn't actually suffered then it shouldn't really be judged on that.**

***INT: HAVE YOU SEEN THAT SORT OF THING HAPPEN ON THE BASIS OF RACE OR SEX, RATHER THAN (..) THE LEVEL OF WORK THAT THEY THINK THEY'RE CAPABLE OF, OR?**

***P9: Umm yeah, I've seen it on the level of race or what, but I think impression (..) more on first impression. It's regardless of race or colour it's perhaps an individual but then on the other hand I think (..) actually I can distinguish the two, possibly in retail, I experienced a lot more race and sex involved rather than maybe in an office environment. In an office environment, it's just a case of, oh, your first impression is you're a bit lazy. I'll give you the work because you don't look lazy. Or you don't get on with your boss, or you talk too much, you're late, it's all going to go against you but I think in a retail experiences, I've been around in the retail, I think it's more to do with sex and (..) sex and maybe yeah racial.**

***INT: THAT WAS ANOTHER OF MY QUESTIONS ACTUALLY IS DO YOU THINK THAT THERE IS MORE DISCRIMINATION HAPPENING IN SOME TYPES OF INDUSTRY THAN THERE ARE IN OTHERS?**

***P9: Yeah, in my experience definitely. I think in a retail department (..) I've experienced a lot of, well, I've experienced it a couple of times plus I've seen it,**

witnessed a lot of times and heard. Especially sex, yeah, sex and racial discriminations. Down perhaps in an office, that's not to say it doesn't happen in an office but you get more, I think you get more, I think it's more in a retail experience.

***INT: SO DOES IT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE WHAT LEVEL - I MEAN WE'VE TALKED THEN ABOUT DIFFERENT TYPES OF INDUSTRY BUT WITHIN ANY SORT OF INDUSTRY - WITHIN ONE COMPANY, DOES IT HAPPEN MORE AT DIFFERENT LEVELS? FOR EXAMPLE AT THE MANAGEMENT LEVEL OR AT THE ENTRY LEVEL, OR?**

***P9: Mmm. Yeah management, definitely management, for example (supermarket name) company name down there it was everything there. On the management level, on the one half of the whole, like the hierarchy of the business side, of the employees, you'd see mainly Asians and black people on the (..) OK you can say on the bottom, that's to say the cleaners and the tills and on the shop floor. But then it went up to supervisory level (..) you see a few and then basically management level, personnel level, you'd be lucky to see one. And considering I think on the bottom, umm, at that branch anyway, and others probably around, I'd say in South London there's probably a couple (..) I would say about ninety, umm eighty, seventy-five per cent were of umm ethnic origin and yet when you get to the management. Maybe one (..) if you're lucky. OK at that case, and because Supermarket name is very big, it's one of the biggest in London. And the management over there, there's possibly one (..) manager. Yeah there was this one black manager, called Jason, but umm. And in another umm another example of discrimination is umm, he, he, because he made a mistake, he made an error, and was demoted. Where as I, I've worked under managers who've made (blows out) loads of errors, two, three big errors and they've not been, they may have been punished but not actually been demoted, which is sort of the biggest you know punishment you could get, is demotion. So, that was another thing, they demoted him and they moved him to another, a much smaller branch. I've worked under managers when they've made big cock-ups, big, huge cock-ups and it's just been a slap on the wrist.**

***INT: SO HE WAS TREATED MORE HARSHLY THEN?**

***P9: Yeah, definitely.**

***INT: DO (SUPERMARKET NAME), IN THAT EXAMPLE THEN, DO THEY HAVE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY?**

***P9: Oh they do yeah. I've seen it on, stuff on the canteen wall and they always talk to us and say, yeah, you know. My, my manager always tried to get more for myself and other black people who worked part-time and were studying. He said, oh when you finish up, what are you going to do here? Take on the training programme? Yeah, I mean, there's a good chance you can go up to them, and they're all, you know what I mean, sensible people, you could go far up. He didn't really see enough of it to really (..) really see, to push ourselves to give us a a (..) a better impression of the company. It's not that we saw maybe quite a few black managers to actually say oh yeah. We saw one and we saw what happened to him so it's it's a negative incidence, so.**

***INT: YEAH, A BAD EXAMPLE.**

***P9: Yeah, exactly.**

***INT: SO WERE YOU TRAINED OR TOLD ABOUT THE POLICIES THAT THEY THAT THEY HAD OR ANYTHING?**

***P9: At the start yeah. When you start the job, you see a video and then they talk and then they give you a leaflet, a book. And they go over it with you but that's the only time, so, after a few years you can sort of tend to forget about it. And they've got sort of the policies on the boards and they go over it with you (..) and then I think at an appraisal they might mention it again, the equal opportunities (inaud) since after interview, if you got the job, they never really went over it again.**

***INT: SO THEY WERE JUST CONCENTRATING ON THE SELECTION PROBABLY?**

***P9: Yeah.**

***INT: SO THAT SOUNDS LIKE THEY'VE GOT A VAST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHAT WAS ON PAPER AND WHAT WAS BEING PRACTISED.**

***P9: Yeah, exactly.**

***INT: IS THAT FAIRLY TYPICAL IN THE OTHER PLACES YOU'VE WORKED?**

***P9:** Umm (..) no. Supermarket's name is probably the worst that umm, example of an equal opportunities that's not been enforced. That's probably my worst experiences, yes at Supermarket name. I've worked in (..) yeah about two or three other umm two or three other quite big retail organisations and haven't experienced anything as bad as that, so.

***INT: AND DID THEY (THE OTHERS) HAVE WRITTEN POLICIES?**

***P9:** Yeah. Everywhere I've worked (..) yeah, everywhere I've worked, I've seen. At the interview they go over it and then you see it as well. And they don't really go on about it as much as sort of, basically at the interview they go on, they talk about it, they mention it and then after that you tend not to hear about it again, unless you need advice, which I haven't but umm. I mean they always say feel free to ask a manager, talk to your manager BUT (..) if it's if it's an example you've put (inaud) they will very rarely, I've never, they've never admitted, it's always like, oh you know, it's not because of that, it's because another excuse they use, so they push it aside.

***INT: SO HOW MUCH AFFECT DO YOU THINK A PAPER POLICY CAN HAVE ON BEHAVIOUR? HOW MUCH DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE IF THEY'VE GOT A WRITTEN POLICY...?**

***P9:** None.

***INT: NO?**

***P9:** No, I mean they put up posters and (..). It doesn't, it (..) it doesn't seem as important as it is, or as I think it should be. I mean I can't think of an idea off the top of my head how it could be umm (..) how it could be noticed more and be influenced in a working environment but having a (..) a small, well about A4 size, in the corner of the canteen isn't going to be seen by everyone. And it gives the impression that oh, maybe, even if not so, maybe (..) if you don't know so much about the Act, then you're going to think it's not very important, you're just going to think it's just a list of rules, that oh

this company has said they'd be (inaud) you know, don't really care about it because it isn't something they've made a big issue about.

***INT: YEAH. SO IF THE COMPANY PLACED MORE EMPHASIS ON IT AND HAD LIKE A DETAILED POLICY AND EVERYBODY WAS GIVEN SAY SOME EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TRAINING OR DIVERSITY TRAINING OR SOMETHING, SO THAT EVERYBODY KNEW THAT THEY WERE PUTTING A LOT, PLACING A LOT OF IMPORTANCE ON THIS POLICY. DO YOU THINK THAT THE COMPANY, THE MANAGEMENT, IF YOU LIKE, PLACING THAT EMPHASIS ON IT WOULD MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO BEHAVIOUR THEN?**

***P9: Yes and no. It wouldn't, yeah it would help. It wouldn't make things any worse but I think in a work environment, I think people are going to be noticed: actions rather than just words on a piece of paper I think. For example, although umm they have a list of point, if I saw more (..) black managers at Supermarket name then that would encourage me more to believe that yeah they are enforcing it rather than (..) they go over it as many times as you like but if you're not going to see any evidence of it in action then you don't take no notice of what they've written. Because Supermarket name, they had it everywhere and they gave it to you at the interview, so they did make an attempt but then when it actually came down to it, when it came down to work you could see. I mean the examples were there. Blacks everywhere on the bottom and Asians on the bottom and no-one got promoted to the higher and then they were (..) the one who was got demoted, so that sticks in the mind more than a piece of paper and training. I mean it would help - don't get me wrong, it would help but I think companies have to actually go through the whole process, not only just in training but then in the work. I mean, if they're ability is good, then go ahead, carry on, promote them.**

***INT: SO IF YOU SAW A COMPANY THAT HAD ACTUALLY PUT SOME ACTION INTO IT AS WELL, AND THERE WERE BLACK MANAGERS AND THERE WERE WOMEN MANAGERS AND THINGS THAT WOULD MAKE YOU THINK THAT...**

***P9:** Yeah and on evidence of (..) going back to Supermarket name, I think a lot of blacks as well. Because everyone knew Jason and when that happened it was like, oh, you know, everyone knew about it and that gave everybody such a negative opinion, so, (..) everything they'd trained into us went out the window because they can say this, they can say that and it sounds good, on paper, but when it actually comes to it, it doesn't, so, it's all got to be hand in hand. You want to be trained but you've got to see the results.

***INT:** SO WHEN YOU SAW THAT SORT OF THING HAPPENING, DOES THAT AFFECT YOUR WORK AT ALL FOR THEM?

***P9:** Hmm, not really no. OK even before he got, I say demoted, we sort of, we knew what they were, not knew but had an idea of what they were about because we hadn't seen anything ethnic before that. So when, when he became the first black manager, OK that's a that's probably a step forward but also we're going to be looking at it as (..) umm 'cos I was looking at it as though is that just a token gesture, just to say, we aren't a racist company, we are equal opportunities. Also, I'm not just about black manager, women as well. Women managers are very very rare in Supermarket name as well. And apart from the till operators they never got further. So when it came to women or err black males getting to management, it, it was something else. It wouldn't, it didn't change, it didn't really change anything, how I worked because we sort of thought that anyway. Well we sort of thought that anyway, we didn't (..) I wouldn't have bet my house on it but I would have thought that, yeah, OK they're probably got it down on paper but yeah I'd really like to see it though.

***INT:** DOES IT CHANGE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THAT COMPANY THOUGH WHEN YOU SEE THAT?

***P9:** Oh yeah.

***INT:** IN WHAT WAY?

***P9:** Umm well (..) in a sense of umm, OK umm defending it, like being an employer you always thought that you've got stick up and defend for the place that you're working very rarely do I ever bother to defend it or promote it in a good vein. I turn

around and used to say well, I just work here because I need the money to get through university. And the people who want that are OK but as a company as a whole, the food quality is OK but then I wouldn't (..) where as if, you know what I mean, if it was different now and had equal opportunities and they had women managers and black (..) then I would have seen, I would have said well then, I'll speak of them as a company, yeah they're really, yeah equal opportunities is good there. OK it might not be for me but then hey I can recommend it to somebody else and say, yeah go for it. It's a good company, they train you up. There's good examples of women and black men and Asian guys doing well there, so the company's really good. But obviously if you speak about it negatively to people, you can turn people off it. You know, you can put some people off even doing their shopping there.

***INT: SO IT'S THE REPUTATION OF IT?**

***P9: Definitely comes down to that.**

***INT: SO IF YOU HAD HAD A BETTER EXPERIENCE THERE YOU WOULD ACT AS LIKE A GOOD AMBASSADOR FOR THEM?**

***P9: Definitely yeah. Definitely.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK IT AFFECTS ANY OTHER THINGS ABOUT IT, LIKE (..) WELL HOW IMPORTANT IS IT? LET ME ASK THAT INSTEAD, HOW IMPORTANT?**

***P9: To me?**

***INT: YEAH.**

***P9: Umm it is important to me (..) to an extent. I, I mean, I can speak basically I always knew that well at the end of the day whether they were enforcing it or not, I wouldn't have looked for a career there, so I just knew it was just a (..) so because I had in the forefront of my mind, you know that was the most important thing, I was just there for the money to get through college but after saying that it was important because you like to think that umm a company's (..) you start to think OK one company's like that, what will the rest be like then? I mean, (inaud) we could be in their country, so**

what would, if one company is, a big company like Supermarket Name, you think if they're like that then well gosh (..) it gives you a bit of a negative view on other companies before you got to work for them, you'd think (..) all right, they could just have the (inaud) it turns into a whole (..) negative look on other companies which haven't actually been given a chance because such a big company gives this negative outline, people come away thinking well, I think the whole of the country is backwards. People actually do think that.

***INT: DID YOU EXPECT TO BE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST WHEN YOU FIRST STARTED WORKING?**

***P9:** Umm, not everywhere. Supermarket name (..) possibly yeah. I mean my sister did work there when she was so Supermarket name possibly, not everywhere. [Company name] I didn't but I mean that's different, like I said, it's (inaud). I mean there's more, probably more French and Italians than the English people there, so you (..) and it's an American company. Err (..) no yes, so not every job I've gone into thinking about BUT (..) it is there. The thought is there, it's at the back of my mind I think yeah (..) I wouldn't be surprised, I suppose that's it, I wouldn't be surprised.

***INT: SO IF YOU WERE LOOKING FOR A CAREER JOB, WOULD WHETHER THEY ARE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMPANY MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO YOU, IN CHOOSING WHETHER YOU WANTED TO WORK FOR THEM?**

***P9:** Umm no. I'd have to see. No, I'd go to any job and like see it for myself and experience it rather than it being on paper. Because I mean, not just Supermarket name there's been other retail companies I've worked for and they've said it and been trained and you see the video and the whole package but it's not working.

***INT: BUT IF YOU KNEW IT TO BE TRUE THOUGH, IF YOU'D SEEN IT...**

***P9:** OK oh yes it would make a difference yeah. Yeah, it would make a difference on my, on choosing a company to work for.

***INT: SO WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF IT THEN AND WOULD YOU (..) I MEAN YOU SAID LIKE WITH SUPERMARKET NAME YOU'D HAVE BEEN A**

BETTER AMBASSADOR, WOULD YOU BE ANY MORE COMMITTED TO THE ORGANISATION?

*P9: Definitely as well yeah.

*INT: WOULD YOU WORK ANY HARDER? WOULD YOU KEEP THE JOB ANY LONGER? WOULD YOU, I MEAN WHAT, WHAT BENEFITS WOULD THE ORGANISATION GET?

*P9: OK possibly working harder. Me personally I like, if I'm working I like to work to a good standard anyway; it makes me feel better, but yes I would have maybe tried that little extra five per cent. Where I was working to just a good standard, I may have probably worked to a better than good standard umm. (..) As I said before, the ambassador. Umm (..) and the outlook of the company, not just as an ambassador but a genuine, my own individual outlook in the store, it would have changed. Mmm perhaps have worked harder, treated customers and managed, you know especially management would have been different as well. Not that I treat them badly but my attitude could have been better at times (..) and it probably would have been better at times, if I'd seen...

*INT: YOU WEREN'T RUDE TO THEM WERE YOU?! (LAUGHS)

*P9: (Laughing) No I wasn't rude to them but umm (..) at times I could be sarcastic. Well I'm a sarcastic person, so I could be sarcastic and (..) I feel perhaps if it wasn't, if there was no need to be sarcastic then I wouldn't be sarcastic, so!

*INT: YEAH. I'M JUST TRYING TO WORK OUT WHAT (..) LIKE IF I GO TO A COMPANY AND I SAY, YOU REALLY SHOULD BE INVESTING IN LOOKING AFTER YOUR PEOPLE, YOU SHOULD HAVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TRAINING, YOU SHOULD BE ENFORCING THE POLICIES: IT INVOLVES A LOT OF COST TO AN ORGANISATION. SO I'M TRYING TO LOOK FROM THE OTHER WAY AND SAY WELL WHY SHOULD THEY BOTHER? WHY SHOULDN'T THEY JUST HIRE WHITE MALES AGED BETWEEN WHAT IS IT? THIRTY AND FORTY, OR TWENTY-FIVE AND FORTY THAT THEY SEEM TO LIKE, JUST LIKE A SMALL GROUP. WHY, WHAT BENEFIT IS THERE TO

HAVING A MIX OF PEOPLE WORKING FOR THEM? FOR LOOKING AFTER THEIR WORKFORCE? FOR MAKING THE EFFORT BASICALLY. WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES ARE THERE FOR AN ORGANISATION TO DO THAT?

*P9: OK Yeah. Err, any organisation can just hire a group of, like what you said, just white males between twenty-five and forty, what benefit would it be to the company?

*INT: WELL I MEAN WHAT STOPS THEM FROM DOING THAT? I MEAN WHY SHOULD THEY GO OUT OF THEIR WAY TO HIRE WOMEN (..) BECAUSE THEY MIGHT LEAVE, THEY MIGHT HAVE BABIES. WHY HIRE BLACK PEOPLE, BECAUSE THEY MIGHT GO AND SAY, OH YOU'RE NOT DOING THAT BECAUSE I'M BLACK, OR THEY MIGHT CAUSE TROUBLE, OR...

*P9: Well nothing's really stopping them.

*INT: NO.

*P9: I mean nothing's really stopping them I mean the law is there and I mean OK there are cases when they could take it to the court and discipline hearings but (..).

*INT: I MEAN OUTSIDE OF LEGAL REQUIREMENTS, WHAT BENEFIT IS THERE TO HAVING A RICH MIX OF PEOPLE? LIKE YOU SAID, YOU WOULD HAVE LOOKED FORWARD TO GOING TO [COMPANY NAME] BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT FRENCH, YOU'VE GOT ITALIAN, YOU'VE GOT THIS YOU'VE GOT THAT. IT'S LIKE A NICE MIX OF PEOPLE, WHICH I ENJOY BUT I'M NOT QUITE SURE WHAT IT IS THAT I ENJOY ABOUT IT , YOU KNOW? WHAT...

*P9: OK umm (..) I reckon it's talking to different people. That's a that's a different aspect. (..) Umm.

*INT: DO YOU PREFER WORKING WITH A MIX OF PEOPLE THEN?

*P9: Umm definitely. (inaud) (..) It's a different experience, it's also an experience and you're learning things, umm (..).

***INT: BECAUSE I MEAN THERE'S THE NOTION AS WELL THAT EVERYBODY, IF YOU'VE GOT A WIDE MIX OF PEOPLE, THEN EVERYONE HAS GOT SOMETHING DIFFERENT TO BRING INTO IT.**

***P9: Totally, that's it exactly.**

***INT: SO ON GROUP TASKS OR SOMETHING, THEN EVERYBODY HAS GOT SOMETHING NEW TO CONTRIBUTE...**

***P9: That's right, that's true.**

***INT: SO THE ORGANISATION WILL BENEFIT FROM THAT. (..) AND IT'S BETTER FOR EVERYBODY THAT'S WORKING THERE. BUT IT IS A VERY INTANGIBLE BENEFIT - THERE IS NO 'I WILL MAKE MY MONEY IF I PUT THIS MONEY INTO GETTING AND KEEPING A MIXED WORKFORCE' (..) SO, IF YOU CAN THINK OF ANY MORE BENEFITS TO IT, PLEASE TELL ME!
(LAUGHS).**

***P9: I mean, it would give a better outlook to customers and other organisations that I feel as well. I feel that if other organisations sort of tend to, like (..) can sometimes be like sheep: if one changes, changes something little, they hold back and wait and see and if the result is positive then they all sort of tend to go that way. If, if for example umm Supermarket Name or one of the big supermarkets made a change and started to advertise, OK they advertise good customer policy but then, but to advertise to say OK we're going to be (..) not just saying that, we're going to be equal opportunities. We're going to see it, you're going to go to a Supermarket Name and see women running the shop and black men, and you saw it. And the feedback would be very good from customers and other organisations outside umm the the outside those supermarket chains, like uhh, the large companies who provide the food (..) they'll say, oh yes, we made a good, you know what I mean, the figures have gone up and there's a really good (..) it was a good idea and it's it's really helping the country and helping the actual organisation again. Then that, I would be sure then you'd see perhaps Supermarket Name and Supermarket name start doing it slowly as well.**

***INT: SO YOU THINK IT WOULD LIKE INCREASE THEIR SALES THROUGH THE CUSTOMER SERVICE SORT OF ANGLE?**

***P9: Definitely, possibly, yeah. I think, yeah I think, I think it would be. I mean (..) a lot more people seem to be more, you know (..) conscious and aware of the equal opportunities and I, I mean I've heard people saying, oh I'm not going in that shop over there, they treat people racist and I'm not going to go in there. And I mean it's just the one customer, but then that's a customer lost. I feel that it would give a better outlook to the general public, generally. So it would, I think it would benefit and it would give them a better umm view in people's eyes about the company, as well as possibly, possibly increasing their, their sales revenue as well.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK IT UMM (..) DO YOU THINK WHITE MEN NOTICE, FOR WANT OF A BETTER PHRASE? LIKE YOU SAY THE CUSTOMERS, YOU HEARD PEOPLE SAYING THEY WON'T GO IN THERE BECAUSE THEY'RE RACIST, IS THAT BLACK PEOPLE SAYING THAT OR WHITE PEOPLE?**

***P9: Umm black people.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK WHITE PEOPLE NOTICE? DO YOU THINK IT EVEN OCCURS TO THEM THAT THAT MIGHT BE GOING ON? OR THAT MEN MIGHT NOTICE THERE'S NO WOMEN MANAGERS? OR...**

***P9: I, I think they (..) they notice, yeah they sort of notice but umm (..) I think, again in my experience, I think if it's oh, one or two, they're not bothered about it all. Or the woman doesn't actually make a big difference, or thinks she'll going to make a big difference, a group would be able to make a big difference but you don't bother with it. If it was on a larger scale, yeah, it would. I'm sure they'd (..) because they do notice on a small scale but think, oh well it's nothing; they brush it under the carpet. If it was happening on a larger scale they would, I'm sure they would do something about it. They would start to (inaud) definitely.**

***INT: ANOTHER THING I WANTED TO ASK YOU: IF YOU SEE COMPANIES IN ACTION AND THEY'VE GOT WOMEN MANAGERS, THEY'VE GOT BLACK MANAGERS AND (..) THEY'VE PUT THEIR MONEY WHERE THEIR MOUTH IS**

BASICALLY, SO YOU'VE GOT AN EXAMPLE, SO THAT THEN IT STARTS FILTERING THROUGH. DO YOU THINK THAT COMPANIES SHOULD START USING POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION TO PUT PEOPLE IN THOSE PLACES, TO SEE IT?

*P9: Actually what, hiring a woman specifically for the job?

*INT: YEAH, YOU KNOW LIKE THEY HAVE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN THE STATES. I MEAN POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION IS ILLEGAL IN THE UK BUT DO YOU THINK SOMETHING LIKE THAT SHOULD BE HAPPENING?

*P9: Yes. Yes and no. I think it should be happening, not to, but umm, I think it would, I would prefer it if was just, you hired somebody (..) you know what I mean, it's not that, whether this will actually take place, or not is another thing but the type of person that's going to do the job, rather than having a selective like quota system or having selected female or, OK well we've got to hire a woman for this job because necessarily you might not be hiring the best person for the job. But you're just going to hire, a woman and well you know, oh, let's just hire a woman, OK your standards are dropping because you're just going to hire because of the, you're cutting out (..) hundreds of people who probably might be better at that specific job than a woman, so it's not really actually necessarily a benefit for the company. But umm, what I'm saying though, if it's going to help the organisation and the outlook on how people view the company because they are going to see women managers and more black faces, then yes, to an extent but I wouldn't like it to overtake (..) the fact that umm (..) because I think that people start to get blinded by it and they forget the equal opportunities and say forget the, we'll just hire a woman for two jobs and a black man for one job and that's OK so it can confuse things because I think it's two different things. If you're actually asking me I wouldn't actually hired someone (inaud) say I'm going to hire this black man, it would be like a token. Just to hire a black man or a woman to make it SEEM like you're enforcing equal opportunities but you're not really, you're just doing it because the law (inaud).

*INT: SO IT SHOULD BE ON MERIT THEN?

***P9:** Exactly. It should be done on merit but I mean that's, that's if it's a perfect world and being as it's not it's it's a start. I think yes, it's a start.

***INT:** SO IT SEEMS TO ME THAT IT'S THE SAME OLD THING; DO YOU WANT TO BE A TOKEN OR DO YOU WANT TO START THE EXAMPLE SO THAT YOU CAN GET THE BALL ROLLING. IT'S LIKE IF YOU COULD DO A ONE-OFF, FREE FOR ALL, OK WE'LL PUT PEOPLE IN THESE POSITIONS ONE TIME ONLY, THAT SORT OF THING! YOU KNOW, WHERE DO YOU START?

***P9:** Well I think because the effects, it will still be more, it will still have a more positive effect than negative even if it is token, so (..) it's better than nothing. That's what I think.

***INT:** SO WHEN YOU GO TO WORK, DO YOU WANT TO HAVE LIKE THE DIFFERENT GROUPS ACKNOWLEDGED? LIKE THAT'S A BLACK MAN, THAT'S AN ASIAN WOMAN, THAT'S A WHITE, DO YOU WANT THAT ACKNOWLEDGED OR DO YOU WANT EVERYBODY TO BE TREATED THE SAME, OR ...

***P9:** Umm everyone to be treated the same but for everyone to acknowledge that we ARE different but then (..) to not let that cloud them how they think about giving someone this job, or giving someone the opportunity to do something, or promotion aspects, just that everyone, to recognise that oh, I'm different yeah, he's Indian, or he's from Africa, or she's Irish, and so and so. Everyone to acknowledge that OK we are all (..) they're different, BUT (..) not to umm but we should, yeah, we should all be taken, I mean (..) be classed equally but, I think, yeah, you've got to acknowledge that people are different. Yeah, I think that's important.

***INT:** BECAUSE THERE'S ANOTHER MOVE AS WELL TRYING TO TAKE IT AWAY FROM 'EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES' FOR SPECIFIC MINORITY GROUPS, INTO 'DIVERSITY'. SO DIVERSITY DOESN'T JUST INCLUDE RACE AND SEX, IT INCLUDES AGE, RELIGION, NATIONALITY, UMM EVERY SINGLE DIFFERENCE THAT YOU COULD POSSIBLY THINK OF; BACKGROUND, EDUCATION, CLASS, WHATEVER IT IS, AND JUST SAYING WELL EVERY

SINGLE PERSON HAS A DIFFERENCE TO BRING TO THE ORGANISATION, THEREFORE IT SHOULD BE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL. WHICH, WHICH IN AN IDEAL WORLD, TO MY MIND, SOUNDS ABSOLUTELY LOVELY BUT THEN CAN ALSO BE USED A SMOKESCREEN BECAUSE THEN YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING FOR ANYBODY. I WAS JUST WONDERING HOW YOU WOULD LOOK AT IT.

*P9: Umm my (..) If they're all given the same opportunity then it would (..) yeah, that would be fine, (inaud) great. If you brought everyone in different religion, sex, colour. They would acknowledge that they're different - not that they're different but yeah, you're who you are (..) and they were given the same opportunities as a other person, then yeah, you wouldn't look, you probably wouldn't think about it, you'd just get on with the job (inaud) this Indian guy, he's going to be the new accountant, or this woman's going to be the new so and so. And you'll then think nothing of it because, you know what I mean, because different (inaud) with all these people about, you can be certain that someone's this and that because of umm culture or religion, then that's when it breaks down. I mean (inaud) organisation what sort of business it is, it shouldn't affect what religion or race, colour, or if you're a woman, or a Jew, it shouldn't, you know what I mean, not many organisations it will affect so it shouldn't have a (..) it shouldn't really be an issue really. Unless it's an organisation where (..) umm, if you're a food tester and you're not going to eat meat and that's because of your religion, well fair enough but I mean if it's just an organisation, it shouldn't really be an issue about oh well, he's a Jew or he's an Indian. It shouldn't be an issue. But again, that's in the ideal world!

*INT: (LAUGHS) RIGHT, WELL THE FINAL THING THAT I WANTED TO ASK YOU ABOUT WAS MONITORING: YOU KNOW ON THE APPLICATION FORMS, TICK THE BOX AT THE BACK JOB. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THAT? IS THAT A USEFUL PRACTICE, OR OUTDATED OR NECESSARY, OR WHAT?

*P9: Umm, it's a bit like a fifty - fifty. It's important but then you think (..) I always tick it and think to myself, you know, (inaud) nowadays if I fill in an application form I tick it, I think to myself, they'll probably receive maybe a hundred, and they'll only

probably, they might decide, OK, we'll let three or four go through, that's what I'm thinking, so (..) yes and no. It's a difficult question.

***INT: DO YOU THINK IT GETS MISUSED?**

***P9:** It can do, yeah. I think it's, the, the intentions (..) well I'm not sure about the intentions behind it, but the actual, the IDEA is is is good. But then, I think companies can abuse it and you know the intentions by some companies might not be for the right, might not be for the right intentions, so (..) but I think the actual idea behind it is good (inaud) as a way of, OK we can tell how many certain people are applying for the job (inaud) a person of this colour. You know what I mean (inaud) basically count so many (inaud) because they know that (inaud) Afro-Caribbeans. So (..) no, I still think it's a good idea but umm (..) because if it was, I mean if it was dated and it was taken away, they'd probably just have another, but then (..) I mean they'd call everyone for an interview but then they still treat everyone the same way as you tick the box, so it wouldn't really make a big difference if it was (..) you know what I mean, if they stopped doing it.

***INT: IF IT'S BEING USED GENUINELY AND THEY ARE JUST CHECKING THAT THEY ARE GETTING APPLICATIONS FROM ALL GROUPS OF PEOPLE, DO YOU MIND SORT OF FILLING IN BOXES...**

***P9:** No no. If it's used properly, and I think it the intent, maybe the government or the council issued it. If it's used for the right purpose, yeah, I don't mind, it's useful. I just feel that (..) again it's like a bit of a smoke screen for (inaud) companies, or more companies that just see who is applying for jobs, so that they can fill their quota, or put a token in. That's what, I think that's what I count as being misused (..) but the actual intention is quite good, so it should continue. There are companies that, not everyone, is misusing them so, they're good guidelines that can be use (inaud).

***INT: SO OVERALL, IF AN EMPLOYER CAME TO YOU AND SAID I'M THINKING OF INVESTING SOME MONEY IN A DECENT POLICY; IN TRAINING PEOPLE, IN MONITORING WHO IS APPLYING FOR WHAT, WHO'S**

GETTING PROMOTED AND ALL THAT SORT OF THING, WOULD YOU SAY, YES YOU SHOULD DO IT, OR NO, DON'T BOTHER?

*P9: Oh, no I'd say yes. Because I think a lot of companies would sort of be (..) not running scared but (..) they'll think about it a lot more, they'll spend a lot more time thinking about it and (..) and if you think about something, there's more chance of it being put into action. I mean, at the moment, there's only (inaud) making a big fuss being made about it. The government says, oh, the equal opportunities act is there. You're supposed to all treated, you're supposed to give (inaud) training. Umm they might do, but it's not, you know, I think, I mean, (..) in all the jobs I've had, there's more concern about fire and and safety and (..) the equal opportunities commission a little bit. They keep saying (inaud) OK, not bad (inaud) you go to work (inaud) and you think I've heard all this, you know, what were you talking about? So it sort of dies at that point. But then (..) I think yeah, if somebody did come across it, let's say, if I was permanent in a company, somebody came across and mentioned that to me, I think yeah, quite a few companies would at least sit up and pay more attention to it than they have been and you know.

*INT: HOW WOULD YOU SELL IT THEN? HOW WOULD YOU SELL IT TO SOMEONE WHO WAS TORN WHETHER IT WAS WORTH THE INVESTMENT OR NOT?

*P9: Oh, to a manager or something in the company?

*INT: YEAH.

*P9: Uhh.

*INT: I MEAN LIKE WOULD IT (..) INCREASE PEOPLE'S JOB SATISFACTION, OR WOULD THEY STAY LONGER ON THE JOB? (..) OR CAN YOU THINK OF ANY ECONOMIC REASON, OR ANY REASON OTHER THAN 'IT'S MORALLY RIGHT TO DO SO' THAT SORT OF ANGLE, BECAUSE BUSINESS AND MORALS OFTEN DON'T MIX!

*P9: I, I think for more companies that incentive enough would be, I think would be (..) to give them a (..) they'd have to, I think, manager of companies would have to see what benefits it would be to them to take it. So if in the case of, I think you'd have to umm sell the idea and how well it's done to another company, for them to say OK well this company was like this before. You see if they're taking up our programme this is what it will result in equal opportunity, this is what it result in. They'll have more jobs umm more money so I don't know, I think it would be a money.

***INT: SO YOU'D HAVE TO SHOW BY EXAMPLE?**

*P9: Yeah. I mean they would listen and go OK good idea but if it's not going to increase profits, it's not going to increase their image. It might only give them a better image yeah, if it was going to give them profits or better image, then yeah I can't see (inaud)

***INT: CONCLUDES AND ASKS P9 TO COMPLETE INFORMATION FORM.**

PARTICIPANT NO. 10 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

***INT: I'LL START BY ASKING YOU WHAT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MEAN TO YOU? WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF IT?**

***P10: My definition is that umm (..) there's no barriers. That means to the women and men and whoever else can get to where they want to go without having to struggle.**

***INT: RIGHT, JUST AT SELECTION LEVEL OR WITHIN COMPANIES OR WHAT?**

***P10: No the whole thing.**

***INT: THE WHOLE THING.**

***P10: Unfortunately it doesn't exist so (..) especially in the job I do, so (..).**

***INT: YEAH? WHY ESPECIALLY IN YOUR JOB?**

***P10: I work in a team of (..) ten. There's one girl.**

***INT: WHY'S THAT?**

***P10: Token woman. I don't know.**

***INT: YEAH?**

***P10: She feels uhh (..) frustrated, uhh paranoia (..), she's not capable of doing the job, picked on, various bits and pieces.**

***INT: AND IS SHE AS CAPABLE AS THE REST OF THE TEAM?**

***P10: I think she needs to be trained more for the role she's in. I think she needs guidance but uhh other than that I think she's got it. And I tell her she's got it but umm I don't think she believes me.**

***INT: SO WHY ARE THERE SO FEW WOMEN DOING IT THEN?**

***P10:** Because our customer base is very male dominated. And unless you're very (..) umm extrovert and be willing to do ridiculous things, you know, be one of the lads but not be one of the lads, then you you're not going to (..) do the business or be with the right people meet the right people, have the right effect, put pen to paper and basically sign a deal. Which is unfortunate but true.

***INT:** SO IT'S LIKE YOU NEED A MAN TO GET INTO THE MAN'S....

***P10:** ...No I think there's the umm the guys we deal with mainly I work for, I sell stock brooking systems so umm it's very much a male dominated client base who are (..) either barrow boys or come up through the ranks or went to the right schools and they feel intimidated by women so they prefer not to do a deal with them.

***INT:** YEAH?

***P10:** Yeah. Umm (..) a lot of men don't like talking with women. Mainly the ones who have been (..) umm wronged by their wives or, when they come to London they're in a male dominated area so they can do very well. That's my opinion.

***INT:** WHY ARE THEY SO INTIMIDATED BY WOMEN THOUGH? IS IT BECAUSE THEY'RE...

***P10:** ...Well it's one of those areas where you can umm you can sit down and have a serious chat (..) women are just like guys that you, they they know their job, they know the topic they're talking about but then they can't have the uhh the idle or the chit chat afterwards is different. You know where as I suppose guys would talk about football or rugby or whatever else umm you can't exactly, there's not many women you can to football you know football about. It's not umm a great area for them. It's not mine as well but umm.

***INT:** THEY THINK IT WOULD BE BECAUSE YOU'RE MALE!

***P10:** Well that's right!

***INT:** SO DOES THE SAME ARGUMENT APPLY TO BLACK PEOPLE?

***P10:** No, I wouldn't say in this company. We've got umm, we are, our parent company or our head office is in Birmingham which we've obviously got a lot of Indian, Pakistani and what ever else working for us. Umm our company is a 'multicultural' I think the word is, something like that the phrase. So we don't suffer from that which is good. (..) There's shit bags in every race and it doesn't matter what colour you are so.

***INT:** SO WHEN YOUR WHEN YOUR COMPANY ADVERTISES FOR JOBS DOES IT STATE 'WE ARE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER' OR 'WE'RE A MULTICULTURAL ORGANISATION' OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT?

***P10:** I don't know. I was umm (..) I was approached not uhh, I didn't apply for anything so.

***INT:** HAVE YOU EVER SEEN AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY OR BEEN TOLD OF ANY COMPANY POLICY WITH REGARDS TO RACE, SEX?

***P10:** Umm. No I haven't seen anything and I haven't umm I haven't come across in this company which is very strange because there must be somewhere in the region of in this building alone four hundred people. Umm, there's no 'you can't get here because you're black, or you can't get here because you're Chinese' or what ever else, they are people from, you met some of them in reception, I don't know what they were here for, they're not anything to do with me but there's a lot of them about, you know, from every walks of life. You know, some of the guys that I work with are (..) close to fifty and some of them are umm my own age and and younger. Some of them are Asian, some of them are (..) we've got a white Jamaican which is quite strange. Umm, I I don't know, other companies I've worked in yes it does, I suppose it does apply but here umm being a Birmingham based company originally it doesn't.

***INT:** DO PEOPLE GET PROMOTED EQUALLY AS WELL? HAVE YOU GOT ASIAN OR BLACK OR ANY ETHNIC MINORITY....

***P10:** ...Well so in this company and I've only been here seven months so I've only noticed the fact that people who do well get on, regardless of what they are or who they are.

***INT: SO IT'S BASICALLY ON THEIR MERIT?**

***P10: Yeah we have umm in my department I'd say the women side of things is very much (..) we have a secretary, who's obviously a lady and we've got one sales lady, the rest are guys but the other areas, we've got a product manager who is very senior. She's been around (..) a few years. Our whole marketing department bar one is ladies. And they're very successful. I don't know whether it's umm (..) I'm not sure whether it's the fact that they were (..) selected or in the right candidate at the time, I'm not sure. All I know is that I think we're deficient in the fact there's only one girl works in the sales department and there should be more but I think they're, there's a girl being interviewed today for a sales support role, which (..) hopefully (..)/**

***INT: WILL THAT CHANGE A LOT THEN?**

***P10: It would change a lot yeah. (..) Sales is a very male dominated area in any company..**

***INT: IS IT?**

***P10: Uhh I think (Company Name) is about one of the only companies I know that's not. I think (Company Name) is about a sixty / forty split female advantage.**

***INT: IS IT? SO DO YOU THINK IT'S, LIKE THIS SORT OF SEGREGATION THAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, IS IT VERY INDUSTRY SPECIFIC THEN, OR FIELDS WITHIN THE INDUSTRY OR?**

***P10: Yeah there are a lot, there's certain areas you know umm (..)the city is a very male dominated area, so (..) umm you wouldn't find that (..) people that...**

***INT: DO YOU NOTICE THEN?**

***P10: Well you you, you realise you know, it's not hard to notice the fact that umm city people won't really link in or mix with female, I've got one customer in particular that have got a lot of senior male err female umm members and and I get on with them very well but other people find it difficult you know, 'I'm not talking to that silly cow, she**

doesn't know what she's talking about' but it's the fact that they can't handle talking to women but that's (..) their own problem and nothing to do with work.

***INT: SO DO YOU NOTICE WOMEN BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST IN THE CITY THEN?**

***P10: Hmm yes.**

***INT: YES. IS IT LIKE AN ACCEPTED...**

***P10: Well it's umm, when when guys come to the city (..) you know this idea of becoming, either working for a stock broker or going to a bank or an insurance company and I (..) it's quite sad but I think when most girls come to the city to get a job they are looking to become either a secretary or someone who operates you know, they type or something stupid like that, which is, I think is pretty stupid but umm (..) and it is pretty limited. But the way that it's umm it is portrayed to them, you won't go, you won't become a finance director, you'll become a typing pool manager or (inaud). It's rubbish really but it's the way you see yourself. If someone tells you that that's as far as you're going to go, then you do have your limits set for you already.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK A WOMAN COULD SET HER OWN LIMITS IF SHE WANTED TO?**

***P10: I think they can blow the limits if they wanted to. I know (..) a director of a very large bank! (..) I deal with all the major banks in the UK on the stock broking side and I know a finance director at one of them, and she is very very successful and she's got a family and she has a private life and umm, she's not let anything get in her way. And nothing to do with anything between her legs or what ever else; she was determined she was going to get where where she wanted to go and she's done very well. But I know other women who have been knocked once, and that was enough and they never wanted to go back there again because they couldn't face getting knocked again where as umm (..). I think it, I don't think it's so much (..) it's the intimidation side of things. Lisa, who works with me, umm, she's very good at dealing as much as she gets and then when she's by herself or when we're out having a drink she'll say, 'I don't think I can face this any more' and 'I've had enough' and, but when she's in front of everybody**

else, she's got bigger balls than most blokes, which is what she should be like all the time.

***INT: SO DO WOMEN HAVE TO BE BETTER AT THEIR JOBS TO GET ON THAN MEN?**

***P10: Yeah.**

***INT: DO THEY HAVE TO BE STRONGER PERSONALITIES THAN THE MEN?**

***P10: What you were searching for earlier about racial discrimination is the umm is the same thing here I think for women, or for most women around the city: you've got to be bigger and better and more dynamic and umm very (whispers something inaud)**

***INT: IT DOES HELP! (LAUGHS) (..) SO YOU DON'T THINK IT APPLIES TO RACE, JUST SEX IN THIS TYPE OF WORK ENVIRONMENT.**

***P10: In a lot of companies it does.**

***INT: WHAT ABOUT AGE?**

***P10: Umm. (..) umm in the company that (Contact's Name) works for umm I was there for ten years and after the first four I should have gone into sales but because after that I was twenty two years old I was considered to be too young umm and I was still too young when I left in June of last year, according to them. But I was umm I was good enough to run all the UK accounts. Umm I was good enough to train (contact's name) and the girl that came in with her and tell other people what they should be doing, what they shouldn't be doing, so. This guy here sort of came to me and said I want you to sell because I know what you can do. Umm and I said well I'm only twenty-eight and he said well you should have come to me four years ago.**

***INT: REALLY?**

***P10: But umm. I think it's was uhh it's one of those things where it's it's drummed into you. And that comes out of the fact that a lot of companies don't want to lose people that they consider, not being big-headed, to be good. Because if they can leave**

you to do it then they can concentrate on other things. (..) Which is what (Contact's name) is going to suffer from unless she leaves.

***INT: SO YOU HAVE GOT SOME EXPERIENCE PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST THEN?**

***P10: Age-wise yeah, the same with haircuts (..) and earrings.**

***INT: YES, THAT'S ANOTHER THING I'M LOOKING AT BECAUSE IN THE UK THERE'S A SLIGHT MOVEMENT AWAY FROM EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MEANS MINORITY GROUPS THEREFORE RACE AND SEX...**

***P10: ...(inaud) I was told I wouldn't become a manager if I uhh didn't lose my earrings. So I lost my earrings, I became a manager. And then umm when I joined this place, the guy said, 'well you're getting on very well with the customers but don't you think you've got a slightly aggressive haircut?' I said well, it's on my head, you know, what can I do about it? So umm, but the customers get on very well with men. (..) Umm they remember you, if you're different from everyone else, they remember you. Uhh, they remember my loud ties and short hair and uhh (..)**

***INT: ...CAN PUT A FACE TO THE NAME...**

***P10: ...Exactly.**

***INT: BECAUSE THIS MOVE IS SAYING WELL IT'S NOT JUST RACE AND SEX, IT IS YOUR HAIRCUT, YOUR ACCENT, YOUR**

***P10: Well, I think there are certain things that are acceptable and certain things that aren't. Short hair I don't think is a problem. Long hair I would think in the city is not acceptable because umm you're dealing with people whom sometimes are a different era. You know I might I might be dealing with the Managing Director or the Chief Executive who's thirty years older than me and he can understand me having short hair but someone with a pony tail he would not entertain. So there is (..) and that's, I don't think that's a problem as such I think that's just the fact that umm things have changed in recent years and you know if you piss them around for a long time...**

***INT: YOU JUST WON'T WORK IN THE CITY!**

***P10: That's right, they want someone with pony tails and umm, which is umm is not very acceptable, I don't think. That's my own view and I don't push it on any one else. If you want to have long hair you have long hair.**

***INT: SO IS THERE AN UPPER AGE LIMIT ON WHO IS AN ACCEPTABLE PERSON TO WORK IN THE CITY AS WELL?**

***P10: I don't, well, in the city itself I think you, they're getting younger and younger in the like brokerage houses or on the LIFFE floor or on the Met Exchange floor, they're going younger and younger because they want people who are quick. So they're really not looking at other interests or how you turn out. They look at your exam results and whether you've got any common sense umm. When I first came to the city, sales representative was seen to be someone between thirty-five and forty-five. If you look in any magazine now, someone between twenty-two and thirty-two. Everything is dropping. They want someone who is quicker, smarter and able to get on with the job, not have any ties.**

***INT: SO WHAT DO THEY DO WITH THE PEOPLE THAT HAVE GOT FAMILIES, THAT HAVE GOT...**

***P10: ...(inaud) they don't stay around if they're not. They're surplus to requirements. (..) Dead wood.**

***INT: SO WHAT IS THE REPUTATION OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CITY THEN?**

***P10: Everyone's got to be seen to be politically correct these days.**

***INT: HAS THAT GIVEN IT A GOOD NAME OR A BAD NAME OR?**

***P10: I think politically correct is crap and I think that umm what is right is right. And at the end of the day if you do a good job regardless of who you are or what you are, then you deserve to move on. And if you're an asshole then you stay where you are or you get sacked. And I don't believe in carrying dead wood and I think there's a lot of**

companies do carry thousands of, well especially the banks, they carry thousands of people that are dead wood that are hanging around for their mortgages and what ever else. They're not doing any favours for the company or to themselves and are a waste of time.

***INT: RIGHT. SO IF YOU'VE GOT A COMPANY THAT EMPLOYS PEOPLE PURELY ON THE BASIS OF MERIT, YOU'RE DOING A GOOD JOB REGARDLESS OF YOUR SEX, RACE, WHAT EVER AND IT'S THOROUGHLY WELL KNOWN BY EVERYONE IN THAT COMPANY THAT THAT'S WHAT THE SCORE IS BASICALLY...**

P10: ...You're going to have (..) prejudice wherever you go. It's going to be about age, it's going to be about sex, it's going to be about colour (..) creed, whatever else umm at my last company when I was part of a large organisation called (Company Name), I was in charge when I was nearly nineteen of twelve people. One of them was older than my dad. He found that very hard. You are always going to find someone who is not happy with what's going on and 'political correctness' is just another phrase that's come out of the woodworm and means absolutely nothing because if a company is good then they understand these things and they stop them from becoming a problem straight away.

***INT: HOW CLOSELY TIED DO YOU THINK EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND POLITICAL CORRECTNESS ARE?**

***P10: (..) I think they're they're part of the same (..) I think they're more of a problem than they are a solution. I think that umm by standing around and shouting about it and spending so much time talking about it you're actually missing half the things that are going wrong. Because when they turning around and saying a girl should be doing this because she's good, they're missing out on all the guys turning around and slagging off a black guy over here. Or in the same vein, I know certain computer rooms in the city where they've got seventy percent black guys who slag off all the white guys, so you're never going to get the mix you've you've got to (..) the overall picture is you make the departments work and you make them work as a team and if there is team then they're friends and if they're friends, they don't slag each other off.**

***INT: OK IF YOU'VE GOT A LOAD OF PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER WHO DON'T UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER'S CULTURES OR RACES OR WHAT EVER ELSE BUT YOU MAKE A COMMITMENT TO DO SOME TRAINING OR SOMETHING, DO YOU THINK THERE WOULD BE ANY POSITIVE ADVANTAGES OR ANY COSTS TO DOING SOMETHING LIKE THAT?**

***P10: I don't agree with giving anyone any slack. I don't agree with people having certain privileges because of their...**

***INT: ...OH NO...**

***P10: In my department there are (..) I found out yesterday because I'm supposed to be a Roman Catholic that umm Ash Wednesday and everything else they umm there are Roman Catholics, there are Protestants, there are Church of England. We have an Asian guy (..) actually I think he's he's Pakistani umm we have a features guy that's working with us at the moment, I've got no idea what the hell he is. We've got quite a few non-believers in anything. We get on. No-one, we have a, we have a laugh. We take the mick. I think Lisa takes a bit more than she should but you know she gives as good as she gets most of the time. Umm.**

***INT: SO IT'S MORE TO DO WITH PERSONALITY THEN, IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?**

***P10: Well it just it just comes down to the fact that you should know (..) in larger organisations like this you have teams. And if you have a team and you run that team then you should know the people. And you should know when people are going too far (..) and you should know when things aren't funny. (..)**

***INT: NOT EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT AUTOMATICALLY DO THEY?**

***P10: No they don't but you know if you get on well, if you put the right team together, then they are going to know. You know, this weekend I'm going to Dublin with four of the guys that work here. And at my last place there's probably about two people that I'd actually spend a you know a weekend at all with. But this place we all have a good time (..) things are, things are handled differently here than what I'm used to. There**

was a lot of it before in my last place, as in women don't get very far. Or unless you suck up to the right boss, who's in charge of, umm.

***INT: SO WHAT DO THEY DO DIFFERENTLY HERE TO WHAT THEY WERE DOING AT YOUR LAST PLACE THAT IMPROVES YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT?**

***P10: Umm (..) I think here they're, they are more commercially aware, they're more business oriented, where as the last place they are very insular and they they they do things that they've always done umm. (..) (Contact's) boss for instance, who was my boss umm (..) when he went out to employ people I, he inherited me, but when he went out to employ people it was all girls. He only interviewed girls (..) because he gets on well with women. Or he thinks he does - they can't stand him but that's beside the point! But he thinks he gets on well with women. He cannot tolerate or handle people with strong opinions, i.e. myself, because that's undermining his authority, but with women, it's a bullying tactic because with women he thinks he can get away with it.**

***INT: SO IF YOU'D HAD A DIFFERENT MANAGER OR SOMEONE THAT WAS MORE OPEN TO IDEAS OR THAT WAS WILLING TO PROMOTE YOU REGARDLESS OF YOUR AGE, WOULD YOU HAVE STAYED?**

***P10: Ummm, if they'd let me do what I was supposed to do, or what I should have done in the first place, yes.**

***INT: IF SOMEONE STARTED CURBING YOUR OPPORTUNITIES BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T LIKE YOUR HAIR CUT OR BECAUSE THEY THOUGHT YOU WERE TOO OLD OR TOO YOUNG, WOULD YOU LEAVE?**

***P10: Yeah, yes. They curbed me now, that's why I might be going**

***INT: YEAH? SO WHAT ELSE WOULD (..) WOULD IT HAVE AN IMPACT AND DOES IT CHANGE LIKE YOUR JOB SATISFACTION OR YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE ORGANISATION OR?**

***P10: Oh yeah, you've got to enjoy what you're doing (..) and I don't (..) there are a lot of unemployed people out there and a lot of them do try to get jobs and I've no qualms**

against that but there are a lot of lazy arseholes who sit on their backsides doing nothing. Umm, I've never personally been out of work umm and I believe that if I didn't like what was happening here I could leave and I would find something. It may take me a couple of months but I would find something else, so.

***INT: AND YOU WOULD BE PREPARED TO DO THAT?**

***P10: Yeah.**

***INT: PURELY BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T LIKE THE PROCESSES?**

***P10: It's nothing, nothing to do with processes, it it comes down to anything, you know. My sales and marketing director can be a real twat but on a good day he's the best person in the world to be with. He likes, you know, people to realise that he's the sales and marketing director. So, which is understandable, it took a long time to get there. But at the end of the day if he if he (..) insulted me in front of other people, or he umm, which I've seen him do before, they've known him a long time, they just, it's water off a duck's back, I wouldn't take it as well. And I'd be prepared to walk out.**

***INT: (..) I'M JUST TRYING TO WORK OUT HOW MUCH IMPACT THE FREEDOM OF OPPORTUNITY HAS ON YOUR DECISION TO STAY, ON BEING HERE, WHETHER IT MAKES ANY DIFFERENCE.**

***P10: Well (..) in the last place it was just, basically I don't have much of a difference here, other than the fact I'm working on a different product and I work with a different team. Umm I looked after my own time there and I look after my own time here. There are subtle differences that obviously, I'm in a larger organisation, there's more money involved, so obviously they want to know where I am. Not so much on a sort of keep tabs, but just so that they realise what's going on and what I'm working on, the case, but umm other than that, I'm very much look after myself. I work with another guy for a team but as long as he knows what we're all up to and I know what he's doing, then we're fine.**

***INT: OK LET ME TAKE THIS BACK A BIT TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, LIKE YOU WERE SAYING ABOUT THE WOMEN ON YOUR TEAM GETS QUITE A**

ROUGH DEAL AND THERE SHOULD BE MORE WOMEN. IF YOU HAD, AS AN ORGANISATION, A VERY STRICT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY, DO YOU THINK IT WOULD ACTUALLY CHANGE BEHAVIOUR AT ALL?

*P10: Umm, I think (..) well I I, it may have come out wrong but I think Lisa gives herself a hard time. I don't think she necessarily gets a hard time. She sticks her neck out sometimes where it's not needed but then again everyone else does. Umm, I think if they had a fifty-fifty split, it would make a lot of difference. I think that just umm, the team would be obviously very much different, but there would still be the banter that there is now. As will probably tell you, I like to speak my mind!

*INT: ALL RIGHT, SO A POLICY WOULDN'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO YOUR BEHAVIOUR OR?

*P10: Umm, I think there's certain people who have chips on their shoulders about umm (..) if a guy opens a door for a girl, I have no problem with that, I was brought up to do that. Umm, but there are certain women that get offended by that, 'I can open the door for myself, thank you very much'. Well, yes and while you're doing that you can stick it up your backside, I was only trying to be polite. And I don't think people like that would work in our environment very well because (..) for example Lisa does deal with a lot of directors and what ever else and if they opened the door for her and she turned round and said, came out with that sort of comment, then she would not be in this business very long. So you've got to be the right sort of person. You can't just sort of umm (..)

*INT: I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT THE EXTREME FEMINISTS HERE...

*P10: Well no but you can't see, in the same vein I don't think that, there there was a guy who worked here when I first joined who was umm (..) I would say very much a sexist and a racist person. But then saying that (..) the guys that we work with that are you know Asian or Pakistani or whatever else you want to call them, he got on with them very well. It was just that he was brought up in an ex-pat family where they always had servants and they were always black, so they were servants, he'd never treat them any different. And the same with women, women are always, he was umm

brought up in Egypt, women are second class citizens there, so when he comes over here he believes that's the same case!

***INT: WELL THAT'S WHAT I MEAN. IF YOU HAD SOME KIND OF TRAINING OR SOME KIND OF PROGRAMME SO THAT YOU TRY TO BREAK DOWN THOSE BELIEFS AND HAVE SOME POLICY IN PLACE SO THAT YOU COULDN'T BEHAVE IN THAT WAY, SO THAT YOU COULDN'T BE THAT RACIST....**

***P10: ...Do you think that people who are (..) nearly forty years of age are going to change?**

***INT: WELL THIS IS WHAT I'M ASKING YOU SEE. IS THERE ANY POINT IN HAVING A POLICY? WILL IT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO BEHAVIOUR WITHIN THE COMPANY?**

***P10: (inaud) but umm I think they change for the for the day on the course.**

***INT: AND THAT'S IT?**

***P10: Yeah. I think it'll go in one ear and straight out the other and they turn round and say I done a course, thank you very much and sign here.**

***INT: SO INCREASING SOMEONE'S UNDERSTANDING ISN'T GOING TO MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO, TO THEIR ATTITUDES?**

***P10: Some people yeah, if people are open-minded. (..) Yes that will make a a complete difference but other people who are (..) men brought up in very much a confined environment then they're not going to change at all. They're going to see you as being wrong. As being umm (..) 'lefty, lesbian bitch' I think I've heard the term quite (..) a couple of times. Or umm, feminist (..) light in the loafers, I don't know, what ever else.**

***INT: IT'S JUST...**

***P10: Is this a test? Am I going to get marked on this?**

***INT: OH GOD NO. IT'S JUST DIFFERENT PEOPLE HAVE GOT DIFFERENT THINGS TO SAY ABOUT IT. YOU YOU'VE NOT SUFFERED ANY DISCRIMINATION YOURSELF OTHER THAN THEY WOULDN'T PROMOTE YOU BECAUSE THEY THOUGHT YOU WERE TOO YOUNG...**

***P10: Well, that I ignored for a start because umm I knew I was better (..) umm.**

***INT: IF A COMPANY HAD PUT A POLICY IN PLACE AND WAS DOING ALL THIS TRAINING AND THIS, THAT AND THE OTHER, WOULD IT MAKE THE SLIGHTEST BIT OF DIFFERENCE?**

***P10: I believe unless you're going to find a company that's going to get really bad-mouthed unless they do it, they're not going to spend money on that. (..) We go on training courses at the moment. There are team-building and relationship-building and what ever else. I think they're all aimed at that sort of market. And I think it's good because you do actually, you know, if you go out with the people that you work with on a social, a social event. We have a sales gig every year and we go out and go to a hotel for a couple of days and get absolutely wrecked. And you know we go out on go-karts and various other things and clay pigeon shooting and it's good fun. And it is team building but umm (..) at the end of the day, if people don't like each other, they don't like each other. They're not going to get on.**

***INT: WHAT ABOUT THE COMMERCIAL EDGE OF IT THOUGH? LIKE YOU SAY YOU'VE GOT MEN HERE BECAUSE A LOT OF THE MEN THAT ARE YOUR CUSTOMER BASE DON'T LIKE TO DEAL WITH WOMEN. BUT THERE MUST BE WOMEN...**

***P10: ...I wouldn't say that so much I think it's just the fact that, like we've got guys that have been here for, in our sales department have been here four years, which is quite long for a sales team. The guy I work with has been here (..) he was director of the company they took over and he's been here nearly nine years. That's a very very long time for one sales person to be in one place. But umm (..) but he, he's one of those guys that gets on (..) no that's not right actually, he doesn't get on with everybody but (..) he has no umm male and female. He's doing business. So you may be sitting there**

you know stark naked, he's doing business so he doesn't care. You can be a man or or a woman, he'll just sit there and he'd go through the contract with you but umm...

***INT: NOT EVERYONE'S LIKE THAT.**

***P10:** Well that's right. We've got one guy that deals at the moment heavily in Eastern Europe. And they are very, and it's it's I think it's a sad state of affairs and it will change 'cos things are changing over there but there are (..) next to zero women in charge of companies out there. Banks, insurance companies, what ever else you want to call them umm, I don't think I've ever heard him mention dealing with a women over there.

***INT:** OK WELL WHAT I'M TRYING TO ASK IS IS THERE A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE, OR COULD YOU SEE A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IF YOU'VE GOT WOMEN CLIENTS, MALE CLIENT, BLACK CLIENTS, WHITE CLIENTS ARE, IF YOU'VE GOT A MIX OF PEOPLE HERE THAT MATCHES YOUR CLIENT BASE, WOULD THAT NOT INCREASE YOUR COMPETITIVE EDGE AT ALL? WOULD THAT NOT...

***P10:** ...But then aren't you being racist in the first place?

***INT:** BY SAYING WHAT?

***P10:** Well, say you've got, say you've got the Zimbabwe bank of what ever. What are you going to go out and employ a black guy to work with them?

***INT:** NO NO, JUST THAT THERE'S A REPRESENTATIVE...

***P10:** ...I don't that's (..) I don't think that's the case...

***INT:** NOT SO THAT ONLY A BLACK PERSON CAN DEAL WITH A BLACK CLIENT AND ONLY A WOMAN CAN DEAL WITH A WOMAN BUT...

***P10:** ...I don't think that's the case. I think when they. When they see our team, we do like umm customer days and consultancy days and the press come in and (..) they can see that we're a multicultural company. We don't sort of say 'we're only having white

people in this area, you're not allowed in' or 'we're only having women in this area, it's umm (..)...

***INT: ...SO YOU CAN SEE THE MIX ALREADY?**

***P10: Yeah but (..) I don't think the advantage was ever, well I'm not aware of anyone ever saying, 'we've got, we've got an Asian guy, we've got to have a Roman Catholic we've got to have a proddyod', you know whatever else...**

***INT: NO BUT NATURALLY BY THE NATURE OF YOUR BUSINESS YOU HAVE A MIX OF PEOPLE. IT'S A MULTICULTURAL ORGANISATION. DO YOU THINK THAT MAKES YOUR COMPANY...**

***P10: ...Well so far I've only come across the fact that the people in my department were employed for what they could do. Umm I was employed because I knew, I know a lot of people. Umm.**

***INT: SO IF YOU WERE ALL WHITE MALES BETWEEN THE AGES OF TWENTY-TWO AND THIRTY-FIVE...**

***P10: ...I think there'd be something that stunk to high heaven. (..) But it doesn't'. We range from forty-eight to, I think the youngest guy in our department is (..) me!**

***INT: DO YOU THINK YOUR COMPANY WOULD BE VIEWED ANY DIFFERENTLY BY EXTERNAL CLIENTS OR PEOPLE IF IT WAS ALL WHITE MALES COMPARED TO HOW IT IS NOW?**

***P10: Umm (..) to be honest I've never given it a great deal of thought but yeah I suppose it could be viewed very badly if we were all males, white and under thirty five. In the same vein any company can be judged right, judged wrong if they're all umm Japanese, white, or whatever, you know, yellow and under thirty-five. That is it.**

***INT: SO IT'S JUST...**

***P10: ...How far do you go with political correctness?**

*INT: WELL I'M NOT INTO POLITICAL CORRECTNESS AT ALL TO BE HONEST I THINK IT'S...

*P10: Well how far do you go with umm discrimination?

*INT: DISCRIMINATION TO MY MIND IS (..) IS JUDGING PEOPLE ON SOMETHING OTHER THAN MERIT. IT'S ON A CRITERION THAT'S OF NO RELEVANCE TO THE SKILL THAT YOU'RE ASSESSING.

*P10: I was always told to umm, well that people always judge you by first appearances. (..)

*INT: WELL PEOPLE DO THAT. THERE IS ALWAYS GOING TO BE THAT ELEMENT. IF YOU WALK ONTO A BUS AND YOU GO AND SIT DOWN NEXT TO SOMEONE, YOU FIND A SPACE AND YOU SIT DOWN. SO YOU'VE ALREADY MADE THE CHOICE THERE, YOU'VE ALREADY DISCRIMINATED WHO YOU WANT TO SIT NEXT BUT IS THAT PREJUDICIAL? THERE WILL ALWAYS BE DISCRIMINATION, WHAT I'M TRYING TO LOOK AT IS HOW MUCH EFFECT IT HAS ON AN ORGANISATION'S BEHAVIOUR. I KNOW THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO LEAVE BECAUSE THEY'VE HAD OPPORTUNITIES CUT, BECAUSE...

*P10: I can personally say that I've, I think Lisa is (..) umm very self-conscious at the moment. She's only been here, well she's been here nearly a year. She came from the same sort of environment I came from. But I was determined I was always going to be in sales, where as Lisa wanted to get out of the job she was last in, and this came up. Umm (..)

*INT: SO SHE HAS A DIFFERENT REASON FOR BEING HERE?

*P10: No, I, I, she believes she's bitten off more than she can chew and I know that she hasn't. I think she needs a bit more character boosting or you know, get your ego going or what ever else, she's going to be all right.

*INT: AND IS THAT BECAUSE SHE'S A WOMAN OR IS THAT BECAUSE OF THE WAY SHE GOT THIS JOB OR WHAT?

*P10: No I think it's just Lisa.

*INT: IT'S JUST HER INDIVIDUALLY?

*P10: Yeah. I think it's just her. I, I know ladies that are in this job that work for other companies that have done fantastically well for themselves. Umm and I think once Lisa gets over, we, because in sales environment, this is very different from a lot of other jobs. Now you can work in a big stockbrokers and one year you can make a fortune, the next year you don't. But in this job you have a target each year and if you don't hit that target, then you could be seen to be very bad. (..) Umm there's a few of our guys who are not not going to hit it this year (..) and Lisa has one deal at the moment that will make or break it. But I don't think in your first year you can be judged. If you get close to it in your first year then you've done very well. I work in a good team. The guy that I work with, he knows his business. I get on very well with customers. We do a joint thing if you like, umm touching wood, we're going to do it in the next month or so, which will be good for us. It will be bloody good for me because I've not even been here a year. Umm but saying that I think Lisa could have done it and she will do it this year it's just that. It's more to do with her than the fact that she's being (..) picked if you like. I think that umm, well my sister is a (..) what does she call herself now? Head-hunter or, I don't know what they call themselves now (..) and she's done very well for herself and uhh, she's got, she's a single parent, a little boy who's nearly five years old. No-one ever puts her down. You know the fact that she hasn't got dangly bits what ever else, she goes out and does exactly what she wants and she gets what she wants. And I admire her for it but umm (whispers) I'd never tell her that! So.

*INT: AND HOW DOES SHE MANAGE HAVING A CHILD AND WORKING?

*P10: My other sister doesn't work.

*INT: AHH, SO SHE WORKS AS THE FAMILY BABY-SITTER SORT OF THING?

*P10: That's right. My other sister wants to be like that so. (..) Difference of opinion, difference of views, what ever else but. It can be done it's just I think that (..)

***INT: DO YOU THINK MORE HELP SHOULD BE GIVEN IN THE WORKPLACE TO PEOPLE LIKE YOUR SISTER? IF YOU IF YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANOTHER SISTER THERE TO LOOK AFTER THE KIDS, WOULD SHE BE ABLE TO DO THE SAME THING?**

***P10: No she wouldn't, she'd have to, it would cost her a fortune in child-minders.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK MORE HELP SHOULD BE GIVEN TO PARENTS?**

***P10: I think they should be (inaud) more. I think that you shouldn't have to pay so much, or (..) someone should, the government, without my tax, should umm subsidise some of these, umm kindergarten things that cost somewhere in the region of ninety to a hundred and fifty pounds a week! I mean who can afford that? That's ridiculous money. I'd stay at home and do that! (laughs)**

***INT: IT'S NOT A VERY FEMALE-FRIENDLY PLACE THEN, WORKING AND BEING A PARENT...**

***P10: It is and it isn't. I think you you you've got to be. Women have got to be a lot more determined than men. Men can fall into it and women have to struggle with it, climbing up the ladder.**

***INT: DO YOU ENJOY THAT? I MEAN DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU HAVE AN ADVANTAGE AS A MAN?**

***P10: (..) No because I'm always struggling against other guys, so why would I have an advantage? (..) You know, I didn't go to a public school, and mummy and daddy haven't got loads of money, and you know so...**

***INT: HAVE YOU HAD TO FIGHT AGAINST THAT AS WELL?**

***P10: I've fought all my life. Everything I've got, I've earned. No-one else has given it to me, so I struggle against it. You know there's there's other people out there who have got the right jobs because of their background but I've not. There's is, there's always, discrimination is everywhere but it's it's how you put yourself over and if you're not prepared to let anything you've got hinder you. Now I, I used to work with a**

guy who had umm MS. And he'd come in everyday from umm, god knows where, Basingstoke or something stupid like that, and umm he was in a wheelchair and he'd make sure he was in work every day before anyone else and he'd stay there until after everyone else. Now that is a man who was uhh not letting any discrimination get against him and he still had a career. Then when his wife become pregnant, he stayed at home and looked after the kid. You know so (..)

***INT: BUT WAS HE STAYING AN EXTRA HOUR AT THE END AND GETTING IN AN HOUR BEFORE EVERYBODY TO MAKE A POINT THAT I MIGHT BE IN A WHEELCHAIR BUT I'M STILL...**

***P10: No it was to make the point that he could the job just as well if not better than any one else.**

***INT: SO HE HAD TO BE BETTER THAN EVERYBODY ELSE TO PROVE THAT?**

***P10: (..) Yep.**

***INT: SO WOULD YOU EXPECT TO HAVE TO DO THAT, DO YOU...**

***P10: No, I told him he shouldn't. I told him he should go home earlier, because I bloody well would!**

***INT: (LAUGHS). DO YOU EXPECT EVERYBODY TO HAVE TO TO FIGHT TO PROVE THEMSELVES THOUGH ON WHAT EVER BASIS?**

***P10: I think if you want to get on in anything, not just in the city or anywhere else in the world, you've got to put yourself out. You're not going to do it otherwise. You can't just get it by sitting on your arse, unless you've won the lottery or your family is millionaires. You've got to put yourself out. If you want things in life you go down and get them.**

***INT: SO ANY INDIVIDUAL CAN MAKE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THEMSELVES CAN THEY?**

*P10: You make your own luck. I had someone tell me so!

*INT: (LAUGHS) DO YOU BELIEVE IT THOUGH?

*P10: So far so good, yeah, I haven't done too badly out of it. I've umm not sat around and let anyone else do things for me, I've got it all myself, so (..)

*INT: SO THEREFORE ANYONE ELSE CAN?

*P10: People, yeah you can. It's not umm (whispers) it's not a life (laughs)! Yeah you can, anyone can do it. The city is full of lies (..) and anywhere else you go is the same.

*INT: SO IT'S ENTIRELY, IT'S ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS? IF I WANT TO DO SOMETHING, SAY I WAS A BLACK, LESBIAN, DISABLED, WOMAN, WHAT EVER, WOULD I BE ABLE TO...

*P10: ...You'd be bloody lucky to get a job! Umm well...

*INT: WOULD I BE ABLE TO MAKE MY OPPORTUNITIES THE SAME AS ANYBODY ELSE?

*P10: Well that is a bit of a difficult one isn't really because perhaps not. You might be seen in a bit of a funny light. So (..) yeah, if you tried hard enough you'd get somewhere eventually wouldn't you. (..) People do get, if you want something bad enough, you get it. You've got to want it that bad though.

*INT: SO HAVING POLICIES AND STUFF IN PLACE REALLY DOESN'T HAVE AN IMPACT?

*P10: Yeah there are, there's places for them. There's no point (..) bogging the company down with so much policy that they can't do their business. You know I I agree that you you can't have people going round calling people names left, right and centre but in the same vein, you can't have someone sitting there watching to make sure they don't.

***INT: YEAH, BUT YOU KNOW WHERE THE LINE IS AND WHERE TO DRAW IT. NOT EVERYBODY WOULD. SO IF THEY WERE TOLD WHERE THAT LINE WAS, WOULD THAT BE HELPFUL OR A HINDRANCE?**

***P10: Well if you don't know where the line is, you're a pretty sick person in the first place.**

***INT: THERE'S A LOT OF SICK PEOPLE AROUND!**

***P10: Oh yes. Lots and lots! (..) I don't know. Perhaps, perhaps it isn't down to companies to do it, perhaps it's down to the parents in the first place to make sure their kids are brought up right, I don't know.**

***INT: OK LOOK I'VE TAKEN UP MORE TIME THAN I SAID I WOULD, SO CAN I JUST ASK A FINAL THING?**

***P10: OK yeah.**

***INT: WHAT DO YOU THINK OF MONITORING, YOU KNOW WHEN YOU APPLY FOR JOBS AND THEY HAVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY MONITORING BOXES AT THE BACK...**

***P10: I don't I don't fill them in.**

***INT: YOU'VE NEVER DONE THEM?**

***P10: No, I think it's insulting.**

***INT: DO YOU?**

***P10: Yeah, because if I write down that umm I'm English, they should know that I'm English and it doesn't matter what colour I am, I, I was born here, so (..)**

***INT: ...WOULD YOU EXPECT EVERYBODY TO FEEL SIMILARLY?**

***P10: Umm I I would find it umm I saw actually, I remember seeing someone on a train one night who was mentioning they had to fill in an application form to join the Council, or apply for a job in the Council. And it had things down there like umm (..)**

umm place of birth, umm ethnic, was it ethnic, no not minority but ethnic something or other umm, were you involved in any secret organisations i.e. Masons, Roundtable, Rotary Club. What, what, and it went on and on and on and I thought well how insulting and what has that got to do with anyone?

***INT: ALL RIGHT WELL THE PURPOSE OF MONITORING, IF IT'S NOT MISUSED, IS SO THAT THEY CAN SEE WHETHER UNDER-REPRESENTED...**

***P10: ...Isn't that umm big brother?**

***INT: UMM...**

***P10: ...Wouldn't you feel like your privacy is being invaded because I bloody well would.**

***INT: IT DEPENDS HOW IT'S USED. I MEAN I CAN UNDERSTAND THE AIM OF IT IS THAT IF YOU WANT TO BE EMPLOYING PEOPLE RESPONSIBLY AND MAKING SURE THAT YOU'RE NOT CUTTING OFF CERTAIN GROUPS OF THE POPULATION...**

***P10: ...You can go back too far on this can't you because you can say, well uhh background of parents. Well I can turn round and say uhh well my mum comes from the east end of London, my dad comes from the south of London. Umm but his parents come from Wales, her parents come from uhh Belgium, umm, how far back do you want to go?**

***INT: YEAH.**

***P10: You know. We used to ride around on dinosaurs and (..) you're going to ask me to fill that in now aren't you!**

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED

PARTICIPANTS NOS. 11 & 12 INTERVIEW

TRANSCRIPT

***INT: SO, I'LL START BY ASKING WHAT IS EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES? WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU?**

***P11: Well that you both have, like men and women, colour, race, disability are equal. All on the same par.**

***P12: I think that the first thing that occurred to me was men / women.**

***P11: Yeah, that's the first thing that comes to mind, is men and women, rather than race.**

***INT: IN TERMS OF WORK, DO YOU THINK OF IT AT SELECTION, OR WITHIN JOBS, OR..?**

***P12: I think both ways. I mean I think that the (..) umm I mean here is unusual, isn't it, because they employ more women than men. Generally.**

***P11: Yes, I suppose so.**

***P12: But I think that's the managers bias.**

***P11: Yes definitely managers bias.**

***P12: But I think generally, I mean in my last job, it's definitely, the emphasis was on men and they got more opportunity. And to be a woman and I think the pay is always different as well. And to be a woman in that you had to be twice as good as well, didn't you.**

***P11: Yeah, I mean most definitely, that, that is a fact in this particular company before we moved from being a large organisation to umm a small organisation, there were a lot of men within our company. And it was a known fact that they were all on more money**

at equal job to another woman, that they were on more money. Because we had a very sexist business manager at the time.

***INT: HOW DID THEY GET AWAY WITH THAT THEN?**

***P11:** Umm how did they get away with it? Umm I don't really know how they get away with it. Umm maybe when it comes to appraisals and, and, and the salary review time...

***P12:** ...Yeah, women are more timid about it.

***P11:** Yeah, the the the business manager at the time put in a better justification for more money for the, for the male rather than the women.

***INT: SAME JOB TITLE?**

***P11:** Same job title.

***INT: BECAUSE THAT'S ILLEGAL FOR STARTERS.**

***P11:** Well, we actually had, Kate actually fought that here. There's a girl that works here now only part-time, she's just about had enough of it. And err, that actually happened to her. She found out that so and so, bloke-wise, got more money than her and he was actually crap at his job. It was well known, within the client base and within the company that this bloke wasn't as good as she was and she didn't get as much as he did. And he basically told her (..) that umm he didn't want to give her more money or err better prospects because she could at any time just go and get married and have kids.

***P12:** I think that that's still the same here now, isn't it.

***P11:** And that would cost them money. Most definitely here (..) with with with the part-timers.

***P12:** I think, yeah part-timers and although it's got more women here, I think still the way that we're spoken to (..) and err dealt with. You know it's very much like they'll flirt with you or...

*P11: ...Oh definitely...

*INT: SO WHY DO THEY EMPLOY WOMEN (..) MORE WOMEN HERE THAN MEN?

*P12: Because I think the manager at the moment ...

*P11: ...It's the managers bias...

*P12: ...Umm he gets on with women better and I think he probably feels...

*P11: ...More comfortable...

*P12: Exactly.

*P11: And communications....

*P12: ...And also for a lot of the jobs they are communication and I think women do it (..) a little more easily sometimes. Not generally but (..)

*INT: SO WHAT DOES HE (..) WOULD HE FEEL CHALLENGED ...

*P12: ...I think so yeah....

*P11: ...He does, he most definitely does...

*P12: ...Because the majority of men that that are upstairs, he wouldn't even talk to on a daily basis.

*INT: REALLY?

*P11 & 12: Yeah.

*P11: And only recently since we've moved away from being a large organisation to a smaller organisation has he HAD to speak to those men (..) you know. And he finds it very very difficult.

*INT: SO WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE THEN? WILL THEY TALK BACK TO HIM THE SAME OR...?

*P12: ...I think I think women talk back but we, we, I suppose we probably back down perhaps?

*P12: I don't really know, yeah. Umm, he's sort of a weedy (..) a weedy sort of a person and maybe he was (laughs) beaten up a lot at school by boys and (..) as soon as a male speaks to him...

*P12: ...Having. No having said that I don't think any of the ...

*P11: ...I don't know...

*P12: err, any of the men upstairs are particularly aggressive...

*P11: No, not at all.

*P12: They're not are they?

*P11: No, not at all.

*P12: They're like none of them was sort of, I think it would be more likely the women if they had a problem that they would go and (..) like say this is a problem, rather than the (..) the blokes. Which I don't think any of them, that I can think of, maybe Walter.

*P12: But that is, it is most definitely him. You know? And it's the person, so you, you could never say, because you'd have to analyse this person and you couldn't because we don't know him personally. So.

***INT: DOES HE PROMOTE WOMEN EQUALLY WITH MEN OR IS THERE ANY DIFFERENCE IN LIKE, AT ONE LEVEL YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF WOMEN AND THEN YOU GET FEWER AND FEWER - DOES THAT SORT OF THING HAPPEN HERE?**

*P11: I don't think with him, he promotes umm either one.

*P12: Neither one, there haven't really been any promotions! So I think (..) well in the short time that I've been here, I wouldn't say that anyone has been promoted. I don't know about the longer term. But I think that's one of the things when you were saying

when you invest in people, I don't think umm (..) that that's sort of happened and had it happened then obviously there would have been promotions but I don't think there has been that much of a vision: oh this person, you know, they can do this and this is where...I mean at my umm appraisal thing, I was sort of saying well where do you see me going? And you know (..)

***INT: NOTHING CAME BACK?**

***P12: So, it's not really going to be pushing you to your potential when you can't see where you're going.**

***P11: Yeah.**

***INT: AND IS IT LIKE THAT FOR EVERYBODY OR IS IT LIKE THAT BECAUSE YOU'RE A WOMAN OR?**

***P11: No I I think actually it's like it for everybody but then I don't know who holds the strings here. I haven't quite worked that one out yet. (..) So it could be him, it could be somebody...**

***P12: ...Higher up...**

***P11: ...Up there. But definitely investing in people (..) is worthwhile to any company I think.**

***INT: WHY WOULD YOU SAY THAT?**

***P11: Well because you've got a better experience. Say for me for instance I've actually completely changed my career in the last two years and I'm in a more sort of male-orientated uhh career now and networking. And I'm I'm I'm somebody who needs to learn more and if they invested in me, it would cost them less as a company because (..) if they get better results from me they wouldn't then have to maybe employ a consultant or (..) umm a solution provider.**

***P12: So there's two ways as well I suppose if they if they gave you that much then the chances are that you would take what you know and go (..) don't you think?**

*P11: Yeah (..) that is a possibility as well.

*P12: But I suppose that's a (..) if they've invested in you perhaps you would feel a certain amount of loyalty (..) and it, you know, then you would be more likely to stay.

*P11: Well I think so, definitely. I mean if they invest in you and you feel that you're doing a good job for the company, you feel happier as well. It's all job satisfaction at the end of the day, and if you think you've done a good job and maybe they've rewarded you for doing a good job, then you'll feel happier to stay.

*INT: SO HOW MUCH OF AN INFLUENCE DOES HAVING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MAKE ON THAT DECISION TO STAY OR TO GO?

*P11: (..) Ooh dear.

*P12: I think it's huge actually.

*INT: DO YOU?

*P12: Hmm.

*INT: WHY?

*P12: Well, it depends how you're talking about equal opportunities: if you're talking about you know between umm races and sexes and all the rest of it, I think if I felt I was doing the same job as somebody else (..) and yet I wasn't getting paid or recognised (..) it's huge, I mean I just wouldn't...

*P11: ...No, that's true. (..) As individuals I think you can say that we're both quite strong characters and we wouldn't put up with (..) that sort of shit really.

*INT: SO YOU'D LEAVE?

*P11: Yeah (..) I think so.

*P12: I think if I found out that say like (colleague's name) who does the same job as me was getting paid more than me (..) I would, I would either leave or just take it up with the managers.

*P11: Especially in in in that particular situation where, you know, we feel that you you actually do a better job!

*P12: (laughs) We feel!

*P11: We do. We as a majority...

*P12: ...We do, we do feel that way...

*P11: ...feel that you do do a better job that she does. She tries very very hard but (..)

*P12: (whispers something inaud.)

*P11: So, yeah I think I'd feel the same.

*INT: WHAT ELSE WOULD MAKE YOU LEAVE?

*P12: I don't know, if they brought someone (..) in over, over, you know, above me. Maybe not at this position because I don't think I have experience to (..) sort of warrant but I think in that case if they brought somebody in and I'd done all this work and all the rest of it, that would.

*INT: BUT AS LONG AS THINGS WERE WORKING ON MERIT, YOU'D BE HAPPY ENOUGH?

*P11: Yeah (..)

*P12: I think at the moment, I mean I'm, I'm quite unhappy at the moment because umm it's so disorganised and there's like umm generally I feel that the company's got a bad name because we don't, we promise things and we don't provide them. So that's, that's nothing to do with equal opportunity, it's like (..) job satisfaction I suppose.

*P11: Yeah (..) but I think I'd feel the same if, well (..) I would and I wouldn't, because I've changed my career now and I'm desperate to learn, you you know, I would actually like somebody to come in above me, who I could turn to and look up to...

*P12: ...Yeah, as a mentor...

*P11: ...And you know (..) please tell me the answer to this question And that person would then hopefully put me forward for (..)

*P12: ...Would it make any difference if they were male or female?

*P11: No it wouldn't. Well, yes it would. I think because maybe I get on personally better with men than I do with women. There are only certain types of women that I can really (..) relate to. I'm not a girly (..) giggly type.

*P12: But I think if somebody was in (..) somebody who was in that work anyway they'd probably be...

*P11: ...But yeah, in this industry, as it is more of a male orientated industry that you would probably get quite a strong down to earth character.

*P12: Because we were talking about this in the pub today and umm the fact that I'd gone to an all girls school and umm Walter had been to an all boys school. And umm Kate, who'd been to a mixed school was like saying that she didn't, she thought it was unhealthy. And I agree with that on a social level but I think as far as umm sort of academic and things like that, that because it was all women together, you were never belittled and you were always...

*P11: ...Treated the same...

*P12: Exactly. You were always made to feel as though what you achieved was really important. Whereas I think sometimes in a mixed school you can get lost. I mean I don't know because I haven't got any experience.

*P11: Well I have and I personally feel that a lot of the boys were given preferential treatment to the girls.

***INT: IS THAT THE SAME IN THE WORKPLACE NOW STILL DO YOU THINK?**

*P11: I think umm (..) it's it's something you've got to (..) I can't answer that question, you know, as a whole, but in this particular organisation, umm (..) uhh, no I don't think so.

***INT: HOW MUCH DISCRIMINATION DO YOU THINK THERE IS GOING ON IN THE WORKPLACE IN GENERAL, NOT JUST THIS ORGANISATION?**

***P12: I think if you look...**

***P11: I think there's quite a lot...**

***P12: Yeah, 'cos if you look at this company and you look at sort of the last company I worked at, there's not a huge, it's not, if you look at people in everyday life, there's not the same (..) mix of cultures and races and sexes that you would find.**

***P11: NO.**

***P12: And you know whether it be there's less black people, less Asian people, less you know, what ever, there is definitely the majority of the high jobs taken by sort of white middle class...**

***P11: ...Men.**

***P12: Exactly yeah.**

***P11: It's nice to see a woman ...**

***P12: (laughs) (inaud)...**

***P11: ...No but it's true, isn't it? It is. But it's nice to see a woman in that position, you know.**

***P12: And and there's, you know when I was working at (Company Name) and I'd go along to these analysts meetings and you can pretty much, you know, guarantee I'd be the only woman there. And umm and I found that they would talk to you about different things as well.**

***P11: Yeah.**

***P12: Which was quite blatant (..) and even now, like still finance, the majority of them are men, so.**

*P11: Well they're entertaining umm

*P12: Oh yeah

*P11: They're entertaining clients and what not, I mean we can tell that story.

*P12: I will!

*P11: I thought you might!

*P12: In fact I might introduce you to him in a minute!

*P11: Ooh yes!

*INT: (Laughs)

*P12: There was one of my, was it one of my? Oh no it wasn't one of my customers but he has taken them out. There was this sales guy...

*P11: ...He was...

*P12: What?

*P11: (Company Name)

*P12: Yeah but it was Albany that they took to...(..)

*P11: Oh right

*P12: It's two stories

*P11: Two stories.

*P12: I'll tell you the first one about umm Fuji, it's like umm. Fuji is a (..) Oriental sort of Japanese, is it Japanese?

*P11: Japanese, yeah, Japanese investment bank.

*P12: And umm and we took two of the men out for a business meeting. And so, they were saying, oh where should you go, and Derek said oh, go to the City Circle. So we

went on to the City Circle. I walked in there and I was the only woman in there. It was all men, and the uhh theme for that is that the waitresses come in little short skirts, they bend over in your face, do you know what I mean? And I was like sat there and I so insulted, really was and I didn't like say anything, but (..) you know that kind of thing immediately excludes women. And he also did it again because we had umm we had, we got a new contract with a company and as celebration he took them out to a topless joint, the Capricorn Club. So, say that I then become their account manager (..) do you know? You're already like I...

*P11: That's how they'd expect you to continue your umm entertainment...

*P12: Well, you could never take them there. I wouldn't ever take them there. And I think that that belittles women.

*P11: He's a disgusting dirty old pervert!

*P12 & *INT (laughs)

*P11: He is. He said to one of the guys in the office once; this was the guy that they'd just sold the system to, he said, oh I don't know how you can work with all these gorgeous women around you, you know he was really like (makes a throwing up noise). But then you're talking about getting them laid (..) as well.

*P12: Whenever you're walking around the office (..) Oh yeah, it was the full works.

*P11: And that's on company.

*P12: Oh yeah, company expenses. But also, when you're walking around the office, he's like, you know, he's looking at your boobs, looking at your arse. I was saying the other day, he was watching me walk around and like I couldn't, but the time I'd finished, I just couldn't get my legs to move! (laughs). You know when you're so conscious that someone's actually watching you walk! (laughs)

*P11: Oh yeah, you don't want any one to (inaud) (laughs).

*INT: DOES ANYONE EVER SAY ANYTHING TO HIM?

*P12: Yeah. I've had a go at him.

*P11: Oh yeah. Yeah, I have.

*INT: WHAT DID YOU SAY?

*P12: I said that I thought his reputation, like from that, his reputation has been (..) completely (..) Nobody really respects him.

*P11: No no no no no. Oh yeah, because that's what he says to you. He goes, 'oh no no no no no. Oh no, I'm not like that.' Bollocks, you are mate!

*INT: DOES HE BELITTLE YOU WITH IT?

*P11: He tries to...

*P12: ..He tries to, he tries to...

*P11: He tries to but he doesn't get away with it. Not with us two.

*P12: ..He tries to flirt with you I think, rather than umm (..) you know, rather than solving problems, if he's, he's a manager, so.

*INT: BUT DOES HE TAKE YOU ON A BUSINESS LEVEL? DOES HE DEAL WITH YOU...

*P12: I wouldn't have said so.

*P11: No. Definitely not. He's always like, 'if you can do this, P12, I'll take you anywhere you want. I'll take you to (nightclub name)' and...

*P12: ...Yeah, he's offered to buy me this suit and stuff...

*P11: The times I've heard that. It's just (..) and I've just and I just say it to him now, don't I, you're just full of shit. You know, why say these things? You've said these things a hundred times before and you don't deliver. It's boring. It's a waste of his energy even saying it.

*P12: Yep.

***INT: DO YOU HAVE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY HERE?**

***P11: I don't know. I expect so.**

***P12: We haven't, they haven't got a handbook have they?**

***P11: We, uhh, yeah we have. Well a bit of paper. It is a bit of paper!**

***INT: TAKEN SERIOUSLY THEN IS IT!**

***P11: It is a photocopied bit of paper.**

***P12: There have been, however there have been people in the last company umm taken up for sexual harassment haven't they?**

***P11: There are, yeah. (..) Who are here now.**

***INT: YEAH? WHAT BECAUSE THEY WERE HARASSING SOMEONE OR THEY WERE HARASSED?**

***P12: Yeah, they were harassing someone.**

***P11: Yeah.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK IT WOULD MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO LIKE THAT BLOKE'S BEHAVIOUR IF THERE WAS A STRICT POLICY?**

***P11: No.**

***P12: I think, I I don't, I think it would do. I mean the person who was, I think they got demoted.**

***P11: Yeah.**

***INT: THE PERSON WHO WAS WHAT?**

***P12: Umm, harassing. He got demoted. And umm I think it, it sticks really, doesn't it?**

*P11: Hmm definitely.

*P12: But the other guy who did it, I think he's, you know, he's quite harmless but never the less,. you know. I think he was touching someone's backside or something.

*P11: Oh, Derek?

*P12: Yeah.

*P11: Yeah.

*P12: And umm (..) and I think he's a bit more cautious, don't you think?

*P11: Very. Very.

*P12: Because he was quite upset by it.

*P11: Well she reported him to Personnel. When we were in our other place we obviously had a larger Personnel department, dealt with these sort of problems. Took everything seriously (..) about that much, after they told the whole company. But err, it was brought down to his manager and her manager and they sat down and they discussed it and it was, yeah she felt (..) it was sexual harassment. It was just umm (..) a tap on the bottom, but he shouldn't have done it, you know. And that was the end of that. And I've forgotten what I was going to say! What was the moral of that story?

*INT & *P12: (MAKE A FEW PROMPTS)

*P11: Ahh, yes but, yes, the moral of that story was, since that event, as P12 says, he was very very very cautious.

*P12: Having said that, he did feel me on the arse in the pub the other day!

*P11: Yeah, but he's left now.

*P12: I know.

*P11: But the other guy, I don't know what he was like during the time he got umm (..) reprimanded. So I couldn't say.

***INT: WHAT SORT OF REPUTATION DO YOU THINK EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES HAVE DO YOU THINK IN THE WORKPLACE? I MEAN, IS IT SOMETHING THAT IS TAKEN SERIOUSLY?**

***P11: I don't think really it is. I don't think it's taken completely seriously.**

***P12: I think it's probably taken more seriously by women than men.**

***P11: Yeah. Yeah, that's exactly what. From a man's point of view. From a managing director (..) no, I don't think it's taken completely seriously yet.**

***P12: But do you know I think that...**

***P11: ...More so than it it probably ever has done, but still not (..) because they're still worried about, oh you girls could go off and get pregnant and have babies, so we don't want to give you more money, we don't want to do this for you.**

***P12: Well that's like, one of the ladies is umm, who works in Edinburgh, and she's gone for a pay review and umm she's just about to have a baby. She hasn't had a pay review for**

***P11: Fourteen months**

***P12: And umm they won't give her one because she's**

***INT: GOING TO HAVE A BABY?**

***P12: Yeah. So. (..) I was going to say that, you know, in some respects I suppose that men would find it very difficult to think that women, to to understand how women feel, because unless you've been in that situation (..) they wouldn't, I mean, (..) I didn't, I didn't even know about sort of umm equal opportunity and the fact that women were umm you know, distinguished from men, until I'd left school. And university. And really working was the only time I became aware of it. I was very naive about it. And it came as a huge shock that umm a man would uhh automatically think he was more intelligent umm, and all the rest of it, than me.**

***INT: SO YOU DIDN'T EXPECT TO BE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST?**

***P12:** Not at all. And even even here, you can find yourself talking and a man will cut in and talk over the top of you, where as a women wouldn't. And in lectures as well and things, it would be more likely that the men would speak up than the women. Because that's the way that they've been brought up, that their voice is more important than the woman's. The woman would say, 'oh you know, I might be wrong, but I was just thinking' and she would excuse herself before she would like you know say something. And I found myself doing it as well.

***INT: DID YOU EXPECT TO BE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST WHEN YOU CAME TO WORK?**

***P11:** (..) Well, I suppose I was a bit more aware of it maybe than P12 because I've been to a mixed school maybe, I don't know really. But I was always brought up to have such a strong character that you know, if someone said something to me, or I felt that I was being discriminated against, I would speak up for myself, you know. A lot of women don't. (..) And I could never work, I could never ever work in a company where I was really umm monopolised by men who thought I was, you know, dust on the table. I couldn't, I couldn't do that, you know. It's too demoralising. And (..) so when I came to work, I don't suppose I really thought about it then. It's (..).

***INT: AND DO YOU SEE IT'S LIKE IF YOU'VE GOT A STRONG ENOUGH CHARACTER THEN YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET DISCRIMINATED AGAINST? OR LIKE YOU ...**

***P11:** Well, I think it will help you. I think if you've got a strong enough character then you will stand up for yourself and you won't let them (..) you know, knock you down. And I think a lot of the time, you know, men do try and knock you down, in business.

***P12:** I think sometimes as well when you're trying to put your point across, in a meeting or something, the men will assume you're being emotional about it and you can't sort of (..) where as a man puts his point of view across. It's just you know OK But we're like, OK calm down. I hear that all the time, 'OK calm down', you know, 'it's all right' (..)like I'm not...

*P11: Yeah, they treat you like a (..) you know, you're their little daughter. (..) That's why I think every organisation is different and it it, the group of managers that you've got running the business. I mean, previously when we were (..) joined up to Financial Times (Company Name), our managing director was very equal, I believe. He had women account managers and they had (..) both sexes, equal amounts I should say in departments and it all seemed to fit in quite nicely but I think here, uhh, it's it's very, (in a funny voice) 'uhh manly, ha ha, slap my thigh. Let's take the clients out for a piss-up and get them laid.' I do think it's very male orientated here because our owner, is is, he's an American guy, I think he's very sexist. I don't know him I have to admit I haven't met him personally but...

*P12: ...Well the only thing I've heard about him is that umm, oh yes he likes the young girls.

*INT: THE YOUNG GIRLS?

*P12: Yeah, and I was...

*P11: ...He likes young girls. With big boobies.

*P12: And I was, and I was introduced to him and umm he didn't like pass the time of day, he went 'oh hello' and walked off and that was it.

*P11: Well I've got in a lift with him a couple of times and he's not said to me, hello, who are you, where do you work?

*P12: So, if you, you know, that's the head of the company, and he's taking, you know, one second of interest.

*P11: He swans, he swans the department as well and he's not really introduced himself to anyone bar a couple of male members.

*INT: SO DOES IT MATTER WHAT RACE THESE MEN ARE OR IS IT JUST MALES?

*P11: I don't think it does.

***P12: I think Asian men are particularly bad!**

***INT: YEAH?**

***P12: Yeah.**

***P12: I think, from working with (an Asian man she worked for at her last job) (..) I don't, I think the way that he, he carried on with us (..) absolutely shocking and I don't think you would get (..) an English man being quite so bad. I mean I'm not, but I'm not sure but I don't think so. But I think his behaviour was SO typical of an Asian man's attitudes to women. Very much so.**

***INT: WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER WAY THOUGH, LIKE (..) IF, BEING MALE, THAT YOU CAN GET ON, YOU CAN DO THIS, YOU CAN TAKE THE CLIENTS OUT TO GET LAID OR WHAT EVER - DOES IT MATTER WHAT RACE THE MAN IS, AS LONG AS HE'S MALE?**

***P11: No. It doesn't matter. From here, from this point of view here, no it doesn't matter because (..) we've we've got Japanese clients, Asian clients umm (..) probably other, several other...**

***P12: ...We've got Arabs..**

***P11: Yeah, Arabs. And no, it doesn't matter.**

***INT: DO YOU EMPLOY A MIX OF RACES OR NATIONALITIES?**

***P12: Not a huge amount, do we?**

***P11: No, we've got a few. (..) We've got a few down here and a couple upstairs.**

***P12: The one thing that they did do is with umm P13, who was in a very bad bike accident, and he was umm ...**

***P11: ...Yeah, that was very good I think...**

***P12: ..He was, uhh, he was in hospital for a year I think?**

*P11: Yeah it was.

*P12: And he's got some brain damage, and he has lost some of his abilities, and yet they kept his post open for him for a year. And they've taken him back.

*P11: And that's the thing. We keep talking about this this this biased manager of ours, who employs women to work for him. He he actually took, took time out, to go and visit P13's umm occupational therapist (..) at the rehabilitation centre he was in. Umm, and they sat down and discussed P13's therapy and it would be good therapy for him to come back to work because that's all he was really (..) living for each day, was like, I've got to get back to work because I've got to pay the mortgage and (..). And I think that's really good. And that was a side of him that I'd not really seen before.

*P12: I think one thing they don't do here is sack people. Really. You'd have to do something pretty god damn major.

*INT: WHAT ABOUT HAVING A BABY?

*P12: No, they don't sack you.

*P11: No.

*INT: DO THEY KEEP YOUR JOBS OPEN?

*P12: They do but umm...

*P11: ...Yeah, definitely, that's right...

*P12: ...I mean, the majority, well there's two of them aren't there and they (..) work a couple of days a week and umm (..)...

*P11: ...They don't pay any more than the government minimum statutory wage for umm maternity leave though.

*INT: BUT THEY WILL KEEP YOUR JOB OPEN.

*P11: And I've no idea if they do paternity leave. (..) Which I think would be a bloody good idea you know, it (..) as soon as that woman has a baby then the father...

***P12: They do because Andrew Mills had time off, didn't he.**

***P11: That's right, he had one day!**

***P12: Umm, did he?**

***P11: Yeah, and I think the rest was his holiday.**

***P12: Really.**

***P11: Yeah. But I I (..) it would probably open their eyes up a bit. I mean they've all had children, they know what it's all about, but uhh, maybe it would open their eyes up if they had to take paternity leave. You know, they were then away for three months, or for however long it was. I don't know.**

***P12: I think as well as though umm like the, would you say equal opportunity or discrimination? I think there's a way people look as well. Is that discrimination? Because I mean...**

***P11: Definitely.**

***P12: Because the girls would put...**

***P11: ...I've taken my nose stud out today as well!**

***P12: (laughs) but that is very much a factor. You know in the last company (ex-colleague's name), and I went for, I mean she was a stunning girl, really good looking, and I went for a job interview after her at the same company and umm, the bloke said to me that he wouldn't employ her because she was too good looking and she'd be too much of a distraction! But yeah, it can go the other way, that they'll employ them because they are good looking.**

***P11: Exactly. It's a bit of a no win situation that one really, isn't it? I suppose it depends on the individual doing the uhh interviewing.**

***INT: YEAH. IF AN ORGANISATION HAD A REALLY STRICT POLICY, WHERE YOU COULDN'T, YOU WEREN'T ALLOWED TO EMPLOY**

SOMEBODY ON ANY BASIS OTHER THAN MERIT, DO YOU THINK YOU WOULD ACTUALLY BE ABLE TO CHANGE BEHAVIOUR, IF IT WAS LAID DOWN AND STATED THAT YOU CAN'T NOT EMPLOY SOMEONE BECAUSE THEY'RE TOO PRETTY, OR YOU CAN'T NOT EMPLOY SOMEONE BECAUSE YOU THINK THEY'RE GOING TO HAVE CHILDREN...

*P12: I think there's always going to be a way around it.

*INT: YEAH?

*P12: But having said that, you know, you do hear of people, like they have to have a certain you know, these large international companies and for public image they have to have a certain amount of black people and they have to have a certain amount of women. They have to have a certain amount this, that and the other, and they do make an effort I think to put some token people in. You know and so perhaps in that way it does force them to change their behaviour. And then...

*INT: EVEN IF IT IS TOKEN?

*P12: I think it, it probably, you know (..) who knows? But that's the way that it appears to me.

*P11: ...I suppose it depends who's at the top. If it's just a yes man...

*P12: But then, but then again, it may change things if they do have to have you know token people in and they're good. You know, perhaps they can change the (..) umm outlook.

*INT: DO YOU THINK YOU SHOULD HAVE POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION? SO YOU PUT WOMEN IN, YOU PUT BLACK PEOPLE IN, INTO POSITIONS TO CHANGE THE MAKE UP OF THE WORKFORCE.

*P12: I think it should be on merit.

*P11: Well I do too, definitely.

*P12: I don't think you should have have fifty percent women, I think it should be on merit.

*P11: No.

*P12: And I think if we were allowed to compete and were viewed in the same way, then there would be equal amounts anyway.

*P11: Yeah, it would just fit naturally.

*P12: Exactly.

***INT: SO WHAT STOPS IT FROM BEING THAT AT THE MOMENT?**

*P12: People's umm prejudices. (..) I mean that starts like from when when you're at school because there's a prejudice, so when you come out then people are going to be different.

***INT: LIKE IF YOU TOOK YOUR WORK GROUP NOW AND SAT THEM ALL DOWN AND SAID, LOOK, YOU MAY NOT REALISE IT, BUT YOU WERE TREATING US LIKE WE'RE YOUR DAUGHTERS, LIKE YOU SAID EARLIER, OR THAT YOU'RE NOT TAKING US SERIOUSLY. IF YOU ACTUALLY POINTED IT OUT AND DID SOME SORT OF (..) I DON'T KNOW WHAT, AWARENESS TRAINING OR SOMETHING, DO YOU THINK THAT WOULD MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE?**

*P11: No.

*P12: Maybe it would make them think twice, I don't know.

*P11: I don't think it would.

***INT: NO?**

*P12: I I have mentioned it because there's been like umm comments...

*P11: ...I really don't. Because I I I mean I've been working on this product for almost ten years and this this one particular guy, umm he's always been the same and we've

said, various people have said various different things to him and it's it's done no good what so ever.

*P12: If you think about it, I mean even on a personal sort of umm basis. If if you were treating someone a certain way, at the end of the day they just don't wouldn't stand for it, you would have to change their behaviour to them. But if they keep taking...

*P11: No you wouldn't, no you wouldn't, because you piss them off that much, they'd leave so you get next. (..) That's what, that's how it works here, isn't it? You get pissed off, so you go. Someone else will replace you. They'll get pissed off, they'll go. It just, it's just like (..) rolling on and on and on. He's been here for a long time, he's not going to change. You're can't (..) teach an old dog new tricks.

*P12: No I don't think he will change.

*P11: And unfortunately, you know, he's been like that ever since I've joined the company.

***INT: IS THAT JUST ONE INDIVIDUAL THOUGH OR IS THAT SORT OF STANDARD?**

*P11: Yeah.

*P12: Yeah but it sets, it sets the tone though doesn't it?

*P11: Yeah it does definitely.

*P12: It very much sets the tone.

***INT: SO WOULD TRAINING OR POLICY MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO SOME PEOPLE? I MEAN NOT THAT ONE INDIVIDUAL.**

*P12: I think it would.

*P11: Yeah. Yeah, maybe to some. Not him.

*P12: I think the younger people coming in perhaps. (..) But then you would hope that, I think that that umm society is changing anyway so that were behaving a bit different.

***P11: Yeah, I hope so. I think it is.**

***P12: Have we only answered one question?**

***INT: NO, I'M JUST FLICKING THROUGH. I'M JUST TRYING TO THINK NOW, IF I SAID TO YOU, DO YOU WANT A MARVELLOUS, FANDANGLED EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?**

***P11: Do we want it or what would it be?**

***INT: WELL BOTH, LET'S START WITH DO YOU WANT IT.**

***P11: Umm (..) I suppose it, well yes and no. I mean yes because (..) depending on who was at the top as to why they employed so and so to do what job. Then yes it would be a good idea. But like we were saying earlier, you can't you can't just have, you know, so many black people and so many women, and ...**

***INT: ...NO, STILL TALKING ABOUT EMPLOYING PEOPLE ON MERIT...**

***P11: ...you've just got to employ people on merit.**

***INT: YEAH, BUT MAKING SURE THAT EVERYBODY...**

***P12: ...I think it's very difficult because if you suddenly change everything tomorrow, a lot of people would have a big shock. Because there's, for women being treated differently, there are obviously aspects from it, and you can probably get away with an awful lot more than a man in the same position maybe would be able to get away with. That's in some situations, I think that I can get away with more than a man in my position would be able to. So there is, you know albeit smaller, but there is a positive side to it as well.**

***INT: IS THERE A POSITIVE SIDE TO HAVING MEN AND WOMEN WORKING TOGETHER?**

***P12: Yeah.**

***P11: Yeah I think so. Because...**

*P12: ...Because they bring different (..) they bring different things to...

*P11: Yeah, two, two sets of ideas, has got to come a good answer really.

***INT: IF YOU HAD TO SELL INVESTING IN PEOPLE TO THE PERSON THAT HELD THE PURSE STRINGS, HOW WOULD YOU DO IT?**

*P11: (gasps)

*P12: I think I would show...

*P11: ...I'd find that very easy I would...

*P12: I think you'd show them what benefits, in both money terms and umm (..) progress...

*P11: Actually investing in you, yeah. Your output.

***INT: WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS THEN, YOUR OUTPUT?**

*P11: Yeah, your output. You'd save them money. You know especially (..) for me personally, you know if they invested in me, I could learn, you know, I'm hungry for knowledge at the moment. They know that. I'll go and learn this, then we can stop that man from coming in. That will save us and thousand pounds a week or whatever. Uhh, so that would save them money. It would make me happy. (..) Umm, it might cost a little bit more to start with but then (..) it's going to save them money in the future.

***INT: AND WOULD YOU STAY WITH THEM LONGER THAN IF YOU FELT THEY HADN'T...**

*P11: I would.

*P12: I think you've stayed this long because you've liked the company, haven't you.

*P11: I do, yeah. I've liked the people I've worked for. And unfortunately all the nice people are slowly leaving you know, which makes it. And because it (..) maybe it's always been so umm shitty with this one person but because we were so big, we couldn't see it. And now it's all out in the open, there's only a handful of us, we can see

it. And it don't look so good. But umm, I would definitely stay, especially if they umm (..) gave me some kind of of of like merit rise....

*P12: ...Recognition.

*P11: And and recognition. Because at the moment, for a long time they were saying, you can't do this job, you can't do this job. And I said I can, I will and I have!

*P12: But you've got to be doubly determined.

*P11: You have, yeah.

*INT: DID YOU HAVE TO BE TWICE AS GOOD TO DO IT AS WELL?

*P12: I think they've left you to do it on your own, haven't they?

*P11: Umm yeah, I think I have, yeah, had to be twice as good because as P12 says, they've left me to do it on my own.

*P12: Sink or swim.

*P11: You know, I was chunked in at the deep end there. Do it, it's got to be done, you know, our balls are on the line. Get it done. And I've done it and I've come back and said, look I've done it, see? So I think if they did invest in me, like if they would invest in you and the rest of the people in the company, those people would feel happier because they'd feel that the company was giving them something. And they would then give back because they would feel happier.

*P12: I think the women are a lot more susceptible to that than the men (..) as well. I think women tend to give an awful lot more.

*P11: Oh god yeah.

*P12: And umm umm you know (..) they're just more concerned about it, the whole thing...

*P11: ...It's job satisfaction as well, I mean if you've got happy workers, you'll have a productive business.

*P12: Also if it's a more positive atmosphere (..) at the moment we're we're umm very busy and it's all very stressful which I think can be quite good in business sometimes. But it's the wrong kind of stress. It's like umm firefighting I suppose, that's a word that comes up all the time, rather than a positive, you know, we're heading for this goal.

*P11: Well that's because we don't have any organisation. There's no planning, you know.

*P12: No, there's no structure.

***INT: DO YOU THINK MEN NOTICE WHAT'S GOING ON FOR THE WOMEN WHERE YOU WORK AS WELL?**

*P11: I don't know.

*P12: I don't think so. (..) I think they see the women (..) I think if I was to say what I thought they were thinking, which is all very, I would say they think that women get a better deal than the men.

***INT: WHY?**

*P12: Because umm (..) well there's a couple of women who do get, because they get on very well with the manager, they get treated differently.

*P11: Oh yeah.

*P12: Umm, and generally the women are spoken to (..) on a regular basis! You know, which does mean something. And also involved more. And umm, that's purely because the manager can deal better with women. Like he'll ask me (..) to go and ask one of the blokes something instead of just going and asking himself.

*P11: Hmm, hmm, yes, he does do that.

*P12: Which shows, which shows obviously he can't communicate with them. (..)

***INT: DO YOU THINK THERE IS MORE DISCRIMINATION IN SOME INDUSTRIES THAN OTHERS?**

*P12: Yes. Yes.

*P11: Which industries do you think they are then?

*P12: I think finance way above and the City, everything's sort of huge, you know.

*P11: Oh yeah. Well it was always a (..) sort of (..) school boy tie business, wasn't it.
Old school tie.

*P12: I think it still is to a large extent.

*P11: Yes, yeah. It is.

*INT: AND WHAT ABOUT WITHIN ORGANISATIONS, DO YOU THINK THERE ARE CERTAIN LEVELS WITHIN IT WHERE THERE IS MORE DISCRIMINATION?

*P11: I still think it's it's the old saying of of, 'it's not what you know, it's who you know.' And I think so and so's daddy would get him a jolly good job, you know (..) with someone else if he could. And he'd probably be accepted.

*INT: DO YOU SEE IT MORE AT ENTRY LEVEL OR AT MANAGEMENT LEVEL OR AT...

*P12: Management.

*P11: Management definitely.

*INT: SO WHAT, CAN YOU GO SO FAR AND NO FURTHER IF YOU HAVEN'T GOT THE RIGHT...

*P12: I think it comes down to silly things like umm I think, my cousin works for the (Company Name) and umm, she's doing very well and she's very intelligent and she's got to a certain level and they don't like the way she speaks.

*P11: No? (makes tutting noise)

*P12: Yeah. And it's, you know, because she has an accent, and umm, so they want her to go to elocution lessons.

*INT: SERIOUS?

*P12: Yeah, that's ridiculous. I I don't think they'd do that to a man.

*P11: Well saying that (..) umm...

*P12: You think they would?

*P11: No. Saying that (..) a lot of our customers didn't take (person's name) seriously because of the way he spoke.

*P12: Hmm.

*P11: Which is very unfair but a lot of our customers that he dealt with, were old wrinklies as well.

*INT: SO WHAT DO YOU NEED TO MOVE ON THEN? WHAT DO YOU NEED TO 'DO WELL' IN THIS INDUSTRY?

*P12: As a woman or a man or just generally?

*INT: WELL YEAH, DO YOU NEED TO BE A WOMAN OR A MAN OR AN ACCENT OR A CONTACT, OR WHAT?

*P11: I think you just need to leave this company.

*INT: (LAUGHS)

*P11: Honestly, no I do!

*P12: Are you talking about this company specifically?

*INT: WELL, WHAT EVER, YEAH, GENERALLY AS WELL.

*P12: I think generally you have to be enthusiastic and ambitious.

*P11: Most definitely and qualified.

*P12: Umm depending, depending on the industry (..) umm you have to have come from the right place perhaps - in finance I think you're, you know (..) in (Investment Bank P12 had worked for previously) if you'd come from Cambridge and Oxford you'd (..) you know, all the people who replaced us did. That was one of the...

*P11: I think banks are like that though aren't they?

*P12: Oh very much so, but that that, I mean that's very biased because people who went to Cambridge and all the rest of it sometimes you know, their fathers did pay for them to go and they didn't (..) so they probably haven't got the umm (..) intelligence...

*P11: Yes.

*P12: ...You know, than someone who would have to (..) and umm and that's hugely you know noticeable, whereas in somewhere like Germany, where they they invest a lot more in education and umm, you know they follow it through and it's not just the academic it's also the practical, you can see that in their industry and I think you can (..) you know see that now (inaud).

*INT: SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A MAN TO GET ON?

*P12: No I don't think to to get on, no.

*P11: No, I don't think so now. No, not now. Maybe a good few years ago but I don't think so now.

*INT: OK FINAL QUESTION; MONITORING PRACTICES....

*P11: ...I just thought of something, right. This particular man we keep talking about, right. When I was, well this was ten years ago when I first joined, my boss was a lesbian. And umm she was very very very good at her job and put in a lot of hours. She was loved by all the customers. Anyway, uhh pay rise time (..) she gets something like two hundred pounds. Now this was in the eighties, when pay rises were very good umm and she got two hundred pounds and she was very very upset about it and she

went to speak to this man and he said to her, 'well if you wore skirts and starting acting like a manager, then we'll give you a manager's pay rise'. I've just remembered that!

*P12: Well done! (laughs)

*P11: What a bastard.

*INT: WHAT DID SHE DO?

*P11: She cried her eyes out and uhh, 'cos she was a really strong person as well. She cried her eyes out and just thought, well I'll try. And did, and wore a skirt and I thought oh no, you've given in but what do you do in a situation like that? I don't know. (..) So she wore a skirt and came to work and umm got poached by one of our big customers.

*INT: SO SHE DIDN'T NEED THE PAY RISE FROM HIM ANYWAY!

*P11: Nope!

*P12: I think they do, I think that companies do it as well and it's down to individuals, they ear mark someone who they don't think is going to get on. So no matter what you do, you can bend over backwards, you can spend, you know, hours of overtime and you're still not going to get anywhere because they have decided in their minds that you're not going to get on.

*P11: That's right. That's like this woman. I mean she was bloody good at her job. She, she knew it inside out.

*P12: I think it's very...

*P11: ...I don't know, maybe he felt threatened.

*P12: I think a lot of ways, in that way, that management is really very umm you know unprofessional because they don't sort of disjoint their their personality, they'll probably employ people that they like as well, rather than people they think probably can do the job very well.

*P11: Mmm, hmmm.

***INT: OK LET ME JUST MOVE IT ON THEN. MONITORING THINGS; YOU KNOW WHEN YOU FILL IN APPLICATION FORMS AND THEY'VE GOT THE MONITORING, EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING THING ON THE BACK WHERE YOU TICK THE BOXES THAT APPLY TO YOU.**

***P11: Oh yeah.**

***INT: WHAT'S YOUR VIEW ON THOSE? DO YOU THINK THEY'RE HELPFUL OR A HINDRANCE OR...**

***P11: Well why why do they need to know all that anyway?**

***INT: TO CHECK, TO MONITOR THAT THEY ARE GETTING APPLICATIONS FROM ALL GROUPS OF PEOPLE.**

***P11: Equal opportunities, right.**

***P12: It depends for what reason they're doing it. I suppose if that, if that's the case, then yeah it's a good thing. But if it's a way of umm you know separating, oh that's the women pile and that's the, then it's wrong.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK IT DOES GET MISUSED THEN?**

***P11: Or whether you're, you know, Asian or (..)**

***P12: Yeah, I would think they would look at that, yeah.**

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED

PARTICIPANT NO. 13 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

***INT: O.K. IF I START BY ASKING, IF I SAID TO YOU WHAT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MEAN TO YOU, HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE IT? WHAT WOULD YOU ANSWER?**

***P13: (..) It's the employment of somebody regardless of age, sex, colour (..) or physical (..) abilities.**

***INT: JUST WITHIN BEING EMPLOYED, THE SELECTION POINT OR ONCE YOU HOLD A JOB AS WELL?**

***P13: Hopefully, yes.**

***INT: HOPEFULLY BOTH?**

***P13: Hopefully both. Of course it depends on what what happens. I mean (..) speaking personally, if I'd been (..) had serious brain damage that left me unable to complete my job normally, I wouldn't have expected to be re-employed. (..) Using myself as an example.**

***INT: WHAT SORT OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES DO YOU SEE WITHIN THIS COMPANY THEN, IN THAT THEY HAVE RE-EMPLOYED YOU, AND HELD YOUR JOB OPEN, OR, I MEAN I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR STORY IS REALLY SO...**

***P13: Well I see it around me. I see (..) people being employed on their merits, regardless of whether their (..) physical abilities or umm (..).**

***INT: DO YOU THINK PEOPLE REALLY ARE EMPLOYED ON MERIT, GENERALLY?**

***P13: Yes, I do.**

***INT: DO YOU SEE EXAMPLES WHERE THEY'RE NOT? OR WHERE PEOPLE ARE EXCLUDED FOR REASONS OTHER THAN ON MERIT?**

***P13: Not so far.**

***INT: NO? JUST AT THIS PLACE OR ANYWHERE ELSE IN YOUR WORKING EXPERIENCE?**

***P13: In my working experience maybe I've been completely blind to it. Rather than reach the levels (..)umm (..) if I've been promoted or something like that, or other people have been put down for reasons other than the ability to complete the job. In normal circumstances.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK IT EVER HAPPENS?**

***P13: It does.**

***INT: WHAT EXAMPLES OF THAT DO YOU SEE?**

***P13: (..) It's called the glass ceiling isn't it? Where men are much more likely (..) to be promoted to senior levels than women are.**

***INT: AND IS THAT A TERM THAT YOU'VE JUST HEARD BANDIED AROUND, OR IS IT SOMETHING THAT YOU'VE SEEN EVIDENCE OF, OR ...**

***P13: Yes. I've heard it bandied around. I've not seen any evidence myself like wherever I've worked, I've never reached the sort of levels where I've been involved in that sort of thing.**

***INT: O.K., SO IF WE GOT BACK TO THE DEFINITION OF EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY; WHICH WOULD BE THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF A COMPANY PROVIDING THAT TO YOU AND WHICH WOULD BE THE LEAST IMPORTANT? (..) LIKE IS IT REALLY IMPORTANT THAT THEY HAVE A POLICY ON PAPER, OR THAT THEY TRAIN FOR POLICY, OR THAT YOU SEE THINGS IN ACTION, OR, I MEAN, WHAT FEATURE EMBODIES EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU?**

***P13: (..) Umm, that I was interviewed, mainly. The first thing is that I was interviewed on (..) that I was able to do the job. And where there were grey areas, that I wasn't sure about, I would HOPE to get training in that.**

***INT: YEAH. AND HAVE YOU HAD TRAINING SO FAR?**

***P13: Mmm yeah. I mean since I came back from my absence, you know where I was off sick fifteen months, I've come back to a completely different company to what I was in before. Umm, a different system. I've certainly (..) I'm certainly getting trained on now.**

***INT: SO BECAUSE THE COMPANY HAS BEEN WILLING TO DO THAT FOR YOU - TO TRAIN YOU IN THE SKILLS THAT YOU NEEDED THEN...**

***P13: They didn't HAVE to of course.**

***INT: DOES THAT (..) MAKE YOU ANY MORE LOYAL TO THIS COMPANY, OR...**

***P13: Yes it does.**

***INT: YEAH?**

***P13: (..) Having said that, I was, when we were being sold, when [company name], were being sold. I got swept in, like a lot of my colleagues, were all looking for new jobs (..) other work. And I suppose peer pressure or something like that.**

***INT: WHAT, THAT MADE YOU LOOK FOR SOMETHING ELSE?**

***P13: Yeah, that's right. And funnily enough, I mean, earlier this year, earlier last year, when I was going back to work, I came back to my flat and found a couple of letters from the same agencies that I'd been to, so they were still keen on seeing me!**

***INT: YEAH? TEMPTING YOU!**

***P13:** Yes, they didn't know about the circumstances I'd gone through in the previous months. I had to tell them, no, I'm not looking now, I'm going back to my (..) same employer.

***INT:** SO, WHAT BENEFITS DO YOU THINK IT BRINGS TO YOU INDIVIDUALLY THAT THEY'VE PROVIDED YOU WITH THE OPPORTUNITY, TO TRAIN, AND TO COME BACK TO YOUR JOB, OR (..) BECAUSE THEY'VE INVESTED IN YOU AS A PERSON, WHAT BENEFITS DOES THAT BRING TO YOU INDIVIDUALLY?

***P13:** (..)

***INT:** YOU'VE ALREADY SAID THAT YOU'RE MORE LOYAL TO THEM.

***P13:** Well I'm very grateful they've decided to do that. (..) It umm, (..) I (inaud) was at the stage where they didn't even make me redundant because they hadn't paid me for several months. (..) It umm (..) it was nice that they were loyal to me in the sense that they reinstated, they still kept me on the books, umm but, (..) I thought also I had skills to offer them. I must have been good at my job or they wouldn't have let me come back after over a year.

***INT:** SO DOES IT MAKE YOU LESS LIKELY TO LEAVE THEM? YOU'VE ALREADY SAID THAT YOU'RE MORE LOYAL TO THEM.

***P13:** At the moment, yes! But I'm not, I've not got a blind faith. If I can see an opportunity somewhere else, that I think mmm I like the sound of that. Now they've trained me on the AS400, there's a lot of money to made on that.

***INT:** THEY'VE GIVEN YOU THE SKILLS TO MOVE ON SOMEWHERE ELSE!
(LAUGHS)

***P13:** Yes that's right! (laughs).

***INT:** O.K. SO DOES IT MAKE YOU WORK ANY HARDER FOR THEM, BECAUSE THEY'VE INVESTED IN YOU?

*P13: (..) I don't think so.

*INT: DOES IT INCREASE YOUR JOB SATISFACTION?

*P13: Yes it does, umm because I know that, now I'm working (..) the soft, the software is the same but it still (inaud) it's a different company really. The same people work mainly (..) but I think I've got more umm chance of promotion. There are different things I can move into. I've seen, when I was absent, I've seen some of my colleagues (..) they were junior to me, move into quite (..) different positions now that are (..) (inaud) where they're, they're relying on ME.

*INT: SO YOU'VE SEEN THAT THERE ARE SOME OPPORTUNITIES...

*P13: I can, I can move into a more senior position.

*INT: IF YOU DIDN'T THINK THERE WERE OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN AN ORGANISATION, WOULD YOU MOVE ON THEN?

*P13: Eventually, yes.

*INT: WOULD YOU (..) LIKE TO SEE A STRICTER EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY LAID DOWN WITHIN THIS ORGANISATION, OR DO YOU NOT THINK IT MAKES MUCH DIFFERENCE WHAT POLICY THEY HAVE?

*P13: (..) I don't think it's so important here, because to get people with the skills they need, especially with the system we have (..) it's what I was saying to you - they, it pays pretty well, if you're experienced, working on the AS400 system, so I don't think it would matter if they were black, if they were a woman. If they've got the skills.

*INT: SO YOU BELIEVE THEY ARE EMPLOYING PURELY ON MERIT?

*P13: Yeah. I mean I'm making them sound like (..) I don't know (..)

*INT: ANGELS? (LAUGHS)

*P13: Yes, this is the Office Angels! (laughs)

***INT: NO, I JUST, I'M TRYING TO SEE HOW MUCH EFFECT PEOPLE BELIEVE HAVING A POLICY WILL MAKE ON OTHER PEOPLE'S BEHAVIOUR. BECAUSE YOU FIND A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO SAY YES, IF WE HAD ALL OF THIS WRITTEN DOWN, SUDDENLY EVERYBODY'S ATTITUDE WOULD CHANGE TOWARDS EMPLOYING DISABLED PEOPLE, BLACK PEOPLE, PROMOTING WOMEN; WHATEVER ANGLE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES YOU'RE LOOKING AT...**

***P13: But it is already in law.**

***INT: YES IT IS BUT, I MEAN THE LAW IS MINIMAL REALLY AND THEY HAVEN'T HAD AS MUCH EFFECT AS THEY SHOULD HAVE DONE. SO THAT IT'S MORE SORT OF, THE BARRIERS ARE PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES AND PREJUDICES...**

***P13: Sometimes I feel a bit, I have felt quite cynical about the whole thing because umm (..) sure I'm, I have a disability that might, might be permanent (..) but there's a chance that with the help of the specialists, I might get my left arm working again. But umm (..) of course (..) there are legal obligations for helping to employ quotas (..) of disabled people, black people. (..) I must admit I don't really like to be (..) part of a company that is satisfying quota regulations but umm, fortunately, I like the job anyway, so (..) so that's the trade-off.**

***INT: YES. UHH, THERE IS A QUOTA FOR, LEFT OVER FROM THE POST WAR DAYS ACTUALLY, FOR DISABLED BUT THERE ISN'T, IT'S ILLEGAL TO HAVE A QUOTA SYSTEM FOR ANY BASIS OTHER THAN THAT. THOUGH THAT MAY BE CHANGING AS WELL. (..)**

BUT, DO YOU THINK UMM, WELL WHAT SORT OF REPUTATION DO YOU THINK EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES HAS IN GENERAL?

***P13: Umm (..) it's not bad regarding employment but umm, when it comes to other things, like, especially things like transport policym where they're not providing (..) ramps for wheelchairs. Umm helpful for someone to (..) buses. I mean you see more of that now because so many companies feel compelled.**

***INT: WHY DO YOU THINK THEY DO FEEL COMPELLED?**

***P13: Because of pressure from political lobbies mainly. Then they tend to get into, on to the news, like all those disabled people that decided to stop the traffic in Oxford Street, because they weren't able to get on the buses. Of course, one of the heads of that disabled group, her umm father, was a member, I think he was an MP or a member of the Select Committee in Parliament. (..)**

***INT: SOMEONE IN THE KNOW THEN.**

***P13: He was (..) actively against what she was campaigning for, and it created a lot of publicity, so, other companies see that and they think ahh (..) we ought to spend a little more money (..)**

***INT: TO AVOID NEGATIVE PUBLICITY?**

***P13: Mmm, that's right.**

***INT: YEAH. (..) I PERSONALLY THINK A LOT TROUBLE COMES BECAUSE THERE IS NOT ENOUGH POLITICAL PRESSURE MAYBE. BIG COMPANIES WON'T ACT OUT OF THE GOODNESS OF THEIR HEART: THEY'LL DO IT TO AVOID NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES, OR BECAUSE THEY'RE LEGALLY REQUIRED TO DO SO, OR BECAUSE THEY CAN SEE A MONETARY OF ADVANTAGE TO DOING SO. AND THEY SEEM TO BE THE ONLY...**

***P13: Well, sometimes you have to (..) do things, do things for quality through your umm through Parliament. You have to compel people, otherwise they just (..)**

***INT: WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE BEING DONE THEN?**

***P13: Yes I'd like to see less exploitation (..) umm, especially regarding pay. (..)**

***INT: FOR WHOM?**

***P13: The lowly paid! I don't see why employers should (..) take advantage, just because (..) Well they're doing something that is basically making the company, a company a lot of money, and not paying them a living wage for it. Or they're paying a**

very low rate and then telling them to go to the government to get family credit. So why should the state subsidise, why should the tax payer subsidise bad employers?

***INT: MMM. I'M WITH YOU ON THAT ONE I THINK!**

***P13: I'll take my Labour party hat off now! (laughs)**

***INT: HOW MUCH EFFECT ON BEHAVIOUR DO YOU THINK IT WOULD HAVE THEN IF THERE WAS MORE POLITICAL PRESSURE, IF THERE WAS MORE GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION, OR RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON EMPLOYERS, HOW MUCH EFFECT DO YOU THINK YOU'D ACTUALLY SEE? HOW MUCH CHANGE WOULD THERE BE IN THE WORKPLACE?**

***P13: (..)**

***INT: IF THERE WERE STRICTER POLICIES?**

***P13: (..) There again, you might see problems with employment because of differentials. If umm, like a minimum wage, it depends on what level it is set at. (..) Because people that are already on three pounds an hour (..) if it was set at that - they'd get some junior colleagues also on three pounds an hour - they'd want their money increased. And that (..) could lead to some people being (..) laid off, or not employed; less people being employed. (..)**

***INT: WHAT ABOUT WITH, TAKING IT BACK TO THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FIELD, WITHIN WITHIN COMPANIES, IF THEY HAD TO HAVE A POLICY. I MEAN YOU DON'T HAVE TO HAVE A POLICY AT ALL. COMPANIES HAVE NO REQUIREMENT, NO LEGAL REQUIREMENT TO HAVE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY PER SE. THEY ARE REQUIRED BY LAW TO NOT DISCRIMINATE AND THAT'S IT. THAT'S AS FAR AS IT GOES. DO YOU THINK THERE'S ANY REASON WHY A COMPANY SHOULD THEN ADOPT A POLICY?**

***P13: Like you were saying, the problem with quotas (..) is you might have, you might fulfil that quota (..) but they might not be very productive people.**

***INT: YEAH, NOW WE'RE STILL...**

***P13: That's the problem.**

***INT: WE'RE STILL RETAINING THE SELECTION BY MERIT, NOT TALKING ABOUT QUOTAS AND TARGETS PARTICULARLY BUT HAVING A POLICY WHERE THEY DO MORE THAN WRITE IT DOWN: THEY ACTIVELY ENCOURAGE UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS TO APPLY FOR JOBS; WHERE THEY HAVE EVIDENCE OF PEOPLE BEING PROMOTED THROUGH THE GLASS CEILING, WHERE THEY MAYBE EMPLOY SOME SORT OF AWARENESS TRAINING, OR WHERE THEY IMPROVE ACCESS TO THEIR BUILDINGS; MAKING THE INVESTMENT IN HAVING A DIVERSE WORKFORCE.**

***P13: That's much more likely to happen in the public sector, than it is (..)**

***INT: CAN YOU SEE ANY REASON WHY, OUTSIDE OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR, ANYBODY WOULD WANT TO DO THAT? ANY EMPLOYER WOULD WANT TO (..) INVEST IN THAT SORT OF PROGRAMME?**

***P13: (..) Initially it would give them, give them more publicity. If you're aware of who they are, (..) their products. (..)**

***INT: SO THERE'D BE SOME ADVANTAGE TO THAT. O.K., CAN YOU SEE ANY COSTS TO IT?**

***P13: (..) Umm, some people might feel that if they'd been made by (inaud.) single people (inaud) they might they might be inferior.**

***INT: SAY THAT AGAIN, SORRY?**

***P13: If they'd been made by a group of disabled people, they might be inferior.**

***INT: IF WHAT'S BEING MADE, THE POLICIES?**

***P13:** Not the policies but (..) if a company has a policy of employing lots of disabled people (..) others might think that the (..) end product isn't so good. It depends on what sort of business they have, probably (inaud).

***INT:** OH RIGHT. SO THEY MIGHT HAVE A NEGATIVE UMM IMPRESSION WITH EXTERNAL PEOPLE, OR SOMETHING? RIGHT OH.

***P13:** But it could be better, if the company actually had a more formal charter. (..) Especially with the groups who are aiming to (..) target.(..)

***INT:** BECAUSE I THINK THIS IS LIKE THE KERNEL OF MY RESEARCH: WHAT I REALLY REALLY WANT TO FIND OUT IS, IF THEY DO ALL THIS, IF THEY MAKE THE EFFORT, IF THEY PUT THESE POLICIES IN PLACE, IF THEY DO THE TRAINING, IF THEY MAKE BUILDINGS ACCESSIBLE, IF THEY DO ALL OF THIS, AND THEY'VE ATTRACTED (..) UMM, AND MAINTAINED; ATTAINED AND MAINTAINED A DIVERSE WORKFORCE, THAT'S REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GENERAL POPULATION. YOU KNOW, VERY NICE, WELL DONE, BUT WHY SHOULD THEY BOTHER? WHAT'S THE ADVANTAGE OF HAVING A DIVERSE WORKFORCE? WHAT'S THE ADVANTAGE OF HAVING A MIX OF PEOPLE WORK FOR YOU? WHAT WILL THEY GAIN FROM IT?

***P13:** Because it's less (..) I think it's less drain on the tax payer. If more people that appear to be less able are working, are not (..) not claiming benefits. It's the same for, I mean (..) black people are discriminated against (..) umm (..) Not only am I disabled, I'm also gay, so, and in the closet? No, I'm not. And of course there are a lot of employers that do discriminate against that. They won't promote them (..) why, I've no idea. But now of course we're seeing more people, especially in public life (..) that are gay. Chris Smith (..)

***INT:** WELL THIS IS IT, SO ON A GLOBAL SCALE, IN AN IDEAL WORLD, IT'S ALL SO LOVELY, YOU KNOW EVERYBODY CAN BE EMPLOYED FOR (..) REGARDLESS OF WHO THEY ARE. YOU KNOW, EVERYBODY BRINGS A UNIQUE BLEND OF WHATEVER TO, TO AN ORGANISATION.

***P13:** Black people as well. The amount of unemployed black people there are, that are probably perfectly well qualified to the job, like a white person but they go to the interview and of course, I've heard it said (..) (inaud) no, (..) you go to the interview and unless they like the look of you (..) no matter how well qualified you are, how well you speak (..) what your qualifications are, your experiences (..) they make the decision almost straight away.

***INT:** WHETHER YOU'D FIT IN OR NOT?

***P13:** So, (..) that's where the difficulty is really with legislation. And (..) if you have it as a company policy (..) you have to make sure you employ the right people to actually interview but umm (..)

***INT:** MMM, IT'S DIFFICULT TO OVERSEE IT. (..) SO HAVE YOU BEEN DISCRIMINATED AGAINST BECAUSE YOU ARE GAY?

***P13:** No. (..) Not yet. (laughs)

***INT:** TOUCH SOME WOOD! (LAUGHS)

***P13:** (laughs)

***INT:** AND HOW ABOUT YOUR VIEW OF THE WORK PLACE NOW, IS THAT DIFFERENT FROM PRIOR TO YOUR ACCIDENT?

***P13:** (..) It is here because I've really been very fortunate to have a good employer. I know that I had, I had the skills they needed because people were leaving. They still are. So to have someone with experience of the job. I was absent for a long time but (..)

***INT:** YOU'RE STILL PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF DOING THE JOB.

***P13:** (Nods in agreement).

***INT:** YOU USED THE PHRASE 'GOOD EMPLOYER' THERE. WHAT IS A 'GOOD EMPLOYER'?

***P13: (..) Hmm, someone that looks a bit further than first, first impressions.**

***INT: CAN YOU IDENTIFY A 'GOOD EMPLOYER' FROM A 'BAD EMPLOYER'?**

***P13: (..)**

***INT: IS IT QUITE EASY TO DISTINGUISH? WOULD YOU BE ABLE TO KNOW BY THE REPUTATION OF A COMPANY OR WOULD YOU HAVE TO WORK THERE?**

***P13: Someone that isn't taking advantage of their employees all the time. Making them work long hours. Making them work long hours for low pay!**

***INT: DO YOU THINK THAT COULD BE A ROUTE TO CHANGE IF EMPLOYEES START TO CHOOSE 'GOOD EMPLOYERS' OVER BAD ONES?**

***P13: Mmm indeed. A bad employer will soon realise why they're not recruiting (..) hopefully. Of course bad employers (..) often recruit people anyway because the people they recruit are desperate to work. Work no matter what the conditions are, no matter how (..) dangerous (..) the surroundings are (..).**

***INT: SO, IT NEEDS A CHANGE IN THE ECONOMY SO THAT THE EMPLOYEE CAN CHOOSE? IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?**

***P13: Say that again.**

***INT: IT NEEDS A CHANGE IN THE, WE NEED A BETTER ECONOMY SO THAT THE EMPLOYEE CAN ACTUALLY CHOOSE A 'GOOD' OVER A 'BAD EMPLOYER', OR WOULD PEOPLE DO IT ANYWAY - TAKE BAD JOBS?**

***P13: (..) Well we're supposed to have a very good economy at the moment (..) here. Rapidly falling unemployment (in an ironic tone) (..) magically!**

***INT: (LAUGHS) DISAPPEARS UNDER THE CARPET! WE JUST CALLED YOU SOMETHING ELSE!**

*P13: Let's change the subject!

*INT: OH ALRIGHT, LET ME JUST MOVE THROUGH A COUPLE MORE OF THE THINGS I'VE GOT HERE THEN (I.E. MY INTERVIEW SCHEDULE) (..) UMM, DO YOU WANT TO HAVE (..) THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GROUPS AT WORK ACKNOWLEDGED OR IGNORED? I MEAN DO YOU WANT TO BE KNOWN AS A 'DISABLED GAY MAN' OR DO YOU JUST WANT TO BE (..) YOU KNOW, DO YOU WANT THAT PERSON OVER THERE TO BE 'A BLACK WORKER', THAT PERSON TO BE (..) WHATEVER, OR DO YOU JUST ...

*P13: That's putting people in pigeon holes and that's not really necessary. It should be acknowledged somewhere within an organisation.

*INT: MMM, TO WHAT LEVEL?

*P13: Well I can't really see an employer that (inaud) do actually (..) (inaud) us as gay workers, black workers, black and gay workers, black, gay and disabled workers! (laughs).

*INT: (LAUGHS) BECAUSE THAT KIND OF LEADS ME ON TO MY NEXT QUESTION WHICH IS ABOUT MONITORING PRACTICES: WHERE YOU DO HAVE THE BOXES WHEN YOU APPLY FOR JOBS, THE BOXES AT THE BACK, 'PLEASE TICK IF YOU'RE THIS, IF YOU'RE THIS, IF YOU'RE THIS. WHAT'S YOUR VIEW ON THOSE?

*P13: Hmm, (..) I, I hate that. It's like a real invasion of privacy.

*INT: DO YOU THINK IT'S NECESSARY? (..) OR NOSY, OR?

*P13: Well you might want to know if a particular (..) person you're, you might want to employ, is prejudiced against some things. But if you're really skilled at interviewing, you'd know soon enough from their answers. Or (..) when they're not answering properly, when they're trying to hide something, you can tell from looking at them, from their body language or (..) when they're not keen on answering particular questions and that kind of thing (..) not something like "oh do you want to work with gays?"

***INT: (LAUGHS)**

***P13: I mean they'd look, they'd (..) you probably would get some (..) unexpected body language then and facial expressions because they weren't expecting a direct question like that! And you, and that will be an encouragement for them to lie! (laughs).**

***INT: YEAH (..) I'M A BIT TORN PERSONALLY ON THE MONITORING PRACTICES ISSUE BECAUSE I CAN UNDERSTAND (..) IF IT'S USED RESPONSIBLY AND THEY ARE JUST GENUINELY CHECKING THAT ALL GROUPS OF PEOPLE ARE APPLYING BUT THEY'RE NOT EXCLUDING GROUPS AT THE VERY SORT OF (..) ADVERTISING STAGE I SUPPOSE, THEN I CAN SEE THE USE OF IT THEN. BUT I WOULDN'T TRUST THAT SORT OF INFORMATION TO BE GIVEN AROUND OR TO BE KEPT IN PERSONNEL FILES AND FOR EVERY PERSON WHO HAS ACCESS TO THOSE FILES TO USE IT RESPONSIBLY, SO I'M A BIT TORN ON THAT ONE.**

***P13: Well the prejudice is the sort of thing that goes a long way I mean (..) like a lot of companies, some companies might not employ women of child-bearing years, if they're carrying the title 'Mrs'. If they've had children already, oh that's fine, not having any more are you?!**

***INT: DO YOU THINK THAT'S UNREASONABLE OF COMPANIES TO DO THAT?**

***P13: Yes. Thoroughly. Even if the person, the woman was applying for a job that was front-line, important, they should make allowances for that sort of thing to happen. To have a back-up. In an ideal world.**

***INT: BUT IF THEY EMPLOYED A MAN, THEY WOULDN'T HAVE TO HAVE A BACK-UP THEN, SO IT'S EASIER TO EMPLOY A MAN?**

***P13: No, but then again, they might do something stupid like umm try to ride a motor bike and (gesturing to himself) have a serious head injury and not be able to work for over a year (laughs).**

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED.

PARTICIPANT NO. 14 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

***INT: I'LL START BY ASKING WHEN I USE THE TERM EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU?**

***P14: What's really awful is I immediately think men / women, rather than any other, disabilities, like race, or (..) ability or disablement or whatever, (..) which I know I shouldn't but that's what it means to me, when someone says equal opportunities. I suppose yeah race as well. But I know I'm conscious of and often I don't think about the fact of people (..) it just, equal opportunities just means that it doesn't give a damn whether you're black, white, red, blue, male, female, you've got two arms or three arms, if you can do the job, or you can do whatever you're required to do (..) in an equal manner, then you should be given an equal chance.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK OF IT IN TERMS OF GETTING A JOB, OR BEING PROMOTED WITHIN A JOB, OR THE WAY THAT YOU'RE TREATED ONCE YOU HAVE A JOB, OR...?**

***P14: The whole cookie, the whole lot. The absolute whole lot, yeah, definitely. Oh very much so, particularly with promotion within what have you. Yeah, that's that's, in fact (..) to some extent probably more so, sometimes, you know, because getting in they almost have to be very careful about who they employ and there are very strict regulations about the way you can and can't deal with things but once you're IN a company, that's when it becomes harder to monitor I think. So, I think more so, the promotion within.**

***INT: WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU?**

***P14: For me personally?**

***INT: YEAH.**

***P14: (..) Just that (..) I don't know really. Umm, I know I can get in, I know I'll get in to most companies and I'll be treated equally to men. It's a bit difficult in my company,**

in the particular company that I'm in at the moment because they are very straight about, right, you're just a broker, we couldn't give a monkeys who you are, what you are. I must admit, having said that, the people they hire tend to be (..) white, middle-class-ish, not (..) often not unattractive people. I know that sounds awful to think that there are aesthetically pleasing adults (..) but when you're in the sort of cut-throat sales environment that I am, I mean estate agency's awful. You know, it's very much your presentation, the way you deal with it, the way you speak (..) everything. Umm, they're quite (..) they're almost quite pro towards people with northern accents and stuff because they get on with all the posh toffs and what have you. It's, it's really weird but if you were to sit us all in a big room, which we did about three days ago in a big meeting, that's what you've got in the room. But, the the male female thing isn't a thing, I mean, racially and we've, the guy who runs the company is Indian (gives name) so (..) it's kind of, you'd think he'd be more pro towards (..) more ethnic minorities but it isn't. I mean we have a black secretary. (..) I mean all the secretaries, all the admin. staff are female umm (..) I don't know I think (..) it's difficult and because, there isn't really a hierarchy in the company. There's either brokers or there's managers and there's very few managers because there aren't that many offices. You know, there's an average of sort of six to eight brokers to each office, very few managers. The only way you get a new manager is if somebody leaves or there's a new office and it's not every day you can open a new office.

***INT: AND IS THERE A FAIRLY EVEN MATCH BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN AT MANAGEMENT LEVEL?**

***P14:** No, umm (..) we have five office, four of which are run by men and one of which is run by a woman. Having said that, there are only two directors and a managing director and one of the directors is a woman and one of the directors is a man.

***INT: HOW OFTEN DO YOU THINK THAT IS THE CASE, THAT IT IS FAIRLY EVENLY SPREAD?**

***P14:** Virtually not at all. I mean, having come from an investment banking environment, umm, that was so (..) horrendously male dominated, it was awful. I mean

that used to really frustrate me. At the managerial level. But not (..) it does seem to be from talking to friend and colleagues and what have you.

***INT: DO YOU THINK IT'S WORSE IN SOME INDUSTRIES THAN OTHERS THEN?**

***P14:** Oh yeah. Oh very much so. I mean it's difficult because we're based in London but I mean, the only two things that I've got to look at is London and the South West. The South West is just absolutely one hundred per cent male dominated. You know, women stay at home, they have the kids. There aren't any black people. I mean there are but there's so few that they're a novelty and nobody would ever be (..) nobody would ever, I don't think people would discriminate against them, it just doesn't sort of happen really, it's such a rural environment. Umm, so there it's far more (..) there's far far less equal opportunity in my home town. There's more so in London but I mean the City of London, you only have to walk around the tube station (..) at five o'clock in the evening, I mean it's just suits.

INTERVIEW INTERRUPTED TEMPORARILY DUE TO SOMEONE GREETING P14.

***INT: WHAT SORT OF REPUTATION DO YOU THINK EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES HAS WITH THE GENERAL WORKING POPULATION?**

***P14:** Umm I think now it's regarded that it has to be taken quite seriously. Umm and I don't think I'm being horrendously idealistic with that. I think (..) I think everybody is aware that it's something that you have to take into account but I think that the majority of the workforce regards it as, you know they wouldn't follow and equal opportunities policy because they thought it was the right thing to do but more because there were figures and what have you that demanded that they had to do that. Umm and I think it gets taken to extremes as well. I get annoyed when I (..) I would be annoyed if I knew that I'd been given a job over a man just because we were on equal parring, or possibly he was slightly better than me but they had to make up their quota. That would drive me absolutely barmy. I know, I know, I know there has to be a degree of positive discrimination.

***INT: IT'S ILLEGAL.**

***P14: Yeah but (..) but in a way I know that people do do it because of the quotas that have been set up but (..).**

***INT: TO HAVE TARGETS OR QUOTAS IN THE UK IS ILLEGAL ON A SEX OR RACE BASIS. YOU CAN, THERE IS A QUOTA, LEFT OVER FROM THE WAR DAYS, FOR HIRING DISABLED PEOPLE AND YOU CAN ALSO ENCOURAGE UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS TO APPLY, BUT YOU CAN'T..**

***P14: Right, you can't actually have a...**

***INT: IT HAS TO BE SELECTION ON MERIT.**

***P14: Right. Since when?**

***INT: THE PARLIAMENTARY ACTS CAME INTO EFFECT IN THE SEVENTIES BUT WE'VE NEVER HAD POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION IN THE UK....**

***P14: As a, as an actual policy?**

***INT: AS A POLICY, YEAH. ALTHOUGH SOME PEOPLE WOULD LIKE IT, A LOT OF PEOPLE, LIKE YOURSELF, SAY I WANT TO BE HERE ON MERIT, RATHER THAN BECAUSE I'M FILLING A NUMBER.**

***P14: Yeah but having said that, I don't think it's necessarily a major bad thing. I think has to be, I think there should a certain degree of positive discrimination. Definitely because there's just no way of getting out otherwise.**

***INT: WHERE WOULD YOU DRAW THE LINE THEN?**

***P14: I don't know. Look at percentages now (..) at the percentages by a certain amount (..) and then make sure people were keeping to it (..) to a certain extent. I know that that won't work initially but after a while it will integrate people and then it will start to work. I mean I know it will take years and years and years but I do (..) I've always thought that, I've always thought there ought to be, and I came from a university, or I should say, polytechnic at the time, that had the biggest percentage of**

female and ethnic minority graduates, in the country (..) by a long shot. Umm fifty-four per cent of its graduates were female, which just knocked the pants off everywhere else. And because, to a large extent, they operated almost a policy..

**INTERVIEW INTERRUPTED BY PARTICIPANT RECEIVING TELEPHONE
CALL ON MOBILE!**

***INT: HAVE YOU HAD PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST?**

***P14: I don't believe so, ever in my life. And it makes, it makes it very difficult for me because (..) I'm a very very, I'm (..) I'm quite on my soapbox about women's rights. I obviously can't deal with racial rights or whatever because it's not an issue I have to deal with umm (..) but I'm, as a philosophy for my feeling about it, it's like (..) I'm going to keep my trap shut about my very strong feelings about equality until I get into a position in my working life and in a very good position in a very big company somewhere, where I can start to do something about it. To the, to the extent whereby (..) I became elected on the Student Union as President. I was the first woman for quite some years, and certainly the youngest woman (..) umm and got probably the most positive feedback that anybody had ever had and I think as women we have to play the system and not fight against it. And if (..) if a male boss somewhere is going to be stupid enough to fall for a bit of eyelash fluttering then sod him - play him at his own game. It's him that's being the fool and not me!**

***INT: BUT 'PLAYING THE SYSTEM' TO MY MIND IMPLIES THAT YOU ARE BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST AND YOU HAVE TO DO SOMETHING IN ORDER TO (..) TO GET ON.**

***P14: Yeah, well the difficult, the difficulty for me is that'll never happen to me but I know that I'll always be prepared to use a bit of feminine charm. Which I don't think necessarily is because I'm being discriminated against. I think it's because (..) it is a male dominated system and I think men will use their skills, whatever they may be, aggression or charm, or some sort of way and I think if you can use feminine attributes, they're just your natural attributes, to convince somebody that what you're telling them**

is right, then I don't see that as being discriminated against. I see that as just using what your (..) what your attributes are, be it male or female, to get what you want.

***INT: DO YOU THINK THAT'S A FAIRLY TYPICAL EXPERIENCE FOR MOST WOMEN?**

***P14: No. No, I don't think it is. I think I'm (..) I think I'm quite different in that respect because I've got quite (..) I'm quite masculine about my attitude to that I think. In fact I'm almost sure of it. Because I just think, well sod the lot of them. You know, if they're going to be stupid enough (..) to fall for it or (..) if my bit of aggression that way can get me something that I want, then that's what I mean about playing the system because that's what men do. So I think my philosophy on it is that I'm going to beat them at their own game.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK FOR THE AVERAGE WOMAN WHO MAY HAVE BEEN DISCRIMINATED AGAINST, OR MAYBE IS BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST, DO YOU THINK MORE EFFECTIVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICIES WOULD HAVE ANY IMPACT ON THEM?**

***P14: To a large extent not always.**

***INT: NOT? HOW MUCH INFLUENCE DO YOU THINK A POLICY CAN HAVE ON BEHAVIOUR THEN?**

***P14: Don't get me wrong, I think it's absolutely imperative that there is A policy because ultimately (..) everybody must have recourse (..) and a company has an absolute obligation to make sure that they have a procedure with which that person can try and address it. I don't think that necessarily always works. (..) But having said that I think it's imperative. But I don't think they're necessarily that (..) no from stories I've heard and people I've spoken to (..) girlfriends or whatever who might be trying to get on in a particular company. I don't think it necessarily unfortunately has as much influence as it should.**

***INT: OK SO (..) TO YOUR MIND IT'S IMPERATIVE THAT A COMPANY SHOULD HAVE SOME SORT OF PROCESS IN PLACE.**

***P14: Absolutely, absolutely.**

***INT: WHAT (..) IS THAT FOR THE EMPLOYERS BENEFIT OR THE EMPLOYEES BENEFIT?**

***P14: (..) The employee but then (..) if you don't have a happy, you know if you don't have a workforce that feels they can operate in the environment they're working in (..) then the employer might as well not bother.**

***INT: WHY?**

***P14: Because they'll just find that they're not getting quality applicants, they're not getting the quality of staff that they want. They're not getting any sort of harmonious environment with which, in which their staff can work.**

***INT: WHAT'S THE BENEFIT OF HAVING HAPPY WORKERS THOUGH? WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE?**

***P14: Oh huge difference. I mean at the moment, a year ago, when I was in the company that I'm in at the moment in the office, everyone is very comfortable in what they're doing, everything worked very well and now the management and the directors of the company are starting to really put their foot down. Now it's not admittedly about opportunity rights, just about figures and targets and what have you and the way you're doing it. Everybody is so hacked off. The company will be lucky to keep the workforce in my office 'til the end of the year. (..) And whilst it doesn't affect my office and my company and the way we work there, if you're in a much larger environment that needs that sort of thing, it's just a waste of, it's a waste of space definitely. I think so. It's very difficult though because, you know (..) and having come from a big organisation...**

INTERVIEW INTERRUPTED HERE DUE TO PARTICIPANT RECEIVING TELEPHONE CALL ON MOBILE.

***P14: No it was obvious that people weren't happy with what was going on and to some extent (..) I definitely think that was because (..) maybe once or twice just women were overlooked for positions that they could have quite happily fulfilled. Oh just the**

environment but it doesn't (..) you know (..) if people are not happy with what's going on they are not productive. Or not as productive as they could be. There's no doubt about that. That goes for everything.

***INT: YEAH. SO IF YOU HAD TO SELL, SAY A COMPANY (..) HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGER COMES UP OR SOMETHING AND YOU'VE GOT THE PURSE STRINGS AND THEY SAY, WELL, YOU KNOW I WANT TO PUT A POLICY IN PLACE, I WANT PEOPLE TO HAVE TRAINING SO THAT THEY KNOW HOW (..) HOW TO DRAW THE LINE OF WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE AND WHAT ISN'T AND I WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT PEOPLE ARE GETTING PROMOTED EQUALLY AND THIS SORT OF BUSINESS. HOW WOULD YOU SELL IT? HOW WOULD YOU PUT THE COST ASIDE AND SAY WELL IT WILL BRING THIS BACK? WHAT WOULD IT BRING BACK TO THE COMPANY?**

***P14: As an actual physical cost?**

***INT: WELL AS A BENEFIT - IF THE COMPANY DOES INVEST IN THIS, WHAT BENEFITS WILL THEY SEE FOR IT?**

***P14: It's so difficult having not gone really into an environment like that but it's just (..) it's just the fact that, you, you'd have to find an awful lot of examples. You'd have to really, if you were in that sort of position, you'd have to go right down to grass roots level and probably do the same thing that you're doing now. And ask the same sort of questions, right from grass roots but I'm sure if you did that and you spoke at length to people and got numerous amounts of evidence of where people think there was possibly wrong doing, what they would have done and how they felt they could contribute to the company. And then umm, possibly I'm being a bit idealistic but (..) you know, I just think the idea it can bring a wide spread of people in the right environment. I don't think it's the case in all environments. Umm (..) but I think you know a wide spread, and a, you know just different ideas and different backgrounds just gives you so much more (..) scope for where you could go. I mean even working yourself with people of different backgrounds. And you know if I'm approaching somebody about a property or dealing or you know, something they want to do, I might have a bit of input from one of my colleagues who's from a different background and it will just give me a whole**

different slant on the way I should be looking at it and that's got to be valuable. I don't know how I would physically sell (..) sell the idea to somebody really.

***INT: YEAH. BUT THERE WOULD BE SOME, SOME BENEFITS TO YOUR MIND, OF HAVING A MIX OF PEOPLE AND..?**

***P14: Oh god. Oh without a doubt. Without a doubt.**

***INT: ALL RIGHT, I KNOW YOU'RE SHORT FOR TIME, IF I CAN JUST MOVE ON TO THE LAST BIT THEN AND ASK YOU ABOUT MONITORING PROCESSES. YOU KNOW WHEN YOU APPLY FOR JOBS AND THEY SOMETIMES HAVE THE BOXES AT THE BACK: TICK THIS, WHATEVER. WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT SORT OF THING?**

***P14: I think it's excellent. And I think it's imperative. I think we HAVE to know who is doing what in this country.**

***INT: YEAH? DO YOU THINK IT IS ALWAYS USED AS IT IS INTENDED?**

***P14: (..) Umm, no, probably not but I don't think that the (..) the problems with it would outweigh of knowing, of SOMEBODY being able to walk into a company and know what their make-up of the workforce was. And yes, I'm aware that at some stages people are going to be looked at and their personnel file might be looked at and they see (..) a box in the wrong place and maybe not give it the consideration that it should but I don't think (..) I'd like to think that that will stop happening. Umm, I still very much feel that we're in an infancy of you know, certainly, you know, sexual equality. I mean it's major major infancy. I mean, Jesus, women didn't even have the vote, until the early, you know, the early part of the century. Umm you know, we're talking about, you know, two thousand, god knows how many years and we're talking about eighty years, you know? And even less, I mean, any kind of equality in the workplace is like ten or twenty years. It's so in it's infancy that I (..) I just don't think that we really know where it's going to a large extent. And I think really there just needs to be the greatest attempt at some kind of (..) direction. But there's going to be, I mean you know, you hear about hype and I had a funny story last night. A friend of mine who's doing teacher training, who's a male, young male rugby player umm, was in a meeting,**

a staff meeting last night and they were talking about how they were going to divide up the classes for summer sports, which is a bit more difficult than winter sports. And the idea was to have the top boys and the top girls in two separate groups, and then the boys and girls that weren't too interested in a mixed group at the bottom. And there was one woman who's supposed to be their sort of co-ordinator saying you absolutely can't do that, everybody should be treated equally, men and women should compete together in athletics and should be throwing a javelin next to each other and running on the same hundred metre track at the same time. And then you had the rest of the people saying, well just, you know, you can't do that because we have to ACCEPT that men and women, by their physical nature are different and you will affect directly the way that they deal with each other. You know, and they can compete equally and they can run up to their male friend or what ever afterwards and say, you know, I ran the hundred in fourteen and he ran the hundred in fourteen point five but ultimately you know, you had, you had a woman who was vehement that she was determined that everybody should be mixed because they should all be able to stay together.

***INT: SHE WASN'T ACCEPTING THE NATURAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN?**

***P14: No. Completely pointless! And by the sounds of things, luckily, was out-voted by a male and female staff, who disagreed with her. That sort of thing will do far more to harm the cause of any kind of equality, when you've got A WOMAN, in particular, who will be SO determined that, I mean, I, as President, used to disagree with my Women's Officer in the Student's Union every single day (..) on a regular basis in a big way! Because I disagreed with her. She was like, no, women must be given this, women must be given that (..) and whilst I agree that they, you know, she was viewed as a FREAK! And we, we are in such an infancy that, you know, unless we (..) as intelligent women learn. This is what I'm talking about, playing the system. Unless we learn to work in the right way. And to a large extent, you know, work the male attitude in the right way (..)which is obviously a thing that affects women most (..) it's not going to work. You know and women like that do more harm than good. As do major black activists, you know, who just alienate people that could be sympathetic to what they're talking about but become alienated.**

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED

PARTICIPANT NO. 15 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

***INT: I'LL START BY ASKING YOU WHAT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MEANS TO YOU. WHEN I SAY THAT, WHAT INSTANTLY COMES TO MIND FOR YOU?**

***P15: Everybody has the same chance at, if you're talking about jobs, that everybody has the same chance of getting a job, the same chance of getting anything.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK ABOUT IT AT SELECTION POINT, OR ONCE YOU'VE GOT A JOB, OR...**

***P15: All the way through, even applying for the job, umm even down to the advert, it doesn't automatically(..) you know if it it doesn't (..) secretary automatically springs to mind woman but it shouldn't do. And everyone should have the same chance of going for that job.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK OF IT IN TERMS JUST OF SEX OR WHATEVER?**

***P15: Oh no, age and religion as well.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK THAT UMM, BECAUSE THE LAW AT THE MOMENT ONLY STANDS AT SEX AND RACE ARE COVERED FOR. DISABILITY IS A DIFFERENT SYSTEM AGAIN; THEY HAVE A THREE PERCENT QUOTA WHERE COMPANIES ARE SUPPOSED TO FULFIL THREE PER CENT OF THEIR WORK FORCE BEING DISABLED. BUT SEX AND RACE ARE THE ONLY OTHER THINGS THAT ARE CATERED FOR, DO YOU THINK THINGS LIKE AGE, THAT YOU MENTIONED, OR RELIGION OR ANYTHING ELSE SHOULD BE INCLUDED?**

***P15: I think so. I think age and religion definitely because these days more and more people are being excluded from jobs because they're deemed too old and really they might have a bit more experience that say young people do.**

***INT: OK UMM (..) OLDER PEOPLE WITH MORE EXPERIENCE ARE GOING TO COST MORE MONEY, WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY CAN OFFER IN RETURN?**

***P15: Less training is going to be involved in them. Umm (..) experience isn't (..) just on paper is it. It's our knowledge of how situations are handled in general, so I think basically that's what they can offer.**

***INT: WHAT SORT OF REPUTATION DO YOU THINK EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AT WORK HAS?**

***P15: At the moment very bad. Umm mainly because either, you've got one way or the other, if people aren't employing equally at the moment they're either umm discriminating totally, or you've got people being employed just because they are of a particular group that the company is lacking at the time.**

***INT: YEAH? AND WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT?**

***P15: I think it's disgusting, 'cos I worked at the (Company Name) and they kept employing women, and Asian women, and (..) people who couldn't quite walk straight and things like that, and not necessarily because they could do the job. It was because they filled the quota. And that's not the right, not the right way of going about it.**

***INT: WERE THEY THE BEST PEOPLE FOR THE JOBS OR NOT?**

***P15: I don't know because you only see them when they're in the job. I mean the (..) one accountant was an Asian and she was a woman and she was excellent but my particular boss was a woman and she wasn't very good at her job. She wasn't a good man manager.**

***INT: BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT ACTUALLY ALLOWED TO DISCRIMINATE AT THE POINT OF SELECTION. YOU CAN ENCOURAGE UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS TO APPLY BUT BY LAW IT'S ILLEGAL TO DISCRIMINATE AT THE POINT OF SELECTION - IT HAS TO BE DONE ON MERIT.**

***P15: So you can't say, we want a young girl for this job?**

***INT: NO, OFFICIALLY NOT, ALTHOUGH I KNOW OF A FEW CASES OF IT HAPPENING!**

***P15: I'm sure it does.**

***INT: I KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULD ONLY EMPLOY BEAUTIFUL TALL BLONDE WOMEN AS HIS SECRETARY!**

***P15: Well I tried to do it once but my boss won't even, he won't even consider having a bloke in the job. He says sorry, we can't ask. So we can't say that we only want girls applying.**

***INT: SO HOW DOES HE GET AROUND THAT THEN?**

***P15: Well he just doesn't interview any blokes! Or if he does, he just doesn't give them the job. (..) They wouldn't have got, they wouldn't have been able to work with him, a bloke wouldn't. He was that kind of bloke, he was old-fashioned and demanding and (..) a bloke just couldn't work (..) he wouldn't have treated a bloke the same way as he would treat a woman.**

***INT: YEAH? AND WHAT JOB WAS THAT FOR?**

***P15: Oh it was basic admin. That was ages ago. It was terrible. It was just basic admin. Anyone could have done it. But it was just the bosses attitude.**

***INT: WHAT IN HIS MIND, IT SHOULD BE A WOMAN?**

***P15: Yes.**

***INT: WHY WAS THAT THEN? YOU SAY HE'S OLD-FASHIONED, WHAT IS THAT?**

***P15: He umm, I think it was (..) I think it was, as opposed to old-fashioned, it was the way he treated people. He treated, he didn't treat young men as nicely as he treated, or as reasonably, as he treated women.**

***INT: YEAH?**

*P15: Hmm.

*INT: AND THAT WAY ROUND?

*P15: Yeah.

*INT: GOING BACK TO THE REPUTATION QUESTION THEN, YOU'VE SAID ALREADY THAT YOU THINK EO HAS GOT QUITE A BAD REPUTATION FROM DISCRIMINATING ...

*P15: ...One way or another...

*INT: ...FOR MINORITIES. HOW DO YOU THINK YOU COULD START TO IMPROVE THAT?

*P15: It's a difficult one because when (..) because the people who tend to shout the loudest are the minorities about not getting the jobs or (..) being disabled and not having a job and things like that, they they tend to be the minorities who are shouting. Umm (..) so I think perhaps, even simply in the advertising of jobs (..) make reference to the fact that anybody, any race, religion, any ability can apply for the job, the only criteria that is required is that on the job description, and you get in on the application form. But on application forms they do tend to ask a lot of race and ability questions. I think (..) perhaps those questions should only be in there if they are relevant to the job.

*INT: HOW DO YOU MEAN THEY ASK RACE AND...

*P15: In in in some application forms, at the back it says (laughs) are you British, African, what colour are you...

*INT: OH, THE MONITORING FORMS?

*P15: Yeah, I I sometimes I know it's only for their statistics but people tend to wonder don't they. I mean I'd wonder. I mean, why do they want that for? It just, it says everywhere. I mean I can understand if you if you've got a dodgy, and old buildings, no wheelchair access, fair enough, you can't have anyone on more or less, on umm on

any other floor than the ground floor (..) working in a wheelchair, if they've got a wheelchair.

***INT: IT WOULD STATE THAT AS WELL THOUGH SURELY?**

***P15: It would do yeah but I think that particular section of the form shouldn't really be needed unless it will affect the job in some way.**

***INT: YEAH. DO YOU OBJECT TO FILLING THEM IN YOURSELF THEN?**

***P15: I do, yeah.**

***INT: DO YOU AGREE WITH THE PRINCIPLE THAT GOES BEHIND IT THOUGH, I MEAN MOST, MOST MONITORING FORMS ARE THERE BECAUSE EMPLOYERS ARE TRYING TO MAKE SURE THAT ALL GROUPS ARE APPLYING AND IT IS NOT ACTUALLY USED AS PART OF THE SELECTION PROCESS, THEY'RE JUST SEEING WHO IS APPLYING FOR JOBS, JUST TO CHECK THAT THERE ISN'T....**

***P15: Is it never used as part of the selection process?**

***INT: ...IT IS IT'S NOT ALLOWED TO BE OF THE, IT'S IT'S PURELY FOR MONITORING PURPOSES. WHETHER THAT IS THE CASE OR NOT I DON'T KNOW. WHETHER IT GETS MISUSED OR NOT I DON'T KNOW BUT THE ETHICS OF IT IS IT'S THERE TO CHECK THAT ALL GROUPS ARE APPLYING.**

***P15: If it was (..) a separate piece of paper perhaps, you know, not an integral part of the application, then maybe it would be more agreeable. Something without names on, without signatures. Then you can send it back separately or you can send it back together, whichever you wish. You know because statistics are important but (laughs).**

***INT: YEAH. DO YOU THINK IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW WHO YOUR WORK FORCE IS MADE UP OF THEN?**

***P15: Oh yes.**

***INT: WHY?**

***P15:** Umm (..) mainly for (..) accountability. To say to the government, you know if there happens to be any sort of investigation, this is who we've got. But umm (..) I don't think it should matter (..) as long as the best person for the job is there.

***INT:** DO YOU THINK IF THERE'S A WIDE MIX OF PEOPLE WORKING IN AN ORGANISATION, SO YOU'VE GOT MEN, YOU'VE GOT WOMEN, YOU'VE GOT ETHNIC MINORITIES, YOU'VE GOT THE WHOLE CABOODLE, DO YOU THINK THAT BRINGS ANYTHING TO ORGANISATION? DO YOU THINK THAT'S PREFERABLE TO HAVING (..) ONE GROUP ALONE?

***P15:** I think so because umm especially if you're selling a product, you're then, you're showing yourself as being open to anybody. Any any client is then going to come to you because everybody everybody, every client is going to be different. So if you've got a mix of people they're going to think, oh yeah, you know, we're no different to them. (laughs) So I think in that, in that sense of it, (..) it's excellent. And internally as well umm (..) if you're working with a lot of different people during the day, you're going to be more open to new ideas and new religions and new different types of people outside of work as well, so a lot of communities will mix better.

***INT:** WOULD YOU PERSONALLY PREFER TO WORK WITH A MIX OF PEOPLE OR DO YOU LIKE TO WORK....

***P15:** No, a mix of people (laughs) it's far more interesting! (laughs)

***INT:** BECAUSE A LOT OF PEOPLE DON'T LIKE TO, LIKE THIS BLOKE THAT LIKES TO WORK WITH WOMEN AND OTHER PEOPLE LIKE TO WORK WITH JUST SORT OF A GROUP IN PARTICULAR.

***P15:** No, I don't like salesmen! We've got some at work and I don't like them, or saleswomen but umm no. I don't think there's any racial preference or people preference! At umm, I don't know, no. Not at all.

***INT:** HAVE YOU ACTUALLY EXPERIENCED ANY DISCRIMINATION AT ALL YOURSELF?

***P15:** (..) No. I don't think so.

***INT: HAVE YOU NOTICED ANYBODY ELSE?**

***P15: (..) No. It's quite odd but when I worked at the (Company Name) they had a (..) they had quite a mix in my office! And umm I was surprised that there wasn't a greater (..) difference but umm (..) no. I mean I was probably the one who was more cautious because I hadn't ever worked in a big mix of people before. Umm, but it seemed to be quite harmonious.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK IF YOU WERE WORKING IN A PLACE WHERE YOU SUFFERING SOME KIND OF DISCRIMINATION, OR YOU WEREN'T BEING PROMOTED OR SOMEONE'S SEXUALLY HARASSING YOU OR, ANY THING, ANY KIND OF DISCRIMINATION, WOULD IT (..) WHAT EFFECT WOULD IT HAVE ON YOUR WORK OR YOUR JOB SATISFACTION?**

***P15: Oh a terrible effect on my work. Especially if it was subtle, you'd start feeling awful before you even realised what was going on, so your work would suffer. And people probably wouldn't know why, so you'd probably even evoke more (..) discrimination before you even came to the (..) point where you could actually go to someone and tell them what the actual problem was before they could even do something about it. And by that time it's probably too late!**

***INT: DO YOU THINK YOU WOULD LEAVE?**

***P15: Depending on what it was. Umm (..) what the circumstances were and who else was involved. Umm (..) if it was sexual discrimination or if I'd been harassed or something, I'd hope the other person would leave. I wouldn't, I don't think I'd feel compelled to. But if it was racial discrimination and it was quite (..) heavy from a number of people and from (..) a big part of the work force then I'd leave, yeah. I don't think I could put up with that.**

***INT: WHAT ABOUT IF UMM...**

***P15: ...If I wasn't being promoted because of (..) myself, for what I was, and if the issue had been raised and nothing had been done about it then I'd certainly leave.**

***INT: WHAT ABOUT IT UMM, IF YOU'VE GOT, AN ORGANISATION, SAY ONE, THERE'S A LOT OF UNSETTLED FEELINGS ABOUT BECAUSE THERE IS A BIT OF DISCRIMINATION HERE AND A BIT OF THIS AND A BIT, BUT IT'S NOTHING TANGIBLE THAT YOU CAN PIN IN ON AND SAY, OK HE'S BEEN TAKEN TO COURT BECAUSE....YOU KNOW THERE'S NOTHING SO BIG....**

***P15: ...Lots of bitchiness going on all the time?**

***INT: YES.**

***P15: Would I leave?**

***INT: UMM COMPARED TO AN ORGANISATION WHERE THEY'VE GOT LOVELY HARMONIOUS WORKING PLACE, UMM, I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WAS TRYING TO ASK HERE!**

***P15: I think it all depends on what kind of job you're doing and how satisfied you are with your job and how much you can enjoy yourself away from what else is going on. But umm (..) I think if it was affecting me in my day and considering you're at work for seven hours five days a week, yes I would go somewhere else. But umm, if it didn't affect me, or if it was only mild, no, I'd stay. But (..) I think in the long run I'd have to leave because in the long run you can only ignore so much, can't you.**

***INT: BECAUSE THAT'S ANOTHER THING I'M TRYING TO LOOK AT IS WHETHER EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY HAS ANY EFFECT ON TURNOVER. WHETHER IT WOULD ACTUALLY BE SOMETHING IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO MAKE SOMEBODY WANT TO LEAVE THEIR JOB.**

***P15: In the long run definitely. Yeah. I think it would.**

***INT: IF YOU COULD CHOOSE BETWEEN...**

INTERVIEW INTERRUPTED BY SOMEONE ELSE ENTERING THE INTERVIEW ROOM.

***INT: DO YOU THINK THERE'S ANY SORT OF TRUTH, IF YOU'VE GOT TWO ORGANISATIONS, ONE THAT'S LOVELY AND HARMONIOUS AND THEY'VE GOT POLICIES IN PLACE AND LA LA LA AND THERE'S ANOTHER THAT THAT DOESN'T BUT IS, YOU KNOW, PAYS YOU THE SAME, OFFERS YOU THE SAME SORT OF CHANCE TO MOVE ON OR WHATEVER, WOULD YOU ACTIVELY CHOOSE, IN AN IDEAL SITUATION OBVIOUSLY, WOULD YOU CHOOSE ONE OVER THE OTHER?**

***P15: Yeah. Yes.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK IT'S EMPLOYERS GAIN OR LOSE A REPUTATION?**

***P15: Gain, gain good reputation, and especially if there's not such a high turnover of staff, if then working there becomes elite. You know, I really want to work for that company, they've got excellent benefits, they treat their staff really well.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK WORD GETS AROUND THEN?**

***P15: Oh yeah, there's a company in Milton Keynes called (Company Name) I I think they're sort of telemarketing, that sort of thing. They have a huge turnover of staff and everybody knows how terrible they are to work for, so consequently they've got to push their rates up, so these people are getting paid a fortune but staying for only a short period of time.**

***INT: YEAH. THAT'S EXPENSIVE FOR THEM THEN.**

***P15: Well exactly. It's expensive for them and people aren't happy and they spread the word that they're a terrible place to work for.**

***INT: YEAH. SO THAT MIGHT WORK THEN, MARKET FORCES OF A GOOD COMPANY AND A BAD COMPANY.**

***P15: Plus if you if you're a happy employee, you're going to be happy to your customers. And to other companies you're interacting with all the time and so there are better relationships all round aren't there.**

***INT: BETTER RELATIONSHIPS IS SOMETHING I WANT TO ASK ABOUT: WHETHER IF A COMPANY HAS GOT A STRICT EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY IN PLACE AND IT SAYS YOU CAN'T DO THIS OR WE'D LIKE TO ENCOURAGE THIS - THERE IS ACTUALLY A POLICY THAT IS KNOWN TO ALL OF THE EMPLOYEES RATHER THAN A PAGE IN THE HANDBOOK OR A POSTER HERE AND THERE. DO YOU THINK THAT WOULD MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO PEOPLE'S BEHAVIOUR?**

***P15: Umm umm (..) depending on what kind of policy it is and how stringent and whether it was a guideline as opposed to we WILL (..) umm. I think it probably will because it will also give people (..) an indication of what to do if something did go wrong. On you know, how to correct a situation if it did go wrong and who to approach and things like that. It gives structure to the organisation. So yes, I think it would help. And it would also help new employees, or future, prospective ones if they knew that something like that was in place. Especially with the minorities. If they knew that, they'd probably be more encouraged to go there as opposed to thinking oh my god another job. It's my fifth this year, you know (laughs). How's this one going to be different to everybody else? They say they are but are they, you know? It would probably be helped like that.**

***INT: SO IT'S RAISING THE CREDIBILITY OF IT?**

***P15: And for everybody if they if they know that everybody is being cared for, whatever they are, whoever they are, it umm it always gives people a bit more security in their jobs.**

***INT: OK NOW IF YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT A POLICY THAT IS CAPABLE OF DOING THAT, DO YOU THINK YOU'D HAVE TO TARGET DIFFERENT GROUPS AND SAY WELL, FOR BLACK PEOPLE, WE'RE CHECKING THAT BLACK PEOPLE ARE DOING THIS. WE'RE CHECKING THAT WOMEN ARE DOING THIS...**

***P15: No I don't think you can. I think it has to be a blanket policy otherwise you're discriminating within your policy.**

***INT: HOW'S THAT THEN?**

***P15: Because you're breaking it down. Instead of everybody being the same you're sort of saying black people are this (..) you you you're not saying that everybody is the same. It's it's, you can't do that 'cos then, 'but black people have to do this but why don't why don't white people or green people' you know?**

***INT: BUT LIKE NOT EVERYBODY IS EQUAL. DO YOU THINK, WHAT DEGREE OF DIFFERENCE DO YOU THINK SHOULD BE ACKNOWLEDGED?**

***P15: Yeah, not everybody is equal (..)**

***INT: WELL NOT THAT THEY'RE NOT EQUAL BUT THAT THEY'RE NOT THE SAME.**

***P15: Yeah, OK well not the same.(..) I think differences where they're encouraged by religion (..) perhaps. I mean a small bit (laughs) I think everybody should be lenient when they come to the work place! Umm, or physical boundaries. But aside from that and obviously dependent on the job you're doing, I don't think people should be vastly different.**

***INT: YEAH. I MEAN...**

***P15: ...(inaud) person's personality as opposed (..) which holds people back as opposed to physical ability.**

***INT: BUT LIKE IF YOU'VE GOT PARENTS AT WORK, THEY WOULD HAVE TO BE, THEY WOULD NEED TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED. I MEAN, IF, IF THEY WERE BEING TRUE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, OFFERING TRUE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES UMM YOU'D NEED TO HAVE A MUCH MORE FLEXIBLE WORKING SYSTEM SO THAT THEY COULD WORK AROUND THEIR CHILDREN BASICALLY. SO THEY WOULD STAND OUT AS A CROWD. I MEAN IS IT RIGHT THEN TO SAY, EVERYBODY IS THE SAME STILL, OR IS IT MORE HELPFUL TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE GROUPS?**

***P15: (..) Parents at work who need perhaps to go home early, or take the kids to the doctors and things like that?**

***INT: YEAH. BECAUSE THEN THEY'RE GETTING BENEFITS, IF YOU LIKE, THAT THE OTHERS AREN'T.**

***P15: If it's not on a regular basis, then the same rules should be applied to everybody. But if it is a, it's a thing where certain, a certain group of either dads or mums have to come in a bit later because they've taken the kids to school or go home, that should be built into their package, their employment package. So yeah, maybe have a bit in the manual if you were working mum, this is the sort of employment package you'll have as opposed to a non-working mum. Or something non-mum! (laughs). Yes well you can go home at half past three but you won't get paid so much! You know.**

***INT: HOW MUCH DISCRIMINATION DO YOU THINK GOES ON AT A GENERAL LEVEL THROUGHOUT INDUSTRY?**

***P15: In what terms, what measure?**

***INT: DO YOU THINK IT IS SOMETHING THAT REALLY DOESN'T HAPPEN VERY OFTEN, OR HAPPENS QUITE REGULARLY BUT YOU DON'T HEAR ABOUT OR...**

***P15: Oh now that's difficult because you tend to only hear about the big cases or the people who shout a lot. Umm (..) it probably goes on (..) quite a high percentage of the time but on a minor level, a very low level. And very very rarely at a level that causes the big problem but I think it's the low level stuff that is the real problem. Because that's probably affecting a larger amount of people.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK DISCRIMINATION HAPPENS MORE OFTEN IN CERTAIN TYPES OF INDUSTRIES THAN OTHERS?**

***P15: (..) Umm (..) yes. I don't, you know, I'm just thinking. I can't think of umm the types. Lower, lower paid work force discriminating maybe for (..) Asians. They might be, they were talking about picking fruit and veg in the (inaud) Cambridge, they they discriminate for the, for the people who need the jobs!**

***INT: WHAT SO THEY'RE LIKE...**

***P15: The the Asians and the people who've come across to (..) maybe only just got their work permits or something - they're discriminating in their favour because they're cheaper.**

***INT: RIGHT, SO THEY'RE PREPARED TO WORK FOR LESS?**

***P15: Yes.**

***INT: WHAT ABOUT WITHIN AN ORGANISATION? DO YOU THINK THERE'S MORE DISCRIMINATION HAPPENING AT A LOWER LEVEL OR A HIGHER LEVEL OR THROUGHOUT OR WHAT?**

***P15: I (..) employing into management is probably higher discrimination.**

***INT: AGAINST WHOM?**

***P15: Probably against women. And against younger people. Umm though it is changing. Umm (..)**

***INT: HOW MUCH TRUTH DO YOU THINK THERE IS THEN IN THIS 'GLASS CEILING' THING THEN - THAT CERTAIN PEOPLE CAN'T GET PAST A CERTAIN LEVEL - THEY CALL THAT THE GLASS CEILING.**

***P15: It's probably very true.**

***INT: YEAH? LIKE WOMEN ONLY GET TO A CERTAIN LEVEL AND THEN ONCE YOU GET TO THE TOP MANAGERS, YOU JUST DON'T GET....**

***P15: It's all men. It depends what the organisation, I suppose some (..) Everyone's very different aren't they, and the people who run the companies are all very different. The companies that I've worked for, I don't think it's ever been a problem being a woman. And my sister works for (Company Name) and I don't think there's ever a problem being a woman there, it's who's best at the job. Umm (..).**

***INT: DO YOU HAVE ANY FEMALE TOP MANAGERS?**

***P15: (..) No we don't. We've got two directors and a national accounts manager and then we have a sales, I mean sales is all female really...**

***INT: ALL WHITE?**

***P15: All the, no, one Asian.**

***INT: AT WHAT LEVEL?**

***P15: Sales consultant. Umm all the others are white. We have umm (..) six admin people who are all women.**

***INT: AND IS THAT BECAUSE YOU'RE ALL BEST SUITED TO THOSE JOBS OR IS THERE SOMETHING ELSE GOING ON?**

***P15: I think actually in our bosses case it's whether they're best suited to the jobs because he very nearly employed a chappie to come work with us but we just, we didn't need an extra person at the time but it's quite funny because he would have been the only bloke in our office (laughs). Poor chap!**

***INT: DO YOU THINK IT'S AN ADVANTAGE BEING A FEMALE AT WORK SOMETIMES?**

***P15: Yes.**

***INT: IN WHAT WAY?**

***P15: Umm (..) I think, I I don't I don't, we haven't ever had the male input into the admin bit so I can't really compare it to how a man would get treated but if I look at the ways in which the sales consultants umm demands are put onto them, in a, not necessarily work demands but probably in a one to one meeting they they get a different demand level than we do. Not that we can't cope I think it's the actual way that it's put to the people. The the questions were put very differently. So it's it's in our favour (..) always!**

***INT: VERY NICE!**

*P15: Yeah it is actually.

*INT: WHO DO YOU THINK SUFFERS MOST FROM DISCRIMINATION?

*P15: Disabled people.

*INT: YEAH? AND DO YOU THINK, LIKE WE'RE SITTING HERE TALKING ABOUT EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AT WORK, DO YOU THINK YOU WOULD HAVE A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW BECAUSE YOU'RE A WOMAN COMPARED TO A MAN, COMPARED TO A BLACK PERSON, COMPARED TO A DISABLED PERSON?

*P15: Yes. Yes.

*INT: DO YOU THINK THAT EVERYBODY HAS A VIEW THAT IS (..) MORE REPRESENTATIVE OF THEIR GROUP OR JUST THEIR...

*P15: ...Yes. Everyone has got a completely different view. I mean I try to be as liberal as I can but (..) having, I mean not being someone who has been discriminated against, it's very difficult to give that kind of opinion isn't it.

*INT: I JUST WONDERED IF YOU THINK YOU'VE GOT ONE VIEW BUT THEN A LOT OF OTHER PEOPLE WOULD SAY NO....

*P15: ...Oh I'm sure I'm sure that at the moment men think that women are getting all the jobs! (laughs)

*INT: DO YOU?

*P15: Yeah, I I I I always think that for most of the average jobs in the UK, a lot of them are admin type things, women will get them over men.

*INT: SO IT'S (INAUD)

*P15: I believe so yeah. I think so anyway. Sales-y type jobs, men are still quite dominant in that. As you say at managing director levels yes they're quite (inaud) but I'm sure it will change.

***INT: HOW DO YOU THINK IT WILL CHANGE?**

***P15: A lot more money.**

***INT: WHAT, JUST TO BE A WOMAN IN THE WORKFORCE?**

***P15: I don't think so, I think because umm it's been, it's more acceptable now for women to, or it, it's recognised that women can do the jobs at that level and they can commit to them and they're not going to go running home to the baby every two minutes.**

***INT: SO WHAT IT WILL JUST BE A NATURAL PROCESS WITH TIME THAT MAKES IT CHANGE?**

***P15: Yes.**

***INT: WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT ALL THESE SORT OF TARGETS, WELL NOT SO MUCH TARGETS BUT PUTTING WOMEN INTO JOBS, MAKING A POINT OF PROMOTING WOMEN AND...**

***P15: That's terrible. I think (..) you look at you staff and see which ones are due promotion! You know, which ones have worked well, what jobs are vacant and the people who have worked well get put forward for those vacant jobs.**

***INT: SO IT SHOULD BE PURELY MERIT (INAUD) EVEN WHEN IT'S A VERY UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUP AT THE NEXT LEVEL?**

***P15: Yes. Always.**

***INT: ON MERIT?**

***P15: Because if you if you've got someone who can do the job well, it's best to put them in and to move them forward because you you know the job can be done. Hmm as opposed to putting someone in who can't really you know (..) do the job and let the side down and the company suffers in the end. That's what you're there for at the end of the day aren't you?**

***INT: WOULD YOU ADVISE A COMPANY TO INVEST IN MAKING AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY OR NOT?**

***P15: Yes.**

***INT: WHY?**

***P15: Because of some of the reasons I've already said umm (..) to make sure that they are always choosing the best person for the job. Umm to make sure people understand that their company is always open to employ anybody. Umm because that way they get the best cross-section of the workforce not just the women or not just the men. Umm (..) and it will also, it keeps people in the jobs, more satisfaction from the employee, the more settled feeling amongst the employees if they all know, if everyone knows that they've each got an equal chance of going forward then there's no tensions there. And also your potential customers, they look favourably upon you.**

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED.

PARTICIPANT NO. 16 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

***INT: HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING IN THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FIELD?**

***P16: Umm, about twenty-four years, ten years, eleven years with [inner London Borough] but before that I was in the Community Relations here, which was specifically to do with racial equality, working within the Community Relations Council which are now called the Race Equality Councils.**

***INT: HAS THE FIELD CHANGED DRAMATICALLY IN THAT LENGTH OF TIME?**

***P16: Umm, there have been several changes, yes. Umm, when I started in Community Relations in 1974, Community Relations Councils were dotted all over the country, mainly in towns, umm and their remit was to work for racial equality, in the broadest sense, and you were left fairly free to interpret that locally, in particular areas. It changed in the sense that, umm, some years after, local government, some local authorities started to set up equality units with fairly explicit, umm, equal opportunity aims (..) and having set up these structures, backed up by member agreement, we were into a terribly new area and a terribly new era in fact because when, when I sit in Coventry, or in Harringey, or in Camden on a Race Equality Council - a voluntary organisation, partly funded by the local authority, partly funded by the CRE (Commission for Racial Equality) - we had a sort of persuasive role, no official umm position within the government structure. Suddenly we had local government umm units with local government officers paid for. Paid to to put into effect equal opportunity policies, backed by members. So totally official. That changed the scene quite considerably. That's the major changes that I've seen. There are lots of other changes but it would depend on the questions you asked.**

***INT: WHICH ISSUES WOULD YOU SAY, WITHIN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FIELD, ARE IN THE FOREFRONT AT THE MOMENT? WHICH ARE GIVEN THE MOST EMPHASIS?**

***P16:** Within this authority - I mean I think the picture is confused, for me, within this authority there has been recently umm a stronger emphasis on gay and lesbian issues, because, and I must add that, prior to that, our units and our priorities tended to race and (..) secondly gender. Umm sexuality came a very poor fifth, sixth or seventh - I mean it was straight back. There was a race equality unit here, consisting of about fifty staff. There was a women's unit consisting of about half a dozen and there were no officers to do with gay and lesbian issues at all. It came up incidentally at one of the (inaud). Now that has, that that, I would say, gay and lesbian people would not agree it was being given greater priority now, but I think that what is happening now is that the bias is being now corrected, umm, not to any satisfaction in terms of actual, real programmes but we are beginning to look at it more than we used to. And I don't, I welcome that. I'm not saying that in any way to to criticise the drift. Uhh, there's a lot of things that need to be said about what is being given priority and whether or not certain other areas of the racial, of the equal opportunity umm programme are being in in effect umm reduced in terms of resourcing and commitment. I've very strong views about that. I do welcome the raising of the profile in the other issues umm and women issues. There was an enormously incorrect bias when we had a race equality unit of fifty and the women's unit was about six, six or seven. I mean there was something that seriously needed to be addressed and if you have any common sense, if you have any idea of equality issues and that needed to be addressed.

***INT: WHICH ISSUES WOULD YOU PERSONALLY PRIORITISE?**

***P16:** Umm (long pause)

***INT: IN TERMS OF THE ISSUES WITHIN TRYING TO WORK TOWARDS AN ENVIRONMENT OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, ARE THERE CERTAIN ASPECTS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE PRIORITISED?**

***P16:** I think that first of all there ought to be a clear commitment from members to equal opportunities in its wider sense, so the commitment comes through the organisation, they're still committed. At the moment, lots of people think that they're, that they are retreating in that commitment, so the first thing is that members need to signal clearly that they're committed to equal opportunities, WHEREVER IT'S

NEEDED. OK, umm, the second thing I would like to see is (..) uhh, some resourcing. Some resources put towards consciousness raising, (..) and to raising the equal opportunity expertise of the average worker in this organisation. Because there's a tremendous, there's still a lot of ignorance. If you talk to some men, they don't know what, what on earth umm, makes for a life of a woman officer and what she has to go through to get through certain hoops, they don't know the details of that. Some may understand that there is a general discrimination. They don't know a lot about what happens, the different rules, people are living in different worlds, yeah? And I think there needs to be uhh, (..) resources put to self-consciousness raising efforts, like training, umm, having videos which people can look at. I don't want to see training which alienates people so that you come in and you shout at people, I mean the sort of thing that really allows officers to understand the worlds that they don't occupy. So that a black officer understands what happens to gay, lesbians and and women in general and women understand and and white officers and, that sort of thing. These are two things I would like to see happening before you even begin to think of, umm, the actual details of the programmes.

***INT: IS THERE ANYTHING THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN MORE EMPHASIS THAN YOU WOULD LIKE? ANY ISSUES THAT YOU THINK ARE BEING OVERPLAYED THAT REALLY DESERVE THAT MUCH ATTENTION?**

***P16:** Umm, no, no, I don't think the organis... uhh, I don't, I don't think so. I would add that I think, I get a perception among some white officers that there's been a massive overplaying of equal opportunity umm, of of the of equal opportunity as an issue. They don't resent it but they think there's been a massive overplaying of it and we've had enough, you know we've had our, we achieved our employment targets - forty- odd percent black and ethnic minorities in the workforce, reflecting the population outside - well that's that's been achieved, let's get on with the work and they think... You see the PROBLEM is that (..) it is not an equal opportunity organisation unless the consciousness of officers is geared to to that. (..) As I speak, I, I, an issue does arise and that is that (..) umm, the white working class population out there (..) I'm not talking about the parts of it that are explicitly racist, but the large section that just want to get on with their life. They're not racist, they're not concerned, they want,

they're earning a living. A lot of them have come to see places like [inner London Borough] Council as too concerned with what's called the 'politically correct' and a lot of blacks wandering around and they have a gay and lesbian banner outside the town hall and (..) black history month and so on, and what about us? And I think that that question is not necessarily racist although some racists in London DO express that opinion. What I think is the concrete position here is that equal opportunities must be SEEN to apply to all the disadvantaged. There's a high level of white working class, uhh, people who are socially or economically disadvantaged in this borough, a lot of genuinely poor people who are never going to get anywhere. And a lot of the young white girls and boys, like young black girls and boys who are not going to get anywhere, who are not getting anywhere, and the equal opportunity rhetoric and programmes have never, in this borough, taken that uhh, constituency on board umm, and people like me don't even talk about it. Our Race Equality Unit would not be concerned by it. Maybe some of the, some of the Women's programme would pick up women out there who are in fact from the bottom socio-economic group and are suffering violence and sexism as a result. But taking on the, all the white working class that are disadvantaged needs to be put into a programme quite clearly and must be seen and be seen to be done. I would do that if I were in charge of equal opportunities in this council. It would be one of the constituencies we could address explicitly and for real, umm, so that the criticism could no longer hold. But also because equal opportunities are that, they're not just for one section of the community.

***INT: CAN I JUST COME IN AT THAT POINT ACTUALLY? THERE'S A MOVE WITHIN THE FIELD OF PSYCHOLOGY WHERE THEY'RE MOVING AWAY FROM EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND TOWARDS 'MANAGEMENT OF DIVERSITY' THEY'RE CALLING IT, (PEARL KANDOLA ARE THE MAIN ADVOCATES OF THIS IN THE UK) WHICH SOUNDS LOVELY BECAUSE THEY'RE SAYING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IS ONLY ACTUALLY ADDRESSING THE DISADVANTAGED GROUPS, IT'S NOT EQUAL BECAUSE IT'S NOT APPLYING TO EVERYBODY, THEREFORE WE SHOULD SAY EVERY INDIVIDUAL IS UNIQUE, EVERYBODY BRINGS THEIR OWN BLEND OF (..) YOU KNOW, NOT JUST RACE OR SEX BUT CLASS, AGE, ACCENT, OHH EVERY SINGLE PERMUTATION YOU CAN THINK OF, THEREFORE WE**

SHOULD BE ABANDONING ALMOST TARGETING SPECIFIC GROUPS AND APPLYING TO ALL. WHICH, WHICH FROM MY OPINION, IT SOUNDS LOVELY ON AN IDEOLOGICAL STANCE BUT THEN CAN BE USED AS A SMOKE SCREEN VERY EASILY AS WELL.

*P16: Yeah, you see, uhh, I think that it's (..) sounds lovely, sounds desirable, and it's a very civilised umm conception of human relations, that we ought to accommodate, accommodate, certainly validate and uhh express solidarity for this diversity and have that in, as a real umm thing in our employment and so on and so on (..) umm, I don't hear any HARD details about umm how they're going to address people who don't have certain economic goods or power to get those goods, because the notion of diversity totally ignores the fact that in all human groupings there are those with more power and less power and that there are ways of protecting, if you want, yourself, by either using the more power that you have against those that are weaker. Umm, if diversity is going to talk about the weaker and the more powerful and how we handle those in terms of resources that people have in society, then I would begin to listen but I think it's a very easy and, it's it's...It's a very nice thing that covers up a lot of our suffering and it's very sophisticated. That that may not have been the intent of the people starting it off but it's a way of evading umm the really hard questions. they're bringing it on stream here in this borough and in local government generally and it will work I suppose because (..) I mean there is a sense in which I at the, we at the moment, those of us who are concerned about justice for everybody will, will despair because it seems to me that (..) the most powerful political groupings in the country are (..) comfortable with the idea of this diversity. They are not comfortable with the fact that meeting the needs and demands of communities that are rendered powerless and poverty stricken and hopeless. What does diversity have to say to the sixteen or seventeen year olds that is never going to get a job in the next ten years? Never, ever. What what are you going to say about that? I want to hear them. And this is regardless of ethnicity. What are they going to say about the women who live their lives permanently victimised by violence in their relationship? What does diversity say about that? I want to hear that. So the woman will come to work and she'll put her make-up on and she'll sit there typing this whole list and so on but what happens in her her life, in her real life? And I don't see that the, the, I think it's a whole nonsense, if I express it emotionally. Put out by relatively

comfortable middle-class people. That is dangerous, dangerous to talk like that - even middle-class people have problems but I think it's it's far too (..) nice and comfortable.

***INT: YES, YES, I DID FEEL AS I WAS READING IT THAT THEY WERE TRYING DESPERATELY TO DISTANCE THEMSELVES FROM THE POLITICALLY CORRECT VERSION OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND SAY YOU KNOW, HEY WORKPLACE, BE COMMERCIAL, TAKE THIS ON BOARD, BUT WITHOUT MUCH VALIDATION (LAUGHS).**

***P16: Well, well I don't think so!**

***INT: UMM, YOU DID MENTION POLITICAL CORRECTNESS EARLIER, HOW CLOSELY MARRIED DO YOU FEEL THE, ERR, REPUTATION OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE GENERAL PUBLIC, HOW HOW FAR IS IT MARRIED WITH POLITICAL CORRECTNESS?**

***P16: I'm not sure I understand, sorry.**

***INT: Umm, the reputation that equal opportunities has with the general population...**

***P16: Umm, there is, (..) you and I know, a way by which, uhh, all of our media can bring in emotion and if they establish that notion it then becomes (..) crit...it's accepted without any, (..) an an uncritical (inaud) and the notion of political correctness started off as something very nasty because in fact (..). Admittedly there were some equal opportunity practitioners who went around like police, like a repressive police, err, 'listen to this or you'll get hammered' that sort of thing. Apart from that, the notion of political correctness seems to me to have come to be applied to any attempt to (..) redistribute uhh resources, especially to those who have been excluded from those resources. And you simply use that political correctness and you can (..) denigrate and discredit these efforts and I think that's that's a great pity. Umm, the reputation of equal opportunities suffered when that sort of conception of it began to be more and more established around, around the country. This is not to say that one of the problems we've had is that occasionally here and there somehow people misuse their equal opportunities (..) let's call it a movement, broadly, across the country. Somehow people, I think, have been parochial. Uhh, there are, there are race equality officers who**

didn't think of anything else but race. For them equal opportunities was only RACE, it was nothing to do with anybody else's rights. And in some instances they have, they were, (..) some of our people were (..) extreme and that was wrong. But I don't see how those excesses can invalidate an entire movement by which institutions, which discriminated because of the way they were being asked to change their, the way they work in order to accommodate the citizen, (inaud) contract. Umm (..) so umm, but there's there's another point about that and that is I think we we do have a responsibility as a movement to address the reputation that followed from that sort. You know? We have not dealt with it, we have just carried on instead of dealing with it. Maybe we don't have the time.

***INT: THAT WAS MY NEXT QUESTION, HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK IT IS, THE SORT OF REPUTATION THAT IS PERCEIVED? IS IT RELEVANT TO THE MOVEMENT'S WORK OR NOT?**

***P16: I think it's important that we create, as far as possible. First of all we have to be self-critical - there are things we do which need to be better done. Umm, like the business of the err, the exclusion of the white working class, with the exclusion of the white disadvantaged. That in the early days of the umm, movement of the equal opportunity, of the equal opportunity movement in a sense it might have been inevitable. Because it started from ethnic groups and women and so on. But as we went on, we could have been looking at ourselves all the time, critically examining where we are going, how we got there, what we are doing, our relationships, the coalitions we've been making and so on. If we were doing that in any organised and self-conscious way, and in a sort of cumulative way so that we are building our experiences consciously rather than leaving it to intuition, then we would have picked up the fact that we were not relating to, or that the movement, the whole thing, the local government, members could have said, 'this includes white working class'. Bring in white working class people in their units, let them work along, and then find out increasingly better ways of of of of working for this constituency. But umm, (..) I think that we are into serious trouble in the Anglo-American umm block. There there are lots of things that happen both in the United States and here which umm have the same sorts of constituencies even though we're doing, we have have different institutions to deal**

with: the United States has slightly different set ups to deal with race and gender and so on. We can understand what's happening both sides, and I think we're into trouble, because, the most powerful people, the most powerful groupings in both societies are now retreating from equal opportunities in my view. Here in Britain umm it's happening, to to my mind there's a massive retreat and in local government, including my own, I think there's a massive retreat. They're not actually saying we're knocking this out. I'm involved right now in my authority, in a corporate err, where I work is in (inaud) and education, I'm involved in a wider corporate review of our equal opportunities policy and nobody is telling me to wipe it out. I can write up and I'm doing it right now, long after I leave you I'll do some more of that work and write up recommendations for improving our equal opportunities and that will go through. Umm but my impression is that overall, the overall framework is being destroyed, so even though we might locally refine our equal opportunities work, it's no longer safeguarded because the framework has been taken away and and replaced by something else. And I think we're moving to massive trouble because I don't believe that in any society that's free (..) if you have a totalitarian system, fine, you just control people and terrorise them but the (inaud) is you can't just leave those constituencies unattended. And I'm not just talking about blacks, I'm talking about all the people who are not getting access to the goods and the resource, to jobs and and so on. Because, consciously, those people are going to react in some way.

***INT: CAN I MOVE IT ON A BIT TO THE WORKPLACE AND TO HOW EASILY DO YOU THINK ALL OF THE ISSUES RAISED SO FAR TRANSFER TO THE WORKPLACE? ARE THERE ANY PROBLEMS INHERENT IN TRANSFERRING THE ISSUES SPECIFICALLY TO THE WORKPLACE?**

***P16: Umm, (..) concretely, what [inner London Borough] did, and did very well, was to decide some time in the late seventies, early eighties, that we would have an employment target, a recruitment target, whereby the workforce would come to reflect the percentages out there broadly speaking: women and other groups, and they've done it very well and they've managed over the years, through certain positive types of action - not positive discrimination - positive action, like advertising (..) strategically, so**

people who normally didn't see the adverts saw it because it was appearing in their newspapers.

Now, over, over those years we achieved that target, so that our workforce, if you walk around, you could SEE it and you can actually see the statistics if you wanted to go to the umm to the statistics. In terms of that, we've done very well. In terms of our service delivery (..)- I hope I'm answering (..)?

***INT: YES, YES.**

***P16: O.K. in terms of our service delivery, we also think we are impressive in what we TRY to do. I don't, I think we have been very unlucky, in that (..) the attack from central government, in terms of reducing our budget, effectively reducing the money we have to spend annually. I think that the effect of that, consciously or not, has been to reduce the umm, umm, power of our equal opportunities programme and service delivery. Umm, so that we have an explicit aim in the education directorate of (..) quite clearly - it's in all our documents - we work for equality of access to the curriculum (..) in schools. And we work for raising of the achievement of all pupils in schools (inaud). If you say well, that is what we want to do, it means that all of those poor people out there, socio-economically poor people and their children, are going to get quality education and real access to what is offered in a in a well-organised curriculum, so they get a chance to achieve. That's what our documents say. And the people who wrote those things mean that. It cannot easily translate into schools because at school level, at the level where the money is, there's not enough of that, we're we're losing more and more of (inaud)**

***INT: THE COST OF THIS; YOU'VE SAID [INNER LONDON BOROUGH] HAVE BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL IN ATTAINING A REPRESENTATIVE WORKFORCE OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, HAS THAT, WHAT HAVE THE COSTS OF THAT PROCESS BEEN?**

***P16: You mean financial costs?**

***INT: UMM, FINANCIAL, PERSONAL, ANY SORT OF...**

***P16: Umm (..)**

***INT: IS IT EXPENSIVE TO START ADVERTISING IN NEW PLACES, OR (..) TAKING POSITIVE ACTION.**

***P16: Umm, yes , well yeah, yeah yeah. Umm, it's difficult to assess that because I don't have the facts. I mean I can see that if I said for instance that whereas twenty five years ago, they'd have advertised in the Guardian and one or two local government journals and so on, but they then expanded that to the ethnic press and to any other relevant minority in the press then yes, there is increased cost there. Uhh, but I don't have the (..) (inaud) or skills that will tell me, well, look at the whole picture and whether in fact those costs would cancel out by by other gains, when they might.**

***INT: WHAT SORT OF GAINS DO YOU IMAGINE THERE WOULD BE FROM IT?**

***P16: I would imagine that umm (..) I can't I can't I can't easily write an answer (inaud). imagine actual concrete financial gains, except that there would be (..) umm, if you're discriminating, then you might well be losing valuable people. Uhh, if, I've I've sat on panels, part of my work involves to sit on interview panels, umm, you see a whole range of people coming in. Now if, if, if we're discriminating or if we're not taking account of the skills in front of us, we might well reject candidates who were going to bring value to the organisation and select candidates who are less valuable. But that's that's a very vague thing I can't I can't measure an entity there.. I can't think of any costs.**

***INT: YEAH**

***P16: The costs, sorry (for interrupting me)**

***INT: NO, NO CONTINUE (LAUGHS) (..) I WAS JUST THINKING THAT UHH THAT'S THE PROBLEM FROM WHERE (..) WELL THE ANGLE THAT I'M TRYING TO TAKE IS, IT'S AS A COUNCIL THAT YOU'VE BEEN GIVEN GOVERNMENT MONEY TO PUT THIS POSITIVE ACTION INTO, INTO ACTION. THE MORE COMMERCIAL ORGANISATIONS DON'T HAVE THAT**

AND THEY HAVE NO FINANCIAL INCENTIVE TO. I MEAN IT'S A VERY INTANGIBLE, "WELL YOU MIGHT GET A WIDER ARRAY OF THE WORKFORCE COMING IN FOR INTERVIEW. YOU MIGHT GET A BETTER CANDIDATE, YOU MIGHT," YOU KNOW. IT'S NOT REASON ENOUGH FOR THEM TO SAY OK I'M GOING TO PUT X NUMBER OF POUNDS DOWN AND PUT THESE POLICIES INTO ACTION.

*P16: I I I can see that that they're saying that "well if I am going to increase my advertising costs, what am I getting for that?"

*INT: YES.

*P16: So I don't know what the answer is to that but I (..) am inclined (..) I feel that there is something that I'm missing, and let's sit down and analyse it because I suspect that it is not simply a matter of return and costs, in this field, umm, and and that there are a lot of umm, financial risks that the commercial sector take anyway as part of it's ongoing operation, where they lose money on calculations which are fairly ill-grounded.

*INT: YEAH.

*P16: In this particular case, what you are saying is, uhh you are having a more efficient recruitment and selection system. Instead of having having me come in to be interviewed by you on a one to one basis, and you probably don't like my tie, and that's the tie I wear, and (inaud) jacket, instead of that, we're having a more efficient way of actually calculate your your umm, what you do there, your application form to criteria which everybody's form is judged by and we record our umm our our conclusion, then we interview you to those criteria and everybody gets (inaud) we record it, so if you dispute it at the end we can come back to us and we actually can explain what happened, the obligation to explain. Now umm (..) I don't know, I don't know, I'm not, I can't honestly give you an answer although I'm inclined, maybe it's a bias rather than anything else umm to say that it's (..) If you have a country, which is not an ideal country, but where a small country of fifty thousand people and fifty firms there didn't discriminate, appointed effectively the best people for the job and also helped those who are disadvantaged to reach the qualifications to allow them to do that, I feel that you

have an organisation whose ethos is rational and open and therefore can grow on rational criteria, in any of its sectors of growth, rather than an organisation whose style is “I don’t like you then I won’t employ you” it’s not scientific. And there is, you know and I know that there is all sorts of interviews when you walk in and you meet one person. And that person is not judging you according to objective criteria, there is a lot of subjectivity going on. And if if, if the culture of the organisation is that, then it’s possible that that sort of culture pervades the entire operation of the organisation. So it’s partly intuitive and never really to do with objective factors - that’s the only answer I can give. (..) Umm, it is (..)

***INT: SO THAT’S PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS REALLY THEN? THAT’S SORT OF LEADING ONTO A UMM, HARMONIOUS WORKFORCE, OR A GOOD REPUTATION AS AN EMPLOYER OR SOMETHING. IS THAT WHAT YOU MEAN?**

***P16:** Uhh yeah, umm yeah, there is a very great set of problems there because my experience with [inner London Borough] umm, you see initially there is, the harmony doesn’t really apply, initially. Umm, there is potential for that but if you have a society that really, out there, hasn’t sorted out how it deals with certain groups and then, on the front line of change, a local authority like [inner London Borough] begins to employ those groups, what comes in here are, this is why I think, I started off by saying that we needed to have resourcing put into consciousness-raising, because people working together like that, builds tensions. Racism is not OFFICIALLY allowed in this organisation, nor is sexism. I mean you, certain things that you CANNOT do which I have seen done outside in other organisations. And if it’s done, we can always use the disciplinary or the grievance procedure to deal with it. Umm I have to add my own umm, from conviction, deal with women officers umm on merit, so, professionally, by CONVICTION but I’m also obliged to support the procedures of the organisation. In some of the organisations, I can play games and some women are victimised, some will fight back. But HERE, I’m not allowed. It goes along with all the all the princ(..) I don’t really,(..) I think that we need to uhh help (..) I think that there’s still an immense amount of, we can censor, umm (..)

***INT: HOW WELL DOES THE POLICY WORK THEN?**

***P16: Huh?**

***INT: HOW WELL DOES A POLICY WORK? HOW MUCH DIFFERENCE CAN IT MAKE TO PEOPLE'S BEHAVIOUR, HAVING A STRICT POLICY IN ACTION?**

***P16: Umm, it has to be accompanied by a code of conduct which says that if you don't, that if you do certain things, the consequences are....So, so it's got to have an enforcement element to it, otherwise people will slip back. Umm (..)**

***INT: DO YOU THINK THAT PEOPLE WILL LOOK FOR LOOPHOLES THEN BECAUSE SO MANY THINGS ARE LAID DOWN, THAT YOU CAN DO THIS BUT YOU MUSN'T DO THAT AND YOU KNOW YOU'VE GOT MORE THAN GUIDELINES, YOU'VE GOT RULES SET OUT OF WHAT IS PERMISSIBLE AND WHAT ISN'T. DO YOU THINK PEOPLE THEN SAY, OH I CAN DO THIS BECAUSE IT'S NOT STIPULATED THAT I CAN'T?**

***P16: I think that, what what has happened here is that people may even ADD to the things that they can't do. The whole set of insecurities that come on stream (..) so that, umm there are jokes that are made, in the office, and umm, and people shut down a whole area of of uhh interpersonal banter, in CASE they slip up somewhere. Because people have slipped up and got into trouble. That's that's one example. Umm (..)**

***INT: DOES DOES IT LOSE THE SPIRIT BEHIND THE POLICY THEN IF PEOPLE ARE FRIGHTENED OF SAYING SOMETHING WRONG?**

***P16: I, my own feeling, no. I, I feel that you have to go that far in correcting things that are (..) offensive but there needs to be some dynamic built into it, so that while you're doing that, there's self-critical and critical uhh review always about what is happening, how it's happening. It can't be just left. One of the problems some (inaud - women?) have is that it's just left. There are all these prohibitions put there. People are made to work within frameworks (inaud) and none of that is left. What we need to do is look and see how the prohibitions in fact impact on relationships and work. Assess that very regularly so that we are correcting any extremes and it's impact on people. I KNOW that some white officers initially, say a borough like Lambeth, (inaud) council Lambeth, where, uhh, a white officer had a nervous breakdown, and the reason for that**

was that the new regimen imposed all these restrictions and he began to work to them but, and he wasn't umm (..) I don't think he was (..) anti-equal opportunities, OK, I think he found himself working in that very rigid atmosphere and (..) eventually broke down because it was, it was not just about equal opportunities, it was about interpersonal relationships and power and the brutality that sometimes can accompany how how those things work. (inaud) so it can break down in that. And it also builds up resentment. I KNOW and I've been in some relations long enough to see it now and my experience tells me when I'm talking to white colleagues that I have to (..) unbuckle some things. Because they are (..) expecting, they feel tense, they're expecting trouble or aggravation or aggression (..)

***INT: FROM YOU AS A BLACK PERSON?**

***P16: As an equalities officer.**

***INT: YEAH?**

***P16: My problem with walking into into a room as an equalities officer is that people think that you're coming in to find for it and to report for it.**

***INT: (LAUGHS) BUT IS THAT ANY MORE THAN SAYING, I'M A DENTIST, AND PEOPLE SHUT THEIR MOUTHS, OR I'M A PSYCHOLOGIST AND THEY'RE OUT THE DOOR, YOU KNOW! IS IT MORE MARKED THAN THAT?**

***P16: (laughs) I, I think, I, I it may well, well, it shares it shares that, yes, but umm, umm, well yeah, I think it's like a police officer. I mean I, in my experience, I've worked in training sessions with police back in my time. I know that (..) if you're in a room and you assume everybody is a civilian and you suddenly found that that that, they tell you, they say this, that things just suddenly change. You know they expect a police officer to be X, Y or Z, not to be an ordinary person and even in my own head I say, well, I don't believe really they shut down because if they see something wrong they can arrest you. So I mean I suppose that's the sort of thing that happens. Now what I'd like to see is that we are we are accepted, we are dealt with as ordinary people but I suppose it's impossible. There are problems really with the implementation of the, with installing equal opportunity structures and in implementing the policies. There are**

serious problems around that, in the impact it has on good and bad people in the organisation. That has never, in my view, been systematically reviewed. We need to keep looking at that and saying, what effect is it having, why did that officer in Lambeth have a nervous break down, when he was quite an ordinary bloke, making ordinary mistakes, and who could of learned from those mistakes but was just left to drift? Why have resentments built up so massively among some officers here because they think that X is incompetent. X is taking the mickey out of the organisation, and I can tell you there are black officers who do that. There are white officers who do that too but black officers seem to do it BECAUSE of equal opportunities and if, and in some sense, it is because of that. Umm, they take the mickey, they come in late, they under-perform. Some white managers are scared of tackling that because the comeback is 'you're being racist' and the disciplinary structure of the organisation is hard on racism, and 'I'm a white manager and I don't want hassle, so I say alright, forget it, let me get on with the work'. That does happen. It happens across all categories, not just black people. Again it's the way a policy is impacting on the work and on relationships that needs to be constantly reviewed by somebody in the organisation but it hasn't happened in [inner London Borough], not in my view. So that we're now at a stage where because of all these grievances (..) expressed and unexpressed, we get somebody come along and say all this is a load of crap, let's sweep that away, let's have something nice and easy like diversity, all that rubbish, hmm.

***INT: SO YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE A CONSTANT REVIEWING GOING ON?**

***P16:** I think it's difficult but I think we need to do it. I think we need to ask ourselves, are we doing the right thing in the right way, umm to question ourselves, to have ourselves questioned by the organisation. Have a constant dialogue about how we're doing it, umm, SERIOUS. Serious questionings, that our work must be interrogated, our policies and all that, in order, not to destroy but in order to improve on. It hasn't happened yet.

***INT: IT SOUNDS LIKE THERE'S A LOT OF FEAR FOR THE COMPANIES WHO ARE (INAUD)**

***P16:** Yes, yes, yes I I think there is.

***INT: FEAR OF JOB LOSS, FEAR OF (..)**

***P16: Fear of job loss, fear for disciplinaries (..) umm**

***INT: IS THERE ANY WAY AROUND THAT?**

***P16: I think that we should have, take this to the limit, three hundred odd people, for me, umm, they (..) regular mass meeting (..) which are honestly held in order that people can say what they fear. Quite apart from the smaller team meetings, these mass meetings must be validated by the Director. The Director must be present, in order to give it legitimacy, to say (..) and it's not just mass meetings as a, as a stunt, but I mean, I use the word 'mass' in the sense of the whole organisation. Whether it's a mass meeting or a mass survey, but we must constantly, the organisation throughout must constantly feel that it is that is looking at how this policy is impacting on people, and to correct abuses. Massive abuses. Massive, massive abuses. Not not all, it's not totally, it's not entirely useless but there are masses and masses, there are, there are abuses. (..) I know, I know an officer who's (..) a (inaud) officer who's taken advantage of (..) the fear. If you're white, you don't want, I know that you don't want to be taken down the disciplinary route, even if you win in the end, it's a waste of time. I can play on that fear. It happens in all relationships (inaud). (..) So it's not to me a simple thing like implementing the policy and reviewing it, I think we need to look, it's it's it involves human relationships, human power. It involves deeply held views that people have of each other. You can't just simply impose a policy and leave it, you have to look at how it's working.**

***INT: FROM AN INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATION'S POINT OF VIEW, IF I WAS SITTING HERE AND I HAD THE MONEY TO INVEST IN A POLICY, I'D BE THINKING, HEY! NOW, I'M GOING TO ATTRACT AND HOPEFULLY ATTAIN AND MAINTAIN A DIVERSE WORKFORCE THEN, BUT REALLY THAT'S GOING TO CAUSE ME AN AWFUL LOT OF TROUBLE. REALLY IT WOULD BE EASIER NOT TO DO ANYTHING AT ALL, JUST TO IGNORE THE ISSUES. I MEAN IT, (..) IS THERE ANY HOPE FOR INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS TO START LOOKING AWAY FROM THE PROBLEMS AND TOWARDS SOME**

ADVANTAGES? DO YOU THINK THAT THERE COULD BE ANY ADVANTAGES?

***P16: Yeah, you see (..) unless you have total apartheid, I think the best thing is to go the whole hog. All organisations in this country (..) no organisation in this country is allowed to discriminate at recruitment, it's illegal, therefore most of them will have some, to use a simple, well not a simple an easy, an easy example, most of them will have some blacks in the organisation, at some level. Or if (..) yeah, most of them will. And even if that level is a few porters, a few people on reception and the odd middle manager somewhere in personnel, they can say, yes we do. The problem with that is that once they begin to recruit, then the issue of how those people move through the organisation, what their experiences are in the organisation, becomes part of normal management review, or should be, so that I don't see (..) unless you have a system where you can actually have a totally white workforce, I don't see how it can possibly, easily work.**

***INT: MOST OF THE PEOPLE I'VE SPOKEN TO SO FAR SAY 'WE SELECT ON MERIT' THAT'S IT. YOU PROMOTE ON MERIT, THAT'S IT. AS FAR AS THEY'RE CONCERNED, THERE IS NO PROBLEM. AND THEN I'LL SIT THERE AND SAY, WELL, HOW MANY WOMEN MANAGERS DO YOU HAVE AND HOW MANY BLACK PEOPLE ARE AT THE HIGHER LEVELS? AND THEY'RE LIKE, OH YEAH, AND IT SIMPLY NEVER OCCURS TO A LOT OF PEOPLE, NOT JUST WHITE PEOPLE EITHER I HAVE TO SAY. BUT UNTIL THEY'D HAD THESE ISSUES POINTED OUT, THEY THEY REALLY DIDN'T REALISE THERE'S A PROBLEM AND IS THERE ANY POINT TO, TO AWARENESS OF THE ISSUES, THE CONCIOUSNESS RAISING, THE - IS THERE ANY POINT TRYING TO TAKE THAT INTO INDUSTRY?**

***P16: (..) Yes. Because apart from that industry will continue as it was, as it has been (inaud) umm. The point is that there are people in the society and those people are massively disadvantaged in terms of recruitment. Umm, uhh, I'm involved in a project which is intended to bring umm a lot of black people into business education and uhh business development. Umm, you hear phrases like, when you're talking to a black MBA, uhh 'maybe there's no point in us getting MBAs. A lot of black MBAs out there**

who are, who have been trying to get work and are are not in work'. So, I think it's either evasion at best or totally racist at worst. If organisations can say there is no problem because there are black people in the society and there are those who are qualified to come in who never get past the short-listing stage because they realise they are black and so on. (..) umm there are those who will apply for the cleaning jobs as well, so, it is an evasion and it is, at best, or just, people actually KNOW that they are discriminating and they say there's no problem. There is a problem, umm. There is a problem, this organisation has solved that problem in terms of (inaud) policy and it does recruit on merit and there are people come in from different cultures and they behave in a different way but there are some highly qualified people coming in as well. So, umm, I think we have a long way to go to deal with that umm. Up and down the streets of [inner London Borough], Africans and African-Caribbeans unemployed, who are, their qualifications are WELL into management but are not employed at that level and the older they get for us the less viable they are because they are ten years beyond the normal recruiting level for middle management, so they can't get in anyway and so on.

TAPE ENDED HERE

The tape ran out at this point. The interview was continued only for a few more minutes, where participant 16 re-iterated his case and in response to the question of why commercial organisations should bother with equal opportunity, he replied in terms the 'institutionalised', 'systematic' and 'massive problem' of racism and lack of equality of opportunity and said that ignoring the problem was simply not acceptable.

PARTICIPANT NO. 17 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

***P17:** Shall I start now? O.K. what it was was that, we first came up with the idea because on Radio Ulster there was going to be umm like a racism week. O.K. where they were going to sort of like have little sort of thought for the day on racism just throughout various programmes. Umm but I thought why not take a step further and do an actual programme, a half-hour documentary on racism in Northern Ireland. Very kind of general but really amongst the ethnic groups such as the Chinese, the Indian community uhh also gypsies. And umm then what I did is that I sort of went out and talked to various people within the black community and also people who were trying to bring in legislation such as the Race Relations Act into Northern Ireland because it doesn't exist there. So (..)

INTERVIEW INTERRUPTED BY PERSON AT NEXT TABLE ASKING FOR A LIGHT.

***P17:** In Northern Ireland, it's a problem, it's becoming (..) it's becoming more visible and people are beginning to talk about it where as before it was just this undercurrent and people didn't really pay that much attention. Even the police didn't pay it very much attention to it because there were other problems such as the uhh kind of uhh denominational problems, which is Catholics and Protestants and things like that, so people now are beginning to take notice of racism (inaud) because mainly a guy called Simon Lee was killed umm, who was a Chinese guy who was killed uhh when he was locking up his restaurant in (Name of Place in N. Ireland) last summer. So this kind of sparked off the whole kind of thing, you know, that people are becoming sort of quite rowdy about it now. (..) Umm, the things that they find difficult, yeah they're not protected, only by criminal are they protected. They're not actually protected by any sort of race relations act, where as you've had, sort of in England, Scotland and Wales for the last twenty years or whatever, you know.

***INT: SO EMPLOYERS ARE FREE TO DISCRIMINATE AS WELL ON THAT BASIS THEN ARE THEY?**

***P17:** Umm hmm. And this will obviously then help them in some sort of way but of course then you've got to develop some sort of lobby or some sort of panel, you know, so how do you go about doing that? Do you bring in, say Chinese people, Indian people to put on that panel or is it just going to solely be people from the EOC and the DOE, you know so this, these are the problems they're having at the moment, who do you put on a panel. You know, where do you get the balance? This kind of thing. Umm (..) so I went and I talked to the brother-in-law of Simon Lee, mainly because his wife doesn't speak English and she was quite afraid of the publicity and everything, umm and he's campaigning very strongly for sort of more integration in society and just that this is going to be heard.

***INT:** SO IF I CAN MOVE THAT SORT OF EXPERIENCE THEN TO YOUR GENERAL PERCEPTION OF WORK PLACE DISCRIMINATION, DO YOU THINK THER IS MUCH RACIAL DISCRIMINATION GOING ON?

***P17:** Yeah, definitely.

INTERVIEW INTERRUPTED AGAIN FOR SOMEONE ELSE WANTING A LIGHT.

***P17:** Yeah there is, umm but there's discrimination also amongst, you know, if you're working in a Protestant farm and then to bring in Catholic people, of course (..) but obviously they can't sort of really do that now, you've got to fill out forms and whatever. But (..) yeah they have to fill quotas I suppose and everything like this but umm maybe it is getting better but I think that yeah initaly there would be discrimination in the work place but this is what they're trying to change obviously.

***INT:** DO THEY WORK TO A QUOTA SYSTEM DOYOU KNOW? (..) WHERE THEY FILL A CERTAIN NUMBER...

***P17:** ...Oh they would, they would, definitely.

***INT:** BECAUSE THAT'S ACTUALLY ILLEGAL AS PART OF THE RACE RELATIONS ACT, AS PART OF THE SEX DISCRIMINATION ACT...

***P17: Oh I think they definitely do. (..) Because otherwise it would just be biased. Do you know what I mean? If you were working (..) I worked, for example I worked for the (Company Name) and my boss used to be an M.P. and he was quite a staunch Loyalist and he was very umm sort of aware of the staff who were Protestant.**

INTERVIEW INTERRUPTED BY PARTICIPANT'S LUNCH ARRIVING

He would try and bring in sort of more sort of Catholic people just because, because you ARE labelled, do you know what I mean? You you you are labelled and and people realise this and so you have to find the balance, you have to bring in these other kinds of people. That's the way it is.

***INT: IT'S INTERESTING THAT THEY CAN DO THAT (..) BECAUSE THE WAY THAT IT WORKS HERE IS THAT YOU CAN'T, I MEAN THERE'S NOTHING GOVERNING RELIGION SPECIFICALLY, IT'S PART OF THE RACE RELATIONS ACT. BUT YOU CAN'T HAVE ANY TARGETS OR QUOTAS OR SET NUMBERS, IT'S ILLEGAL TO DO THAT. YOU CAN ENCOURAGE UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS TO APPLY BUT THAT'S IT. AS SOON AS IT COMES TO THE POINT OF SELECTION THAT HAS TO STOP. AND THERE'S A BIG ARGUMENT ABOUT SAYING, NO I MUSTN'T SAY I NEED TO EMPLOY YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE A CATHOLIC OR A PROTESTANT, OR A BLACK PERSON, OR WHAT EVER BECAUSE THEN YOU'RE NO LONGER DOING IT ON MERIT - IT'S NO LONGER EQUAL.**

***P17: I think what it came down to, or comes down to, you know you choose the best person for the job (..) but I think in that situation that people at the back of their mind would definitely be considering what you are, who you are, oh absolutely. Definitely.**

***INT: SO DO YOU HAVE LIKE MONITORING FORMS AND THINGS WHEN YOU APPLY FOR JOBS THEN? YOU SAID ABOUT TICKING BOXES AND**

***P17: ...Hmm I mean you still umm**

INTERVIEW INTERRUPTED BY INTERVIEWER'S LUNCH ARRIVING

umm according to your own sort of discretion you know but, they ask you if you, this is a confidential form, blah blah, are you Catholic, are you Protestant, are you, would you describe yourself as oof I don't know African American or what ever you know, not that there's many African Americans in Northern Ireland but! You know, you you tick in the responses and they obviously will take that into consideration.

***INT: YEAH. SO DO YOU THINK THAT GETS MISUSED THEN, IT'S NOT DONE PURELY FOR MONITORING PURPOSES, IT'S USED AS PART OF SELECTION, OR?**

***P17: Umm, do I think it gets misused? (..) I think that (..) that you have to be (..) quite sort of umm umm, it all depends, it all depends on your company and who you are. I mean it would be stupid to misuse it to the point that you get caught out, do you know what I mean? But umm maybe there is slight misuse. Perhaps.**

***INT: WHAT'S YOUR IMPRESSION OF THE REPUTATION THAT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES HAS (..) WITH LIKE THE GENERAL POPULATION?**

***P17: Gosh!**

***INT: DO YOU THINK IT'S HIGHLY REGARDED OR TARNISHED WITH BAD EXAMPLES OR?**

***P17: I mean I'm all (inaud) equal opportunities, I think it's (inaud). You know, we have to have these sort of equal opportunities. Umm (..) yep, perhaps some people misuse it and do tarnish the system or what ever but I'd say generally, I mean on the whole, I would hope that it is being used wisely. (..) It's quite difficult for me to say that (..) sort of you know, I'm not going to (inaud) so what I mean, I don't really perhaps know the equal opportunities system and what they kind of do and process it, you know I don't really know that sort of system umm but it's it's definitely important when you think of umm people for example in the Chinese community. They do live, well there's nine thousand Chinese people in Northern Ireland which is quite a big community considering that there's only about a million and half people in Northern Ireland roughly. You know, so it's a relatively big community. But they do keep very much umm to themselves umm because uhh (..) mainly because of language difficulties. And**

also because of their culture. You know it's completely different umm. So (..) you will need sort of more kind of kind of integration and this is perhaps why people are quite resentful towards this particular community because they have all these very backward ideas about them like, for example, they think that Chinese people keep their money under the bed! You know, they don't have modern banking systems, which is completely not true! You know what I mean? So (..) Chinese people have to be taught as well umm sort of to become more integrated in our society and we have to become more tolerant and to accept them as part of our society. You understand what I mean.

***INT: AND YOU SEE A RACE RELATIONS ACT AS BEING PART OF THAT PROCESS DO YOU?**

***P17: Yes definitely. It's definitely needed in Northern Ireland because people will often come up against verbal abuse. It's not particularly often that they come against physical abuse apart from obviously that murder (..) but it's more the verbal abuse that people are finding quite difficult to cope with. You know it is sort of rising.**

***INT: HOW MUCH DIFFERENCE TO BEHAVIOUR DO YOU THINK IT MAKES THEN IF THERE IS A LAW OR LEGISLATION OR A POLICY, A GUIDELINE?**

***P17: None.**

***INT: NONE?**

***P17: Not really. Not to behaviour. I mean that's something completely different. I mean that's a personal thing. I mean you can have like (..) a hundred laws you know and will take time for them to be reinforced and it will take time for education for this umm for people to realise you know what is going on. It's not it's not something that is going to happen overnight. Umm it's something that we're going to have to deal with in education, socially, in every other respect. Umm and this is why they seem to be quite keen to bring on sort of Chinese, Indian members of the community onto this particular panel. Do you know what I mean because then they'll get that perspective. You know it's no point having just one side and then the other side not being represented. Especially when you're dealing with this side (laughs) you know! (..) It would be very imbalanced.**

*INT: YEAH. (..) SO YOU DON'T THINK IT WOULD ACTUALLY MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE?

*P17: Not initially. Not initially, not initially. No way.

*INT: BUT OVER TIME IT WOULD?

*P17: Well you'd like to think so otherwise what's the point of having it? (laughs)

*INT: WELL THAT'S WHAT I WAS GOING TO SAY! (LAUGHS) YOU KNOW ON THE ONE HAND YOU'RE SAYING, YES, YES WE SHOULD HAVE IT BUT THEN ON THE OTHER, IT'S LIKE WELL I DON'T THINK IT WILL MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE.

*P17: Oh no, it will, it will make a difference but as far as like the initial kind behaviour is concerned (..) that's going to have to come from somewhere else. (..) Umm but it will happen. I mean it's got to happen. (..) Because if it doesn't then you're going to end up in a bit of a mess. And it is needed because they do need to be protected in other areas. In consumer services or what ever. You know they they need this.

*INT: AND WHAT ABOUT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AS FAR AS WOMEN ARE CONCERNED. IS THERE, I KNOW THAT THE SEX DISCRIMINATION ACT APPLIES TO NORTHERN IRELAND AS WELL...

*P17: Oh yeah oh yeah.

*INT: SO DO YOU SEE SORT OF MANY COMPANIES HAVING POLICIES?

*P17: (..) I'm not sure about that. I mean I'm sure they do (..) because women are encouraged now to be going out to the work place. You know it's no longer a woman's job to be in the home rearing children and cleaning the house (laughs) (inaud). That just isn't the case any more. Umm (..) but that will depend as well umm for, in the area of the community that you live in. Perhaps a more rural community (..) happening on the farm or what ever you know it's, it's just a different way of life from those women who live in the city, you know. Again it comes from education umm, how you've been brought up, umm what your own aspirations are, your own ambitions are. You know, if

you really wanted to generalise, generalise, generalise, like you would think that sort of rural communities were the natural progression then for them is when they grew up, that they'll get married, they'll have babies and they'll build a house next to mummy and daddy. Which happens a lot. And they'll sort of carry on the farm and what ever. Where as sort of thing, you're in the city (..) you know. You're, you're surrounded by different kinds of environments and what ever so you're you're pushed towards school, A Levels, University and a job. You know, that's but that's completely base generalism, I mean you just, you know, that doesn't apply to everybody by any means. I mean I grew up in the country and the last thing that I wanted to do was stay there. All I wanted was to go to university and get a good job and go to the city (..) and then maybe I'll go back and have babies and rear children and live next door to my dad. I don't know! You know what I mean?

***INT: NOT JUST NOW!**

***P17: Not just know.**

***INT: SO YOU'VE NEVER ACTUALLY BEEN AWARE OF A COMPANY THAT YOU'VE WORKED FOR HAVING AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY IN PLACE FOR WOMEN?**

***P17: No, not, no uhh (..) Not that I'm aware of because it's something that (..) I've never really even thought about for myself because I just assume that I'm going to go out there and get a job, you know what I mean? I never even think about (..) the kind of equal opportunities side to it. You know, it's just something, I was just so bloody glad to get a job, you know, fantastic! (laughs) Umm (..) but yes they're obviously bound to. Obviously.**

***INT: SO YOU'VE NEVER ACTUALLY EXPERIENCED ANY PERSONAL DISCRIMINATION?**

***P17: ME?**

***INT: MMM.**

*P17: No. None. Never. (..) But umm (..) having said that I interviewed umm an Indian lady for my documentary and this was something that she had to put up with quite a lot in in in Londonderry. Umm and she actually put it quite a nice way. (..) She she didn't understand why this was happening, you know, why why she was being discriminated against, or just being verbally hassled in the street or where ever it was. Umm I said to her well maybe it's because Northern Ireland isn't really like Birmingham or London, where you see kind of a lot of coloured people or Indian people or various ethnic minorities, we just don't see it here (..) as much obviously. And she said 'well no no I don't really think so because the Indian community has been in Northern Ireland for seventy years, sixty or seventy years, you know, my grandparents came over here and I've I've lived here and I'm brought up here. I don't really consider myself Indian, I don't really consider myself Irish but umm, you know this is my home at the same time and, but I'd love to go back to India.' You know this very kind of, not really sure of your own identity, is I think what people are experiencing.. Umm, you know, they were just in a place and that was it and they were making the best of it. (..) Umm where as they'd love to go back to India for a holiday but could never imagine settling down there because of the lifestyle that we have here. You know which is obviously fair enough.

*INT: GOT USED TO IT HERE.

*P17: Then (..) she umm kind of described herself as the brown between the green and the orange, the green being the kind of nationalist kind of groupings and the orange being the very kind of loyalist groupings. Which I thought was a nice way of putting it because she could find a balance with both sides of the community - communities that couldn't find a balance of themselves. And yet she found herself, even though she was hassled, but only by a certain minority, that you know she could have this bringing together effect. Do you know what I mean? So I thought that she put that in quite a nice way. (..) But (..) people in Northern Ireland are becoming aware of racism and they've actually set up a place in Belfast, called Byron House, which specifically deals with umm the Chinese community. And they have a manager or whatever called Peter McLoughlin, he umm (..) has sort of developed this very sort of umm informal drop-in service. Umm where people come in, they've got a language problem, or they need to

go to the hospital or they need to get the doctor quickly, they need interpreters, something like that. Very hands-on, very practical. Which is what is needed immediately, you know rather than people setting up instalments and going away discussing legislation and when should it come in and will it be this year, will it be next? You know. Passing it out. People needed the help there and then. So it's great that they have somewhere like that to go.

***INT: SO THAT'S A START THEN.**

***P17: Yeah it's a start definitely and and it's a big help. It's widely used within the Belfast kind of area you know.**

***INT: WE HAVE SIMILAR SORT OF THINGS HERE, ONE-STOP SHOPS. (..) O.K. IF YOU MOVE IT OUT OF NORTHERN IRELAND SPECIFICALLY, HOW MUCH WORK PLACE DISCRIMINATION GOES ON DO YOU THINK? WHAT SORT OF LEVEL IS IT?**

***P17: Talking about the U.K. yeah?**

***INT: YEAH.**

***P17: (..) What do I personally think? Umm (..) let me see (..). Well I suppose we're not really meant to discriminate are we? You're you're not allowed to do that particularly!**

***INT: WELL NO.**

***P17: (laughs) umm.**

***INT: THAT DOESN'T STOP IT FROM HAPPENING.**

***P17: No.**

***INT: I MEAN THINGS LIKE THE UHH EQUAL PAY ACT HAS BEEN IN FORCE FOR TWENTY ODD YEARS AND YET WOMEN STILL ONLY EARN WHAT IS IT SEVENTY-NINE PERCENT OF MEN MEN'S EARNINGS.**

*P17: Yep.

*INT: AND THE GLASS CEILING (..)

*P17: Yeah, it exists. I'm not really sure as to (..) to what an extent it exists though. Maybe it's something that's kind of covered up quite a bit.

*INT: HAVE YOU EVER BEEN AWARE OF ANYTHING HAPPENING AT PLACES YOU'VE WORKED?

*P17: No. Not that I've been particularly aware of no. (..) Where I live or where work at the moment, I work in a very sort of, almost cosmopolitan kind of environment. Various people work from all over the world and we all speak various languages and it's lovely you come to walk through the office because people are talking in French or Spanish, or German or Italian, or whatever. So we employ people from various nationalities. That's our business. Because we need them to speak the language. Umm (..).

*INT: WHAT ABOUT THE MANAGERS, HOW DOES THAT WORK?

*P17: The managers?

*INT: IS IT UHH (..) EQUAL NUMBER OF MEN AND WOMEN?

*P17: Oh no there's more men (..) who are in higher positions than women. Having said I mean there are also women directors. The majority of them are men though.

*INT: WHY DO YOU THINK THAT IS?

*P17: Well the women directors that we have are very ambitious women. They are excellent at their jobs, umm you know, they're not married. They they strive for (..) for succeeding at work. That's their interest, that's what they do. Umm where as you know, when when you've got a family and children and a husband I mean you just perhaps don't have the time to dash off to (Name of place) one day and sort of leave the kids behind, you know, whatever. You know, so there is that kind of, you've got to think of your personal life as well, you know, whatever. Some people can (..) umm

have both. But I think to a certain extent then they are sacrificing one or the other, you know. It's a very sort of umm clever woman, almost wonder woman who CAN devote both equal time to work and family. I don't know anybody who does it successfully.

***INT: YEAH, HAS SHE GOT THIRTY HOURS IN EVERY DAY OR SOMETHING?**

***P17:** Yeah, you know. I think at one point then you're going to have to give up something, or at least cut it down, you know, just being realistic. I think yeah, I personally would like to have three or four kids and a great job with a great car with a great salary. Yeah, who wouldn't? You know (..) but I think you have to work bloody hard to achieve that, to get to that point.

***INT: DO YOU THINK WOMEN HAVE TO BE BETTER AT THEIR JOBS OR WORK ANY HARDER TO GET TO THE SAME POSITIONS AS MEN?**

***P17:** Yeah, generally yeah, I do. Umm I think it is done on the whole, a man's world, generally. Umm (..) in some cases, if that's, if that is the situation and you're surrounded by men in your work force, it can be quite difficult I presume not to feel too intimidated, and you do have to (..) you mustn't be scared of voicing your own opinion or putting your foot down or of making changes, of making your own mark. And I think that that takes guts. And yes, most definitely I think it can be a lot harder to make your own mark. But, if you're good at it and you're good at your job (..) and you've got good managers and the people on your side, it's obviously achievable.

***INT: WHAT ABOUT FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES? DO YOU THINK THE SAME SORT OF ARGUMENT APPLIES?**

***P17:** I was reading in the Telegraph umm yesterday or the day before yesterday, the richest men in, aye actually it was the richest men in Britain, amongst the Asian communities. I mean these guys are worth millions, some billions of pounds. You know people who who came from Bombay or I don't where the hell they came from but they you know they sell fashion industries or food industries, or Tilda rice, they quoted this guy from Tilda rice. And umm (..) but that's only ten Asian men in the U.K. who've made it fantastically well! (..) When you consider the other million or how ever

many sort of Asian people I'm just talking about Asian people, you know who umm, who live not in squalor but who don't have a great sort of lifestyle, umm and you see that every day in London, and that's only London. Do you know what I mean. So yeah there are millionaires in this country who are white millionaires, British millionaires and there are millionaires in this country who are Asian millionaires but they are a complete tiny little sort of separate, I'm talking way off here somewhere you know, and the rest of us are muddling about trying to sort of iron our next pound or what ever it is you know. Umm but I do think perhaps that (..) on a day to day basis, just living (..) yeah Asian people probably do have it a little bit more difficult. Or ethnic minorities, sorry, ethnic minorities do have it slightly more difficult. You can see that through where they live, what they do and the kind of menial jobs that they do, you know. You see it everywhere you go. I don't mean to be, I don't mean to be racist with what I'm saying but you know people working in fast food restaurants or (..) on the underground, on the buses, you know. It happens in every society. In every kind of European, western society. Generally they'll be doing the donkey work. Generally.

***INT: I'M GOING TO TAKE IT BACK A BIT ACTUALLY TO WHEN YOU SAID THAT THE PLACE THAT YOU'RE WORKING NOW YOU'VE GOT A REAL MIX OF PEOPLE AND A MIX OF LANGUAGES AND THINGS GOING ON AND THAT YOU LIKE THAT. DOES IT UMM, ARE THERE ANY TANGIBLE BENEFITS TO HAVING A MIX OF PEOPLE? YOU SAY YOU LIKE IT, WHAT IS THE REASON THAT YOU LIKE IT?**

***P17: Well, firstly the great thing is, it's never boring! You know, you have a wealth of personalities (..) and people should embrace that rather than run away from it. You know, on a philosophical level you have a lot to learn from them. (..)**

***INT: IS THERE ANY SORT OF UMM FEAR OF SAYING THE WRONG THING TO PEOPLE? ARE PEOPLE EDGY WITH EACH OTHER AT ALL?**

***P17: (..)No, umm (..) no, not not at all, yeah but you could say the wrong thing to a Protestant back home, or a Catholic person back home. Within that kind of wide mix of cultures, it's it's umm (..) it's not as if you're walking on nails or on eggshells. That's that's just not the case. Where as I would say, yeah back home, you've got to be bloody**

careful what you say to people. It's , in fact (..) I do it automatically because because it's the way you were brought up. Umm you, there are certain umm let's say pubs (..) in Enniskillen that I would never even dream about going anywhere near. Because of the clientele that go in there, because of who owns in, because of what they're involved in, you just don't do it. And you know (..) it's not as if you know them personally because you don't, it's just that you don't go there because it's the wrong place to go. Now not that I'm a bigot or in any way biased because I have a lot of Catholic friends, I'm a Protestant but I've got lots of Catholic friends but you do know the, it's just (blows) you know in inner city Birmingham and Manchester there are certain areas that you don't go because you'd be scared being safe (laughs) But (..) if for example you've got someone who works in the police and you've just met someone here in your company, well the first thing you wouldn't blab out is 'oh and by the way, my dad's a policeman' because you don't know where that would go to and you don't know the effects of that so yeah, you've got to be very careful of what you say and do.

***INT: IT'S JUST I WAS SPEAKING TO SOMEONE THIS MORNING ACTUALLY, WHO WORKS FOR AN ORGANISATION WHERE THEY HAVE A VERY STRICT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY AND OVER ABOUT THE LAST TWENTY YEARS THEY'VE BEEN ENCOURAGING UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS AND DISADVANTAGED GROUPS TO APPLY AND PUT THEIR MONEY WHERE THEIR MOUTH IS BASICALLY. AND THEY'VE REACHED THE STAGE NOW WHERE THEIR WORKFORCE REFLECTS THE POPULATION OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, SO I THINK IT'S FORTY PERCENT ARE ETHNIC MINORITY IN THAT AREA. SO I WAS LIKE, OH YOU KNOW, THAT'S MARVELLOUS AND DOES IT MAKE FOR A MORE HARMONIOUS STAFF BECAUSE YOU HAVE GOT THE MIX OF PEOPLE THAT YOU HAVE IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND HE JUST LOOKED AT ME COMPLETELY AGHAST AND WAS LIKE, 'NO, IT BRINGS TERRIBLE TROUBLES'! I WAS LIKE...**

***P17: ...Oh really?**

***INT: ...THERE REALLY ISN'T MUCH OF A (INAUD) BECAUSE EVERYBODY IS (..) TREADING ON EGG SHELLS. THEY DON'T WANT TO SAY THE WRONG THING FOR FEAR OF LOSING THEIR JOBS, OR FEAR OF**

DISCIPLINARY ACTION OR FEAR OF A COMMENT BEING TAKEN THE WRONG WAY, OR FEAR OF ANY NUMBER OF THINGS BUT IT REALLY DIDN'T RESULT IN A HARMONIOUS WORKFORCE, HAVING SUCH A WIDE MIX.

*P17: Well I mean when you talk about saying the wrong thing, I mean what do you mean? I mean you don't go up and (laughs) call them names to their face or anything, what is exactly saying the wrong thing?

*INT: WELL EXACTLY. THAT IS EXACTLY THE POINT. NOBODY KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE AND WHAT WOULDN'T SO HE SAID THAT...

*P17: So you don't say anything? (laughs)

*INT: WELL YEAH. HE SAID ALL OF THE HUMOUR IS LOST. THERE'S NO SORT OF, OR VERY LITTLE, FREE BANTER THAT THERE WOULD BE OUTSIDE OF THE WORK PLACE, IN CASE IN MAKING A JOKE OR HAVING SOME FUN, THEY OFFEND SOMEBODY. IT'S LIKE (..) AND I DID IT, I DID IT MYSELF ACTUALLY WITH UHH ANOTHER WOMAN THE OTHER DAY. I RANG HER UP AND SHE SAID I CAN'T SPEAK TO YOU, ALL I CAN TELL YOU IS MY OFFICIAL POLICIES ARE AND I CAN'T SAY ANYTHING TO CONTRADICT IT, I.E. I CAN'T GIVE YOU MY PERSONAL OPINION. AND I WAS LIKE, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WANT TO KNOW, WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOUR PERSONAL OPINION AND POLICIES IN ACTION. SO WE HAD THIS CONVERSATION AND WE BANGED IT ROUND AND ROUND AND ROUND AND I GIGGLED AT ONE POINT AND I SAID OH THIS IS REALLY SILLY, YOU KNOW AS IN, YOU'RE THE VERY SORT OF PERSON THAT I WANT TO TALK TO BUT I'M NOT ALLOWED TO SPEAK TO ME. AND SHE GOT REALLY PISSED OFF WITH ME, AND SHE WAS LIKE, 'I DON'T FIND IT SILLY AT ALL, I CAN HERE YOU GIGGLING THERE, IT'S NOT SILLY AT ALL, YOU'RE ASKING ME TO', AND IT WAS JUST LIKE ZERO HUMOUR. THIS HAS BECOME SUCH A SERIOUS SUBJECT THAT YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO BE HUMOROUS ABOUT IT, YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO

BE PART OF NORMAL, NORMAL WORKING LIFE OR INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS. AND I JUST THOUGHT WHAT A SHAME, YOU KNOW. IT SEEMS TO HAVE GONE TO AN EXTREME THAT THAT JUST DEFIES EVERYTHING THAT IT SET OUT TO DO SOMEHOW.

*P17: Yeah, yeah, I know what you mean. (..) I mean, from our particular company umm, I suppose the people that we employ are generally western European people. Umm so it's not as if we have a large Indian community or African community or that kind of thing, where culture may well be, well is obviously very very different but umm within a western sort of community the only thing that's really particularly different is your language. You know, generally, your culture is more or less the same. Generally. And your religion and what ever. You know so that perhaps, it doesn't create a problem. (..) But you have to respect people's cultural differences and religious differences. There is, I think I can think of one person who is (..) of Muslim sort of origin and then Ramadan was recently and he had to get a day off or something like that, so you do have to respect that. Umm I mean I grew up in a very (..) very simple kind of umm environment. You know, you (inaud) I'm in a kind of conflict with myself because yeah, you know, I'm talking about Protestants or Catholics but you know, generally, you went to school and people in your school (inaud) umm you know, and they were boys and girls and they were Protestant, because we were also split, due to religion and sex and everything at school. Umm you know, so it was pretty simple. It was only when you go away to university and come across to Scotland or Wales or where ever that you do begin to to see this. You know, you just didn't see it back home. In the countryside you don't see it. It doesn't exist, there isn't a problem for you. It's only in sort of cities, and there is really is one city in Northern Ireland and that's Belfast and that's where they all are. And so people are caught up in their other things about sort of (..) worrying where the next bullet is coming from that they don't particularly think about this. Do you know? There's there's different levels. Just completely different levels. Obviously it is becoming more important as that person was killed, Simon Lee was killed. (..) I I asked the question, you know, umm because of the cease-fire, was this then producing a vacuum that was left for violence? You know, people who commit murder, they don't suddenly sit down and become saints do they? Maybe they do! Well you know, that's what I asked one of the people, you know, where is this

this huge vacuum? What about all the social kind of problems that are, you know, what about rapes, burglaries, things like that that happen in other sort of cities, you know, will that now happen here? Obviously it happened at a various extent and it has happened. And these people who went out to to kill are now sort of going out and mugging people from the Chinese community or whatever it is. You know there is a vacuum there that's being filled.

***INT: REALLY? SO IT'S LIKE A KNOCK-ON EFFECT OF THE CEASEFIRE?**

***P17: Yeah, oh yeah. Oh Christ, yeah I mean theft (..) went up a huge amount. Umm (..) umm just the drugs problem (..) became (inaud) umm in Northern Ireland.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK IT DID ACTUALLY INCREASE THAT MUCH OR WAS IT JUST SORT OF AWARENESS OF THOSE ISSUES, MEDIA REPORTING AND THINGS BECAUSE THERE WASN'T THE SAME LEVEL OF VIOLENCE GOING ON?**

***P17: A bit of both, a bit of both. But it did increase.**

***INT: I HADN'T EVEN THOUGHT OF THAT.**

***P17: If you're so used to earning money from going out shooting people, you've got to get your money from another source. So you go and steal it or mug people or you do other things, do you know what I mean? So yeah, there was definitely a vacuum that was left but (..) I don't think many people would like to admit that but it's obvious. It is obvious.**

***INT: NO, I NEVER REALLY THOUGHT OF IT. I MEAN YOU SAY IT LIKE THAT AND YOU THINK, OH YEAH OF COURSE, BUT. (..) RIGHT, I'M GOING OFF THE PLOT A BIT HERE. IF I CAN GO BACK AGAIN TO THE MIX OF PEOPLE THAT YOU'RE WORKING WITH NOW. DO YOU THINK EVERYBODY HAS GOT SOMETHING NEW TO CONTRIBUTE - ARE THERE MORE IDEAS BEING GENERATED? HAS IT IMPROVED THE QUALITY OF WORK OR PERFORMANCE OR ANYTHING BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT THAT MIX OF PEOPLE?**

***P17: I do yeah.**

***INT: IN WHAT WAY?**

***P17: Umm, our particular company deals with people. (..) It's a people company, it's a people job that I do. I talk to people constantly every day. That's what I do. (..) But I don't necessarily, I deal a lot with Russia and I don't necessarily know anything about Russia, or the Russian culture or the Russian business. So it's nice to have a Russian person, or a person who's done Russian at university, who's lived out in Moscow or St. Petersburg or something, who know a little bit about the Russian culture, to be there. Because then that obviously umm formulates how you're going to deal with the Russian market and it gives you some particular idea. So, it's necessary to have umm some sort of anchor within the business that that will help you improve your own business technique, or the way you deal with people because you know the Russian market for example, it's you know, it's a completely different sort of, way off what we do, you know. And umm I didn't realise that until I sort of got on the phone and talked to them.**

***INT: I FOUND THAT WHEN I WORKED ON EMERGING MARKETS THAT THERE WAS, LIKE YOU SAY, A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT WAY OF DOING BUSINESS AND THAT EACH COUNTRY WAS VERY SCATHING OF HOW THE OTHERS OPERATED.**

***P17: Well yeah, if you want to talk about people being prejudiced (..) the majority of English, British companies wouldn't touch Russia with a barge pole.**

***INT: YEAH? WHY'S THAT THEN?**

***P17: Umm, they're scared of the Mafia, they're scared of not being paid. They're scared of selling their goods and then the goods being sent back because it's not what they wanted, lack of communication, it's too far. Well just then for their purpose, it's too far, (inaud) everything. But generally they don't trust them as far as they can throw them. I swear! That's what it is. It's only very forward thinking companies that see a lot of potential in emerging markets, a lot of opportunity if you're willing to take a risk obviously, who will go out there and do business. (..) Generally it's not a place where people immediately think of sending their agents or distributors out.**

***INT: ARE YOU PUSHED FOR TIME?**

***P17: I've got ten minutes.**

***INT: ALRIGHT, I'LL JUST SCAN THROUGH, I THINK WE'VE PRETTY MUCH COVERED EVERYTHING. WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION? THAT'S THE LAST THING THAT I'LL ASK YOU. WHEREBY YOU PUT SOMEONE IN THAT POSITION BECAUSE YOU WANT A WOMAN, OR A BLACK PERSON, OR AN ETHNIC MINORITY OR WHATEVER THE CONDITION IS, THAT YOU ACTIVELY SELECT FROM THAT GROUP OF PEOPLE.**

***P17: (..) You know (..) umm maybe it brings about I don't know, an imbalance. I mean you don't want to have (..) going back to working for my boss in Northern Ireland at the (Company Name) I mean he was extremely aware of that and he he went on to the point where people were actually saying, 'oh my god, there's no point applying for a job, he's going to take on a Catholic anyway'. You know, because he was so staunchly Loyalist in in a in a previous life! (laughs) That he, you know, he was aware of what people would think of him and he, I think he went a bit overboard perhaps, as far as that's concerned!**

***INT: DO YOU THINK THAT'S A FAIR WAY TO SELECT PEOPLE FOR JOBS THEN?**

***P17: It's something to be considered but you have to obviously select on merit. (..) People consider it obviously. (..) And if it's going to bring harmony and if it's going to (..) increase your output at all (laughs) or bring about fantastic changes, then yeah, I'm all for it. On you go!**

***INT: O.K. I'LL LEAVE IT THERE THEN. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.**

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED.

PARTICIPANT NO. 18 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

***INT: IF I START WITH A GENERAL QUESTION, IF I SAID WHAT DOES EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY MEAN TO YOU, FIRST OFF, WHAT DOES IT MEAN FIRST OFF?**

***P18: Hmm, equal opportunity, now I could quote from MANY job applications that I have applied for, but to me personally it basically means (..) that everyone in the workforce regardless of their race, gender umm, sexual orientation, class, religion or age, is given a fair opportunity within that particular work environment. Whether it's regarding discipline, promotion, umm redundancy, umm, basically it's everyone must have a fair opportunity.**

***INT: SO YOU DON'T SEE IT JUST AT THE SELECTION LEVEL THEN?**

***P18: No it's got to be fair right across the board. If you start umm dealing with selection and then that particular person doesn't get the same equal opportunities when it comes to disciplinary, then that that is then, the company is exposing itself then to disciplinary, you know, unfair dismissal, due to again, race, gender, umm age and sexual orientation, which is what a lot of companies are doing.**

***INT: SO YOU SEE IT AS COVERING ALL OF THOSE GROUPS AS WELL?**

***P18: Yeah, it's got to cover everything. Umm if it's a disciplinary, if it's promotion, and it's not just a question of selection. You know, once you're in that job, you should be able to then umm be given the opportunity to apply for promotion, be allowed TO apply for promotion. Umm if redundancies are happening and umm, it should be fair right across the board. It shouldn't be, no person, or no group should be singled out basically. That to me, that is what equal opportunities is about.**

***INT: YEAH. YOU LISTED SOME DIFFERENT GROUPS THERE, BY AGE AS WELL AS SEX AND RACE AND, I CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT OTHER GROUPS YOU SAID THERE...**

*P18: Age, sexual orientation..

*INT: AND YOU WERE DOING,UHH, ANY GROUP WAS...

*P18: ...Yeah, disabilities, anything, it doesn't matter.

*INT: OUTSIDE OF THOSE THAT ARE STIPULATED BY LAW AS WELL OR JUST..?

*P18: Uhh, I, (..)

*INT: LIKE AGE ISN'T COVERED BY LAW.

*P18: Yeah, yeah, I don't see why somebody because of their age (..) if they're in sound body and mind, I can't see why they shouldn't be allowed to have the same opportunities as somebody who's eighteen and somebody who is fifty-eight.

*INT: YOU MENTIONED A LOT THERE DISCIPLINARY ACTION AS WELL. DO YOU HAVE EXPERIENCE OF...

*P18: I haven't had experience but umm there are people that have been umm dismissed or been warned purely, on the surface it does look like (..) serious matter but underneath that there's more ulterior motive. And that again is to do with umm age, umm particularly when you've got a young boss in, who wants a young workforce and you've got somebody that's a bit old, you know, and the slightest umm menial, or trivial incident could be blown out of proportion purely because that person particularly doesn't, wants uhh, a certain type of workforce. And again that could do with colour, race and, particularly in, in the environment that you're in, it's age. You find that a lot of older generation are being pushed out.

*INT: YEAH THAT'S TRUE, UMM, WHAT SORT OF REPUTATION DO YOU THINK EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AT WORK HAS CURRENTLY WITH THE GENERAL WORKING POPULATION?

*P18: How do you mean?

***INT: WELL LIKE WHEN YOU SAY EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES TO PEOPLE, DO THEY THINK, OH WOW, IT'S A BRILLIANT THING, OR ...**

***P18: No, it's umm (..) It depends. To (..) I think (..) to black and Asians or say Africans, no, or people of African origin and Asian, it doesn't mean anything.**

***INT: YEAH?**

***P18: Yes, it really doesn't. And to non-black and Asians, it could mean umm (..) how can I say this, preference.**

***INT: YEAH?**

***P18: Yes.**

***INT: SO BUILD ON THAT THEN. WHY DOES IT MEAN NOTHING?**

***P18: Well equal opportunities , I'll give you an example. If you look at a lot of the big stores in Oxford Street, for example, look at the number of black women working on a Saturday, in comparison to the number that are in managerial positions, equal opportunities is meaningless. Because basically what you are doing is that you're you're umm providing, you're providing the umm the BASIC. That means we will employ black women, but that's where it stops. We won't promote them, we won't ENCOURAGE them to go for promotion. We, you know, and that that's basically it. You know and that is why I say equal opportunity should be, reflect right across the board and not just umm for selection purposes. Anybody can do that. I mean you can employ one person with a different race or sexual orientation and say I'm an equal opportunities employer. So it's an easy option out. So, no, I mean it doesn't mean anything.**

***INT: No. SO IS IT THAT IT'S NOT TAKEN SERIOUSLY THEN, OR YOU DON'T THINK EMPLOYERS MAKE A COMMITMENT TO IT OR...?**

***P18: Umm some people take it seriously but I believe that some employers use it as a screening method.**

***INT: YEAH?**

***P18:** Yeah, umm. If you, someone like me with an African name, they know I'm black, they know I'm African, so therefore they can throw my interview paper away. Umm, if I was called Michael Price, for instance, (..) if they didn't have what gender or race you are, they would automatically assume that, oh, they're probably white, or somebody, for instance, Patrick Murphy, they would probably think he's Irish.

***INT: WELL, MY NAME'S SIOBHAN O'MALLEY, SO..! (LAUGHS)**

***P18:** That's right, exactly! Where as umm because they've got this form that they fill in now (..)

***INT: THE MONITORING FORM?**

***P18:** The monitoring forms. They say, and we would like to believe, that it is to monitor. And it is, it is to monitor. But I think at the same time it's also there to, sort of as an indirect quota system. Maybe it's my suspicious mind! But it's yeah, it could be indirectly, yeah, it's being misused as well, in, in uhh, ulterior motives. You know, we'll have a certain number of people in (..) of this race, of this race, of this sex. Maybe that age.

***INT: SO IT'S JUST LIKE A QUICK SELECTION METHOD?**

***P18:** Yes. It's a quick selection. Right, OK, we'll meet our quota. No more. Umm I mean at the same time it's got it's advantages whereby in a local government and Government itself, there are positive moves. And even some of the big umm very big companies, it's umm, it can be used beneficial. Such as the police, London ambulance, fire brigade, big companies like ICI, BP, that do make a concerted effort and say well look, why haven't we got any (. pauses in place of saying list of groups again.) black people working at a particular level but I think for smaller companies, it can be extremely manipulative. I'm talking about a workforce that's less than a hundred, you know.

***INT: SO WHEN YOU SAY THAT NON-MINORITY GROUPS ARE USING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AS PREFERENCING, IS THAT WHAT YOU MEAN, THAT THEY'RE SCREENING?**

***P18: Yeah, they're screening. I mean if you've got a workforce of a hundred umm and you're a white person, I'm sure you don't want a workforce where seventy percent are black. Umm, it's nothing, it's not that umm it's not really, I don't really race, it's natural human instinct that you're going to pick that are familiar to you. Umm it's right across, it's a social thing I mean, you're going to obviously hang around, even from school you're going to have friends that are similar to you. You're, throughout your whole life and even in a business environment, you'll want to work with people that have similar umm ideas to you, similar attributes, similar ambitions, aspirations to you. And if you're going to pick a group of people whose culture is totally different from yours umm, it is very difficult then to adapt. You know and when you're running a business, you're not really thinking about adaptability, you're more thinking about profits. So obviously you're going to pick people that are going to (..) not so much look similar but have the same outlook on life as you. So for smaller, for smaller companies, yeah it can be used as a screening process.**

***INT: SO DO YOU THINK, TURNING THAT AROUND, I MEAN YOU'VE GIVEN THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF HIRING A DIVERSE WORKFORCE IF YOU LIKE, CAN YOU SEE ANY POSITIVES FOR HAVING A MIX OF CULTURES WORKING TOGETHER?**

***P18: Yeah, because I think everybody has umm has, everybody from all groups have a lot to offer. Umm and I think it will enhance umm an organisation if you DO have different types. I think it's wrong for instance to have, in the city, to have a very young workforce. I think you do need a balance between the old and the young. Umm the old may be a bit slower but they've got more experience. You know they say age, umm education, umm knowledge is acquired through education, wisdom is acquired through age. So, they're a lot wiser. They're probably been in one or two jobs before and also you're going to get more loyalty from an older (..) working umm group of working (..) you're not going to get people coming in, not coming in on a Monday or not coming in on Friday because they were either too pissed on the weekend, which you will have**

with a younger workforce. You're not going to get the boredom factor setting in, you know umm and also with the different cultures as well. People's different ideas you know is very important if a company is to grow or an organisation is to grow. It's umm you're going to need as much information as you can, if you're going to compete in a world market and not just an English market, it does help to have the different cultures there.

***INT: SO (..) IF YOU DO HAVE INCREASED AND YOU'VE GOT OLDER PEOPLE WORKING FOR YOU AND THEY ARE MORE LOYAL TO THE ORGANISATION, WHAT BENEFITS DOES THAT HAVE FOR THE ORGANISATION? AND WHEN THEY SAY OH YES WE'VE GOT A LOYAL WORKFORCE...**

***P18: With stability.**

***INT: IN TERMS OF WHAT?**

***P18: In terms of umm (..) oh how can I say it? Stability umm in the business, how can I put it?**

***INT: I MEAN ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT (..) LIKE ABSENTEEISM OR OR TURNOVER OF STAFF...**

***P18: Yeah, absenteeism, turnover of staff (NOT PROMPTED AT ALL HUH!) and basically it's cost effective. If you've got a high turnover of staff because you've got high, high-flyers who want to spend eighteen months/two years and then move on, which is, there's nothing wrong with that. To get somebody in to train, for a person to advertise (..) it's going to cost money. To get somebody in to train costs money and then to do it every eighteen months does increase, I mean, you know it's not a good way to run a business. Where as if you've got someone that's been there three or four years and INTENDS to stay there for a long time, that is beneficial to you. You know umm again, you've got people there they're happy in their work environment. It it means the business is going to grow and it's going to prosper. As I said with a high turnover of staff produces low morale. Umm also job insecurity as well and people start thinking well why is this one leaving, why is that one leaving? Where as if you've got a lot, a**

staff that's been there for a long time, I think it's beneficial for that company. And I think you'll find it in a lot of older (..) older umm generation.

***INT: IF PEOPLE ARE INSECURE IN THEIR JOBS OR THERE IS BAD MORALE BECAUSE THEY SEE A HIGH TURNOVER, DO YOU THINK THAT AFFECTS ...**

***P18:** Yeah, it affects, but it affects performance because they're not going to put as much in to the job. They're not going to take the job as seriously as maybe the job requires. They won't get job satisfaction and as I say boredom will set in umm where as if you've got a steady umm steady work, steady flow of staff, you won't get that boredom in. Because at the end of the day a lot of people make a lot of their friends through work, so it's not just work it's also a social factor as well. And if you've got people that have been there a long time, they become like your second family. So that's why I said it's also good umm socially as well as looking at a business organisation profitable as well.

***INT: SO IF YOU DO HAVE JOB SATISFACTION, I MEAN THAT'S GREAT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL, YOU'RE SATISFIED IN YOUR JOB, I MEAN WHAT DOES THAT ACTUALLY MEAN? WHAT DOES IT BRING TO YOU, WHAT DOES IT GIVE TO THE ORGANISATION...?**

***P18:** Well, it means that you'll give a hundred and ten per cent. You're more likely to fight for that company if that company was going to go under, rather than leave a sinking ship if you weren't getting any job satisfaction.

***INT: SO IT'S MORE LIKE COMMITMENT?**

***P18:** Yeah it's more commitment, more dedication, umm and the more you put in, the more you'll get out of it umm and that's what job satisfaction is about. It's not just to do with money. People are paid a hell of lot of money and they hate getting up in the morning and they don't put the time and effort in that they should...

***INT: (LAUGHING) I KNOW THAT FEELING!**

***P18:** Yeah!

***INT: IF YOU WORKED FOR AN ORGANISATION AND THEY DIDN'T HAVE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY AND THEY MADE NO NOISES, BONES ABOUT IT: YOU'RE A WOMAN, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE PROMOTED, YOU'RE AN ETHNIC MINORITY, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE PROMOTED, YOU'RE TOO OLD, YOU'RE GOING TO BE KICKED OUT. IF THAT WAS THE KIND OF ENVIRONMENT THAT YOU WERE WORKING IN, HOW DO YOU THINK THAT AFFECTS YOU? WOULD YOU TRY AND LOOK FOR SOMETHING ELSE AS SOON AS YOU COULD...?**

***P18: Yeah, I mean it's a natural human instinct that umm you would actually go out and look for something else. If they've openly said, you know, you're a woman, you're black, we're not going to promote you then obviously enough you're not really going to take the job. Umm but what I think a lot of people want is honesty. You know because there's no point being led into a job and you've been there six, seven years and they've said to you, right if want promotion you do x y z and you've done x y z and you've done x y and z three or four times over. And you see other people that have been there a lot less than you that probably haven't done x y z or they may have done it but not, not to the umm quality that you've done it. That's more disheartening because they've misled you. You've sat there and thought my God I've wasted five, six years here because they told me THIS. Where as if they'd told me in the beginning I wasn't, they wouldn't be wasting their time, they probably would have been out looking in say a year, two years. So it works both ways.**

***INT: BUT THAT'S IT ISN'T IT? IF THEY TELL YOU HONESTLY THEN YOU'RE OUT WITHIN THE YEAR BUT IF THEY DON'T TELL YOU, THEN YOU STAY FOR FIVE YEARS.**

***P18: Yes, yes that's right and that's where the problem is.**

***INT: YEAH, YEAH. SO THE OTHER WAY AROUND THEN; IF YOU WORKED FOR AN ORGANISATION WHERE THEY WERE WONDERFUL, AND THEY GAVE YOU TRAINING FOR THIS AND THEY PROMOTED YOU TO THAT AND YOU KNOW MADE A SONG AND DANCE ABOUT HOW WONDERFUL THEY WERE, WOULD YOU STAY WITH THAT COMPANY, OR WOULD YOU THINK**

THANKS VERY MUCH, I'VE GOT AN EXCELLENT GROUNDING, LOTS OF TRAINING, I'M OFF TO A COMPETITOR, OR (..)?

*P18: Umm (..) I'd probably stay. I'd probably stay, if they'd given me the support, umm the training, has made me grow umm then yes I'd probably stay. I wouldn't just up and think back (..) the grass always looks greener on the other side, but when you get there it's not that fantastic!

*INT: DO YOU THINK THAT'S A TYPICAL RESPONSE, THAT MOST PEOPLE WOULD THINK LIKE THAT?

*P18: Umm no. Most people think no, fine, I'll go out and get more money but umm sometimes it's better the devil you know than the devil you don't. And in a job environment where job insecurity is extremely high, umm it's sometimes better to stay where you are and get a steady wage over a period of ten years rather than a, maybe five or six thousand over, extra, over three years and then you know in and out of temp work for the next seven. So umm it's it depends on the individual. I mean some people can handle the uncertainty but me myself, no, I like stability. I know where I'm going, I know what I can do, I can plan. Umm so yes, if the opportunities are there for promotion, umm as I said to you before it's got to be fair, umm. If they're prepared to train, if they're prepared to give you the support that YOU want, then yes I would stay, you know.

*INT: AND HOW MUCH A PART OF THAT DECISION DOES EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ITSELF PLAY? (..) I MEAN LIKE TO MY MIND THERE'S A LOT OF REASONS WHY PEOPLE COME AND GO WITH COMPANIES AND (..) EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR ME PERSONALLY WOULD BE QUITE A BIG FACTOR BUT I DON'T, I DON'T KNOW WHETHER IT IS FOR OTHER PEOPLE OR NOT.

*P18: Umm, yes it is. (..) Umm. As I said there's not many, in certain firms there's not many black umm men or women in senior or middle management positions. And so, if they came to me and said to me, well look P18, we think you've got potential, we believe that you could be in a senior management position in say two or three years

time, we want you to do THIS. Umm then I would, you know, I would be gladly more than, I would gladly do it umm because that would show to me that they've looked beyond my skin, they've looked beyond my sex and have looked at me as a person, as an ordinary employee doing the work and that would then give me the incentive to go on and do well, you know umm because they've made the concerted effort not to judge me on what they see umm but to judge me on my work, on the way I do my work. So that's important to me so (..) yes I probably would stay.

***INT: HAVE YOU BEEN DISCRIMINATED AGAINST?**

***P18:** Not, not in the workforce, no. I mean I have been umm directly, well not not, directly when I remember eleven years old! That was definitely being dragged out, when everyone else had done everything, I was the only black child there and I was literally dragged out. Umm, but when I, actually, it was other black people around that said, well why didn't they drag out the others? Umm, we was in school and we was running about (..) we shouldn't been in the place where we, we shouldn't have been in the place where we were and there were six others, all white, and they, I was just dragged out and told off and they made up a kick and a fuss and said it's racism. Why, why didn't they discipline, so that was direct. Umm, indirect. I, I probably have but at the time you don't realise it. And it's only later that you stop and think, oh you know, maybe.

***INT: DID YOU EXPECT TO BE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST WHEN YOU WENT LOOKING FOR WORK AND YOU THINK O.K. NOW, I'M AND ADULT, I'M GOING OUT TO GET A JOB...?**

***P18:** Yes. Yes. The reason why is because, as I said, I, I'm (..) I know for a fact that my African name alone, even if they don't ask, even if they don't, even if you (..) umm. I have rang up and asked for job applications and they've never sent it. So you sit there and think, well why haven't they sent me this job application? And then you ring up a second time and then you say well I asked, I rang. 'Oh sorry, we didn't get the message' or 'it was mislaid' or whatever. So you tend to think well why, you know? And I have, on numerous occasions, asked for an application under umm an English name.

***INT: HAVE YOU?**

***P18: Yeah. On numerous occasions I have actually! Yeah, I have done it, and I've got an application.**

***INT: THERE'S BEEN STUDIES DONE ON THAT ACTUALLY, WITH C.V.'S SENT OUT WITH DIFFERENT NAMES, TO SEE THE RESPONSE RATE - IDENTICAL C.V.S....**

***P18: And see what the response rate is, yeah, but I have actually sent out (..) requested applications on the 'phone and given an English name, and you know I've got them back. Umm I don't know what their reaction is when they see my (laughs) when they see my application and think, 'I don't know we sent this one out to someone' but I have done oh yeah I have done, yeah!**

***INT: HAVE YOU BEEN AWARE OF COLLEAGUES BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST AT WORK?**

***P18: Umm (..) have a look, umm yes, yes.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK HAVING AN EO POLICY IN PLACE WOULD MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO THE LEVEL OF DISCRIMINATION?**

***P18: See the thing is is that (..) you can control the company or the way the company works but you can't actually control the individual people and that's the problem. Umm I'll give you an example: there was an Asian man umm, was very good at his job, excellent but he just had a very strong accent. He was an older man and umm it, it, the job that he was doing required a lot of phone contact and basically they removed him from that job and put him in a job that, where he wasn't in contact so much with the, the the phone. And umm you know, they, he just said oh it's. They used the excuse 'oh it's just a change, you know, there's nothing really to do with it' but it was basically. It was his accent you know and THAT was what uhh because they felt that his accent wasn't what they wanted to pro umm put over to their clients. And you know, at the time you don't realise it and you know you look and you start to think well why did he, you know? They moved you know Raj, and why have they put someone else in there? And**

it's slowly that you begin to realise that it was purely they didn't like his accent. Not that they didn't like his work. They didn't want to put over (..)

***INT: DIDN'T WANT THAT WRONG IMAGE?**

***P18:** Yeah, they felt that his accent was detrimental to the company. So that, I've seen that happen. I've seen that happen with a lot of Africans as well, umm that, you know when you have accents, being moved from jobs that required either public contact by face or telephone contact because of the way they spoke. So even though there's EO policy at the end of the day it's very difficult you see because they turn around and say well we (..) umm we've complied with the equal opportunities, we've employed Asians and blacks. It's very difficult then to take somebody to court, for racial discrimination. And this is where the problem is, is because, it's umm equal opportunities is so open and it can be exploited. You know when you see a colleague like that, you know. I mean I've got a very strong London accent, I know that people, I'll give you an example, this week (..) I was speaking to somebody and he asked my surname. I gave it to him and he said 'oh where's that from?' I said it's Nigerian and he said 'oh is that through marriage?'. He didn't click to hear me, because, even though, I had a very strong London accent he must have thought I was an English girl and he must of thought that I'd married a Nigerian and I said no, my parents are Nigerian, and he was like 'oh right' and put down the phone quickly!

***INT: DID HE?**

***P18:** Yeah, that didn't bother me, I just laughed it off. But because my accent's so, you know it is a very strong London accent, people don't assume that I am of African parentage, they just think oh she's an English girl, you know. I mean, you know and when you give out your surname you get 'oh' you know.

***INT: A GIVE AWAY HUH!**

***P18:** Yeah.

***INT: SO YOU DON'T THINK THEN THAT POLICY CAN HAVE MUCH INFLUENCE ON BEHAVIOUR?**

***P18:** No because you see I've been on a lot of equal opportunities courses, run by the government and umm (..) it does, it can cause, you know a lot of disheartening, you see yes, it does protect us, because it keeps us in work but at the same time, some whites might see it as preferential, you know, which is understandable. You know, they can turn around and say 'why should they get preference?' 'why should they get you know, more people, you know, jobs should be open to everybody'. And in an ideal world, yes that's true but you know if you're (..) you've got to be realistic. If you've got to realise, as I said that people want to work with people that they're familiar with, not people that they're not.

***INT:** SO THE TRAINING THAT YOU'VE DONE THEN HAS THAT JUST BEEN FOR MINORITY GROUPS OR FOR THE WHOLE WORKFORCE?

***P18:** No, for the whole for the whole workforce.

***INT:** SO THEY RESENTED DOING THE TRAINING OR WHAT?

***P18:** No they didn't resent doing the training. They're glad they did the training because as I said, they made, it was an eye-opener to a lot of them, that umm such as somebody's accent could be discriminated against. Umm jokes as well, you know, what can be deemed umm. But some of them did feel that select, particularly in selection wise that they felt that well the jobs should opened to everybody. What they actually resented was that on some job advertise, jobs that are advertised, you actually see at the bottom umm 'this organisation, this particular section is not umm you know, there's not a lot of black, Asian or women in there, so we would WELCOME applications from blacks'. THAT is what angers them a lot that it shouldn't just be. O.K. there isn't a lot of representation from black, Asian. And the question you should ask yourself is WHY? That was their argument. Why isn't there a lot of representation from black (..) women or Asian or even gay men? And therefore you know, the idea then that we would welcome applications from these groups of people, is beneficial to us. But if you're a white working class male who was looking for a job, who feels they can do a job and then you're, you've got this thing stared in your face that, you know, (..) black (..) gay, are under-representing, under-represented, so applications would be welcomed from these people. People would think well I CAN do that job. By just

reading that, he's already put off. I mean he's already, he's not going to apply. So I can see, I can see it from both sides, you know.

***INT: EVEN THOUGH THEY CAN'T SELECT ON THAT BASIS, THEY CAN ONLY ENCOURAGE UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS TO APPLY?**

***P18:** Hmm (yes with a mouthful of wine!). Yeah. They're a bit annoyed about it (..) and I can, I looked at it from their point of view and I thought yes because if we were as, if it was reversed, you know, I know we would be extremely angry, so it's a form of empathising. It's basically well (..) you know, if you've been unemployed, you're looking for a job and you've got something saying, oh I could do that blah blah blah blah blah, and BANG, the last sentence basically says we are under-represented by these groups of people. You know, it's so disheartening. Because you're going to think, you know I'm not black, I'm not Asian, I'm not a woman.

***INT: DO YOU THINK THAT'S VERY REALISTIC THOUGH?**

***P18:** Umm, for some jobs, yeah. Particularly in the caring profession. If you look at for instance, a lot of local government positions, although that's slowly dying out but things like housing associations. Umm, you see a lot of those jobs in there, a lot of the social factors, you see a lot of jobs (..) in, in (..) where it does actually say. You know if you look in the, for instance, a lot in the Guardian, you actually see a lot of jobs that actually say that.

***INT: I'VE SEEN THE JOBS, I'M JUST WONDERING BECAUSE I MEAN I HEAR A LOT OF WHITE PEOPLE SAY, OH YEAH, YOU'VE GOT TO BE WOMEN, YOU'VE GOT TO BE A WOMAN, YOU'VE GOT TO BE BLACK, YOU'VE GOT TO BE A LESBIAN AND YOU'VE GOT TO BE DISABLED, ALL OF THOSE BEFORE YOU GET A JOB!**

***P18:** Yeah, yeah, in the caring yeah.

***INT: I DON'T REALLY THINK THAT IS THE CASE AT ALL. I THINK...**

***P18:** Umm in the caring, some of the caring, if you if you look in the Guardian on a Wednesday, you see some of the housing, some of the jobs for housing. I understand

where they're, where the employers are coming from, in the case that, you've got to related to your client. But at the same time, it's a question of (..) umm are you then saying that because somebody is white working class, cannot then help somebody who's Asian (..) somebody's a Bengali, a woman and a Muslim. You're basically saying that he can't help you? And I'm saying to myself, well, you don't have to necessarily be something to experience the same things, you know, the North Pole is cold. We haven't been but we know it's cold, so what my argument is, is that you don't have to speak the same language, you don't have to be the same sex, necessarily, to empathise or help that person and I think that is where (..) some (..) equal opportunities policies, where they are trying to be umm positive, sometimes trip up on themselves, you know umm. I think they should, I I think in future (..) umm if they're going to write something like you know a group of people are under-represented you know, however we welcome ALL applications from ALL people, I think that will be a lot more better. Because you're basically saying yes, we are under-represented here but at the same time, we will welcome all applications. Even, (..) you know even then everybody gets a chance to apply for that job. Umm you know, and then they can then prove that statement, sift out who they actually want.

***INT: IT SEEMS LIKE YOU TAKE A VIEW THAT'S VERY MUCH (..) UMM, WHAT'S THE WORD? LIKE THE SPIRIT BEHIND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IS THAT IT REALLY DOES APPLY TO EVERYBODY...**

***P18: Yeah. It doesn't just, I don't believe that it just, it SHOULDN'T just apply to a group of people because it isolates another group of people.**

***INT: WHAT DO YOU THINK OF POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION?**

***P18: Umm, in some aspects umm, it depends, for instance (..) I remember what, of the police force, where women had to be over five foot five. And they just couldn't get women that were over five foot five joining the police force! You know, so they basically said well fine, any woman can join the police force (..) you know. It's, you have to give way, you have to be, I mean if you go (..) as I said, there was umm, again men that were over five foot eleven at one stage couldn't apply, men that were UNDER five foot eleven couldn't apply to be a police officer. And then again, they just said you**

know, that's rubbish. It's not the height, it's not related to that. Umm you know so (..) positive discrimination, it depends where it is. I know there's, I think there's some positive discrimination in the police force, umm and I know that there's some positive discrimination in the London Fire Brigade because there are (..) short of umm (..) they are short of umm people from ethnic minorities.

***INT: I WONDER HOW THEY DO THAT THOUGH BECAUSE IT IS ACTUALLY ILLEGAL TO DISCRIMINATE AT THE POINT OF SELECTION.**

***P18: Well there are ways around it. As I said, the criteria changes when you apply! This is the thing is that you know, you wouldn't (..) I mean there is a section under the race relations act that actually says, if there's a genuine...**

***INT: IF THERE'S A GENUINE OCCUPATIONAL (..) YEAH...**

***P18: For instance, there are jobs for instance in the catering business, where if you're working for an Indian restaurant and you say you want an Indian chef, umm, you can't be done under the Race Relations Act because it is required for the job. So, so, there are ways around it and I think a lot of people do do that. Umm you know, if you're dealing with housing, the majority of your clients are under the age of eighteen, umm black children umm, also there's a language or or for instance, a religious barrier. You know, it's going to be very difficult for instance to get a single white man working with a group of Asian Muslim women, who are totally different, who are not going to be expressive as say other women are. And you say, well we DO require an Asian woman.**

***INT: WELL THAT'S A GENUINE OCCUPATIONAL REQUIREMENT THEN.**

***P18: Yeah, that's a genuine occupational requirement umm so that's yeah, that's another way of getting round it is by basically trying to relate a particular person, or a particular group to that particular job.**

***INT: SO GOING BACK TO THESE ADVERTS WITH THE LITTLE STATEMENTS AT THE BOTTOM. YOU KNOW WHEN THEY SAY 'WE ARE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER' DO YOU BELIEVE IT?**

***P18: (..) Well (..) Yes. I mean, if you don't then you might as well say well forget it. In, you, in the first instance, yes you do. Umm, if if you get a chance to get an interview and then you can spot well you know there is some black faces around but how many are in actually senior positions? That's when you start to realise, and you think well there's no black faces in senior positions. Either that tells me that they're not getting promoted or that that tells me that they're not getting the opportunity to go for promotion, then no. So on face value, yes, you have to believe it.**

***INT: SO DO YOU THINK THERE'S A LOT MORE (..) BECAUSE YOU'VE SAID THAT A COUPLE OF TIMES NOW, AT MANAGERIAL LEVELS YOU DON'T SEE THE BLACK FACES...**

***P18: No you don't. I mean as I said, there's they're they are fulfilling the BASIC (..) you know the basic requirement for equal opportunities.**

***INT: SO DO YOU THINK THAT THERE'S LIKE A HIGHER LEVEL OF DISCRIMINATION GOING ON THEN WITHIN THE ORGANISATION?**

***P18: Yeah, oh yeah. That's right.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK THERE MAY BE MORE DISCRIMINATION IN SOME INDUSTRIES THAN OTHERS AS WELL?**

***P18: Umm it's difficult to say. I mean I (..) from umm, I mean I work in a law environment and the answer is yes, there is. Oh yeah, there is. Umm (..) although it's slowly getting there, particularly with a lot, the Asians are taking precedents. Umm and they are pushing the boundaries but yeah, there is. There's what's called a 'glass ceiling' you know. Where umm, you look up and you see but you can't actually get through! You know, let me through! So there is.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK THE CURRENT LEVEL OF CORPORATE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY, IS THAT ADEQUATE, OR WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE, MORE COMPANIES PUTTING POLICIES INTO PLACE, OR ARE YOU NOT MUCH OF A FAN OF POLICIES?**

***P18: Umm I'd, I'd rather, I'd put policy into place and then put it into practice. I think that's the thing where a lot of companies fail. They don't put it into practice. Umm I remember Marks and Spencers holding a conference on equal opportunities and basically SAYING that (..) generally the Africans have better 'A' levels (..) than ordinary, that the white applicants that they got, the 'A' levels they got were much better. But because at the interview they never CAME ACROSS (..) umm articulate, well presented umm. So they've got the mental ability to do the job umm, but they don't know how to package it. I think it's then, it's up to the company then, to take umm the initiative and say right, O.K. he wasn't articulate but we can work on that. You know? There's nothing stopping us then sending him on a training course. At the end of the day, everyone's on probation, so I think they should take that person on, train them and basically say to them, look, this is where we feel that you know, we think you're, you know you are capable of doing the job, that's why we've taken you on however we still feel that you need to acquire certain skills and basically help that person rather than dismissing them at the interview. Or, because you know, they're not articulate and the way they've presented themselves, which I think is what has happened to a lot of blacks. And particularly a lot of young black boys, it's the presentation is their downfall. It's not that they are not able to get the qualifications but at the end of the day, the company I feel should have a policy whereby we should give them the chance, you know.**

***INT: SO NOW WHY DO YOU THINK COMPANIES SHOULD DO THAT? THAT SOUNDS, I MEAN I AGREE WITH YOU WHOLE-HEARTEDLY BUT THAT RELIES ON THE COMPANY BEING ALTRUISTIC, IF YOU LIKE, AND SAYING WELL, WE ACKNOWLEDGE...**

***P18: Well at the end of the day, if you don't (..) it costs the whole country because you're going to have a group of people that are unemployed, O.K. That group are then isolated, disenchanting (..) costing us a fortune on social services. We've got to keep them, we've got to maintain them (..) through either income support, unemployment benefit.**

***INT: YOU SEE I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY GOVERNMENTS, OR GOVERNMENT BODIES WOULD THEN SAY, RIGHT WE'RE GOING TO DO THIS BUT THEN, COMMERCIAL ORGANISATIONS...**

***P18: Well again it's it's their, they will suffer in the long run because what you're basically going to get is that you're going to get a group of people, if you isolate a group of people(..) umm if you don't help them, they will they will help themselves and it will be to your car, to your home and to your children's welfare by selling drugs or whatever other means they feel they have to survive. So it is beneficial to help (..) them because it's like a domino effect, you know; good management creates good staff, creates good sales. You know, bad management, it starts from the top and it works its way down. So it is beneficial in the long term. If they isolate a group of people then they are going to do anything and everything to get a basic standard of living.**

***INT: I MEAN THAT AS WELL, REQUIRES AN EMPLOYER, TO BE, TO HAVE A VERY LONG TERM VIEW, TO BE VERY FAR-SIGHTED, WHICH EVENTUALLY WILL REAP SOME OF THE REWARD...**

***P18: Yeah, that's right, I think it's not, not even far-sighted, just to be a bit more umm (..) compassionate, I would say, it's a bit more compassionate. I don't think it's far-sighted, I think if you have a bit of compassion (..) and if you don't look at it as umm, look at yourself as an individualist. If you look at it more as a community and society 'I'm benefiting society', then you will reap a lot more. I think a lot of companies tend to look at it as (..) A company....**

***INT: YEAH BUT THEY'RE THINKING OF THE MONEY.**

***P18: Yeah, money money money! And at the end of the day, it doesn't really matter whether umm you're competitors, particularly in Europe, are people that don't look like you, don't speak the same language, particularly in South East Asia. And they're realising that now. They're beginning to realise. They're thinking well, you've got Japan, you've got Korea, you've got Malaysia. You've got a BIG South East Asian (..) umm well, the South East Asians that are producing computers, like they've got a very heavy manufacturing base (..) and Europe doesn't. Well, Britain doesn't. It's got to**

compete with that. So it's already got to realise that it's competitors are not Anglo-Saxons or Germans or French.

***INT: IT'S ON A VERY INTERNATIONAL BASIS.**

***P18: Yeah, that's right, it's on a very international basis and they've realised, I think a lot of companies are beginning to realise that. They're beginning to open up a lot wider.**

***INT: O.K. THERE WAS SOMETHING ELSE I WANTED TO ASK YOU ABOUT AND THAT WAS GOOD EMPLOYERS AND BAD EMPLOYERS. DO YOU THINK IF A COMPANY DOES ACT OR REACT IN A RESPONSIBLE OR COMPASSIONATE WAY, DO YOU THINK THEY GAIN THEMSELVES A REPUTATION AS A GOOD EMPLOYER?**

***P18: Yeah, they do.**

***INT: WHAT SORT OF BENEFITS DO YOU THINK THEY REAP FROM THAT?**

***P18: Umm, staff loyalty. They'll definitely reap that. They'll reap, they'll also reap a high, they'll also attract a high calibre of employee. So they'll get the best, you know. And they'll keep them there as well. Umm even though head hunters will hunt for him, he'll stay where he's at because he's relatively happy, he's been treated (..) good. So not only will they get loyalty, they'll also get a higher calibre of, a good high quality calibre of staff and in turn obviously higher profits.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK THEY'LL BE ENOUGH OF A MOTIVE FOR, OR ENOUGH OF A STABLE ECONOMY WHERE PEOPLE, EMPLOYEES CAN SAY, 'I'M NOT GOING TO WORK FOR YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE A BAD EMPLOYER BUT I WILL CHOOSE YOU'? DO YOU THINK THAT'S ENOUGH OF A FORCE TO MAKE CHANGE HAPPEN OR DO YOU THINK SOMETHING ELSE IS NEEDED?**

***P18: Umm (..) yes but then you've got to highlight the bad employers and they're not really highlighted. I mean I worked in [company name] for a long time, they're awful. I work in [company name] and there's no comparison. Although people complain about**

[company name], if you compare it to [company name], there is just no comparison. I mean [company name] offers a non-contributory pension scheme. Very few in the retail business offer that. Umm, and once you retire, you still get to keep your discount. Umm, it's got homes for it's staff, you know, holiday homes. Retirement homes for it's retail staff. Very few in the retail business offer that umm that that competitiveness. So what you're going to get, you're going to get a forty year old woman in, OK, who is going to stay there for the next fifteen years or the next twenty years, knowing that well at the end I'll get a pension, OK I'll get to keep my discount, so I can still shop in the store at a reduced rate and you know they've got holiday homes for me and my children. So (..) they've treated you well where as somewhere like [company name] that doesn't offer that to its staff. You know, come and work for us (..) their attitude is it's a privilege to work for us. Where as other people, other people, yeah because we're the world's top store, you should be privileged to have the [company name] name badge on, where as someone else says no, you know, it's a privilege, umm, we feel privileged to have you working for us. That's the difference, that's a completely different attitude and umm you know as I said very few employers offer that.

***INT: SO ALL OF THESE ISSUES THAT WE'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT, DO THEY APPLY JUST TO LARGE ORGANISATIONS OR SMALL OR MEDIUM OR?**

***P18: Small organisations. Everyone (..) you know, every, it should, I mean if you have that policy at the beginning, you will grow and you will sustain as a company. Umm, OK yes profit it does matter but if treat your staff well. I mean because basically an employers reputation is through word of mouth. It's to do with 'oh yeah, my husband works for so and so and they did blah blah blah' you know or 'my wife worked for so and so, when her father died, you know, they bought a wreath or a bunch of flowers. Little things like that you know umm and I think oh that's nice, oh I'd like to work for them. You know or, you know when I was, I got compassionate leave, I got a few days off compassionate leave. Or when I was getting married, you know, they bought, you know, I got a standard forty/fifty pound present from the company. When I was, when my child was born I got a bottle of champagne - it's word of mouth. So people would**

be tempted to think oh they got this that or the other you know and oh they got this that you know.

***INT: SO IT'S NOT DIFFICULT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

***P18: For the employer or the actual person?**

***INT: NO I MEAN THE EXAMPLES THAT YOU'VE GIVEN THERE THAT MAKES AN EMPLOYEE FEEL VALUED THEY'RE REALLY QUITE SMALL THINGS.**

***P18: Yeah, they're small things. They're basically showing that you're needed. I think people need to be needed. I think the idea of the (inaud) is that everybody is indispensable. It produces a lot of job insecurity. Umm where as little things like that shows that, oh that's nice, you know. Little things like that, and they're not, they don't cost a lot. As I said, it's compassion basically. It's nice for instance, even for a small company, of even, of fifty people, right for the employer to go around and basically say, 'who's off? why are they sick? how long have they been off? right OK' to his secretary, 'send out a bunch of flowers and a card'. Or someone's off because their mother's died, OK send out a wreath, flowers and just to say we're thinking of them. You know, that's nice, it's a gesture, it's the thought that counts. Where as employers, a boss (..) who doesn't even know, because at the end of the day, if somebody, for instance, a relative has died, that person's work performance is not going to be up to the standard it once was. You know, it's up to you then as an employer to find out why. And if you can't be bothered to find out why and then you're basically going to say to that person at his appraisal, it's, it's, well you wasn't up to standard, umm, and then you, and you say well why wasn't you up to standard and 'well my mum died'. Oh! Why didn't you tell me? Well you never asked. It's not very it's not going to reflect good on the. And that person's probably going to come out of that interview thinking right I've had enough, I'm not going to work here. And he's probably lost a very good hard-worker. You know so it is important that you know that you show a little bit of compassion. And people thanking you as well! (both laugh) It would be nice for them to just say thank you, you know. If if you've made an astronomical profit, it's basically**

nice (..) you know just to say to all my staff, thank you for you hard work and your co-operation, you know. This has not been forgotten, you know, and it's been appreciated.

TAPE ENDS HERE

Interview concluded.

PARTICIPANT NO. 19 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

***INT: MY FIRST QUESTION IS JUST WHAT EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY MEAN TO YOU? WHAT IS THE FIRST THING THAT COMES TO MIND WHEN I SAY EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES?**

***P19: Well for me it means umm no obstacles in the job place uhh when I say obstacles that's anything that will umm stop me from progress in my career umm that sort of thing umm (..) well that's the first thing that would occur to me, that would spring to mind in the workplace.**

***INT: WHAT SORT OF OBSTACLES ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?**

***P19: For example if I'm due for promotion, umm you know I should be given the opportunity to progress alongside my colleagues, be they white, black, females, males, umm I would expect to have the same opportunities as everyone within that set-up. So anything that would stop me from having that sort of opportunity, for example, would be an obstacle.**

***INT: SO YOU DON'T SEE IT AS JUST AT THE SELECTION STAGE BUT ALSO ONCE YOU HAVE A JOB AS WELL? YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT PROMOTION AND...**

***P19: Oh right, OK I thought you meant within the job and within the work environment.**

***INT: YEAH YEAH IT'S JUST THAT SOME PEOPLE ALWAYS THINK THAT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IS WHEN YOU GO FOR A JOB AND THEY FORGET ABOUT ONCE YOU'RE IN IT...**

***P19: ...Oh well I mean, that's a wider (..) wider meaning than than just the job situation. I was only looking at it from the job situation but if I was outside it and looking at you know equal opportunities, I mean I would say that of course anything that would also stop me from getting a job. You know, anything that would stop me**

from getting a job. For example, I mean I've been in (..) you know job, I've applied for so many jobs. I remember years, you know years back, applying for jobs and umm and I was told once, this was off the record that umm (..) you've got, you've got all the qualifications but you didn't get it because umm because of your age.

*INT: YEAH?

*P19: For example. I mean this guy just confided in me. Actually told me!

*INT: WHAT, TOO YOUNG, TOO OLD WHAT?

*P19: Yeah, he just told me that the sort of people I was competing with were far younger than than myself. And umm the chances of me getting, he said I did very well and I mean I was doing everything OK on my application forms so I was getting a lot of interviews. The disappointing thing was I wasn't getting the job. You know and I wanted to know why I wasn't getting the job. Most of the people, the feedback I was getting was well, you know, you were competing with people who had much more experience than you have, and that's why you didn't get the job. But on this particular occasion, this guy, I sort of phoned him, because normally you know they send to you something on paper, I realised that employers don't really like that. They they're not very honest with you if you have to write it on the paper but if you get a trust of somebody and you're speaking to them on a one to one basis they can tell you lot more. So I wasn't actually going for the feedback on paper I was sort of trying to establish a rapport with people and then talking to them. And uhh this guy just said to me yeah you did extremely well you know on the interview and you know there's nothing against you really, uhh the only thing on that occasion was was your age because you were competing with people that uhh had much more experience than you have and uhh you know people that were much younger than you are and and that's why you didn't get the job. So I mean equal opportunities to me you know implies a lot. It implies age, it implies colour, it implies sex, it implies (..) perhaps you know qualifications. It's it encompasses a whole lot of issues which are, I mean maybe some of them have evaded me at this stage! But umm (laughs). But uhh I mean it means a lot, it means, it means a lot. Perhaps as we go along you know some of these things will spring to mind but uhh mainly for somebody seeking to enter the job market, those are the sorts of things that

concerns me really. If if I wouldn't get a job because of my age, because I'm too qualified, because umm somebody else has possibly, I mean one of the tricks as well I've realised was umm on one occasion somebody said to me, you know, you, your interview was OK you did extremely well but the person who got the job has been doing this job on a, umm on a voluntary basis for for some time now, and that is the only reason why the person got it. So again this one I saw on a one to one basis because he said to me that if you can come in and do the job on a voluntary basis, umm you, that may increase your chances of getting a job. And again this was on a one to one basis, this was after the interview. You know, I spoke to the person and said, you did so well, you know but you came second....

***INT: ...BUT THEY JUST ADVERTISED IT BECAUSE THEY HAD TO?**

***P19:** Because they just had to advertise it. So again that's one thing that concerns me. As a result I've no confidence in, in umm perhaps I've no maybe belief in the sort of jobs that are advertised. Uhh I look at it and I say, well this job is already gone. I mean I shouldn't bother to to apply for it. Which is not, it shouldn't be the case but it's just the way it goes. Unless somebody there tells me that there's a job going, you have a chance of getting it, but if you look, you know, you see a job advert in the papers and then you think you have an equal chance as any other person who has applied for that job, to me you know, I mean it's must be some dream. But again, you know I I may be very pessimistic in that regard but you know it's my experience leads me to that, to that effect, yeah.

***INT: ALRIGHT, SO ASIDE FROM JOBS BEING ADVERTISED THAT THEY ALREADY HAVE SOMEONE IN MIND FOR, WHAT SORT OF UMM LEVEL OF DISCRIMINATION DO YOU THINK HAPPENS IN THE WORK PLACE IN GENERAL?**

***P19:** OK so we're now moving to the work place?

***INT: YEP. I MEAN IN TERMS OF GETTING JOBS, BEING SELECTED FOR JOBS AND WITHIN THE JOB, YOU KNOW THE WHOLE FIELD OF EMPLOYMENT, HOW MUCH DISCRIMINATION DO YOU THINK THERE IS?**

***P19:** Umm OK first let me start with the type of discrimination that I think of. I mean age, age discrimination is there, you will be discriminated as a result of your age. There is also a possible discrimination as a result of your sex. There is also a possible discrimination as a result of your colour. Umm what else? Think, I mean, let's take, let's take those sort of various uhh age, sex, uhh colour, possibly qualification as well. You know you may be over over qualified. In that particular case (..) they give you, and they're qualify, they possibly wouldn't even get an interview. If you're over qualified you're likely to get it! (laughs).

***INT:** YEAH, I HAD A WOMAN TELL ME TO NOT PUT MY DEGREE ON PAPER ONCE, AND I SAID WELL WHAT SHOULD I SAY I'VE BEEN DOING FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS? (LAUGHS)

***P19:** Well yeah, yeah. So. On the age basis, it happens if you're a say a mature student. Umm (..) I mean you apply for a job, you've got the necessary qualifications, perhaps you haven't got the experience in that particular area. Umm before I went to university, I worked you know as a clerical officer for years, you know before going to university. Now when I came out, it means I was older than my mates, you know and, of course went, I did Town Planning as a profession, that was my degree. So I was competing with people that were much younger than me. I suppose employers saw those people perhaps as more receptive to ideas and new ideas than I was because I was older than them, you know ahh...

***INT:** ...OR THAT THEY WOULD ACCEPT A LOWER WAGE THAN YOU.

***P19:** Or they would possibly accept a lower wage than than I would, so (..) from that point I think I was disadvantaged (..) in a, in a way. But uhh...

***INT:** ...DO YOU THINK THIS HAPPENS A LOT THOUGH, I MEAN THAT'S YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, DO YOU THINK THERE'S A LOT OF DISCRIMINATION GOING AGAINST PEOPLE BECAUSE OF THEIR COLOUR, OR THEIR SEX, OR AGE OR....

***P19:** I mean I'll I'll tackle it one by one, you know, I'm I'm starting with the age one.

***INT: OH I'M SORRY!**

***P19: It's alright. I'm I'm starting with the age one. I think people in my situation, not just me, because I've umm I've got so many friends in London for example that you know are barristers, you know and it's like, you know, that I finished with and all the rest of it, that you know, or haven't got a job because, I mean there are a whole lot of reasons but you know, starting with the age one, umm, there are certain areas, certain industries that age is a critical factor. I mean if you look at the, if you want to be say a merchant banker and you wanted to be a banker for example and you want to work in the city of London and you finish your degree let's say at the age of say twenty-eight, twenty-seven. Twenty-seven, twenty-eight uhh, you are competing with people at the age of twenty-one, twenty-two, possibly even lower than that. Umm yeah, that sort of industry is the type that actually, you are told what to do. It's it's it's part of the success of that industry and you know, there is somebody who is up perhaps with far more experience in that industry who knows it inside out and they just come and tell you, 'if you do this, you know, our company will be successful'. There's little room for, for using your own initiation (sic) on doing things. Uhh, even then initiative or intiation that you have will be restricted in a particular way, so (..) my personal opinion is that they are reluctant to take people who are slightly old because they think that they wouldn't be able to take things as told them. Or they they may not be much more...**

***INT: ...OLDER PEOPLE?**

***P19: Yeah, old people, yeah older people. Uhh and I've seen a lot of you know friends in that situation. Now, you know let's move slightly from age as well to to say race or something. I mean again there are certain areas to that. I mean if you're black, or if you are white, you may be disadvantaged. Umm if you take again, you know certain areas in the financial services and industry. No let's let's go back. I mean my sister for example who did a degree in the uhh Hotel and Catering industry (..) for example was told once, in umm (..) south east London somewhere, I think it's probably Greenwich, where this person actually lived in Greenwich. He, he was a manager of a restaurant or a hotel. Now he said to my sister that umm he would like to employ her because of her, you know, she was very (inaud), she can do the job but, his customers, if he employs her, he will lose his customers.**

***INT: BECAUSE OF HER COLOUR?**

***P19: Because of her colour. He actually said that to her!**

***INT: ON THE RECORD OR NOT?**

***P19: Well perhaps on the record but I mean he was genuine, he even he even became friends with my sister, you know, because he said he genuinely wants to employ her and that if there's any help he can do, like you know, giving her references for jobs elsewhere, he will do that. But if he actually employs her, he loses customers. Possibly because the people who come there maybe National Front! You know, which means that they see, somebody of that sort there. That's uhh, you know that's the end of of his business. So it's up to him, what ever, he takes the risk to employ you know a black person and lose his customers and as a result his business goes down the wall...**

***INT: ...DID HE REALLY THINK HIS CUSTOMERS WERE SO RACIST?**

***P19: That's what he thought!**

***INT: I FIND THAT ASTOUNDING.**

***P19: And you know, he's there to make money. You know he's not there to to patronise or take people because you know, if you're looking for to make money, he's there to make money. So for him, you know, employing black people, however, whatever good intentions he has, umm, he may not be able to do that. I mean that's that's that's one thing. I mean the other, at a different level, in my profession as a Town Planner, like when I got my degree for example, I was the only black in about umm forty to, about fifty students. So, I mean the profession don't really know. I wouldn't say they're not used to black people but not many black people enter that profession because it's not very known. It's not like Law, Medicine, that so many people know of. You know, Town Planning, it's it's unusual sort of thing. People don't really, I didn't know about it until I got offered the course, so you know. So, it's not surprising to me that not many people know about it. But you know, in that in that scenario, I mean some of the interviews that I go to, and there are places that you know, you hardly see black people. I mean I go to these interviews and the people walk by and they look at**

me, cars go by and people sound their horns, those sort of things, you know. I mean I went to a place somewhere, ohh somewhere at the back of Cambridge or somewhere, I used to go, I mean I used to go everywhere. I've been to Derbyshire. I mean I would go anywhere. I mean I didn't care. But you can tell some of the uhh, the reactions, or the the responses from people, you know. It's either they don't expect you to be there. It's like you know, you've got to go to London, or to Birmingham, or you know those sort of places (laughs). But in those sorts those sort of places that are so remote that they don't expect you to be there. You know, so again, you know the colour of your skin, you know, will be, you will be disadvantaged from that, from that point.

***INT: DO YOU THAT'S SO? BECAUSE I'VE HEARD A LOT OF PEOPLE TELL ME (..) THAT YOU EXPERIENCE RACISM FROM WHITE PEOPLE WHEN WHITE PEOPLE ARE USED TO HAVING BLACK PEOPLE AROUND AND HAVE GOT LIKE A NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE OR NEGATIVE VIEWS FROM PEOPLE AROUND THEM. BUT THAT OFTEN WHEN YOU GO TO AN AREA WHERE IT'S PREDOMINANTLY WHITE, IT'S UNUSUAL, YOU MIGHT GET PEOPLE BEING CURIOUS OR SOMETHING BUT IT'S NOT A NASTY RACISM, IT'S JUST A CURIOSITY...**

***P19: Well yeah I mean it depends on how you define racism. I mean, it depends on how you define it, on how you want to look at it. I mean on the one hand, yes you may have people who, out of curiosity, may be doing things which they may not be aware of it but it's still, it's still racism. I mean, it's still racism, but they are not aware that that's you know, that they are being racist. You know, those, I mean I've had people who genuinely, I know they're not racist, but the sort of things they talk to me about, you know, has race, it has race connotations, which they are not aware of it. I mean like I go to work, somebody comes to me and said, 'oh, I saw this umm, oh this weekend I met this guy from from South Africa, you know, and he was really good, you know' and if he met somebody who was Welsh or he met somebody he would come and talk to you, tell me about it! But I don't see why he should come and tell me that he met somebody who was a black person. For me, you know, it doesn't do me any good. I don't want to hear them sort of things. I would rather he came and tell me 'well I met an interesting, nice guy, he was really nice'. As to whether he was black or green or yellow (..).**

***INT: THAT'S NOT RELEVANT.**

***P19: (laughs) That's not relevant! Do you know what I mean? I mean lots of little things, I mean people, like when I was, like on my course when I was doing my first degree course, I just realised that out of, people were just curious, being the only black. Most of the people had come from the North, some from remote areas. Being the only black you know they, they were curious to know more about me. You know, some people would just come and touch my hair, you know. I could tell, you know, they're looking for the opportunity to touch my hair but it's like, you know. (laughs) You know that they're not actually coming to touch it but you know they're just going past and you know they just sort of touch your hair and they say, 'oh I didn't realise you, your hair was greasy, I've never'. You know, it's you know silly, all sorts of silly remarks you know then you can tell you that yeah, it's just purely out of curiosity. But then (..) you know, I, I've always had this feeling that you are, live in a society where (..) if you don't make any effort not to be a racist, you will be a racist. Without knowing. Do you know what I mean? Because if you sit down for example and you listen to the media, anything negative is black, you know, black sheep, black this, black that, black that, black that, black, black, black that! And umm I sincerely believe that if you don't go out of your way to be educated in these issues, you know, you will be a racist. (laughs) I swear that you become a genuine racist. Or uhh racist by default, you know it's...**

***INT: ACCIDENTAL!**

***P19: It's you know, it's neither here nor there. But umm I mean, even if you look at the way the system is in England, I mean if you live in a place like uhh (inaud - name country town), your whole life, unless you actually go to university, your, probably from school to your college, you know sixth-form whatever, may be restricted to, to the area. You know, you may not get a chance to go to say outside, so your whole life is restricted to that area and it's only when you go to university, then you meet say black people there, then you know, you say to yourself, 'oh you know, I didn't know these people were also capable of doing that'. Because you always just see them you know, playing football, or you see them in Crime Watch, you know, there's hardly the day goes without you know, a black person being mentioned. You know, you hear of these**

issues in in the media, that sort of thing and that of course, of course that will sort of mould or shape your opinion, of you know, of of black people. It's only when (..) where and when you go to university, in my opinion, do you actually meet black people who are capable of doing you know, what you are capable of. Uhh I think that is where the respect actually comes but you you know, you actually earn it, you know, the hard way. I mean when I did you know my first degree, it was even difficult for me to even open my mouth, because what ever you say, people just, you know, they shout you down. That even happens here. I mean I've met people you know because of my position as the president of the Afro-Caribbean society, you know, people talk to me about the experiences they have here and you know, people go and say thing, especially the overseas students that have just come, you know I mean, some of the things, they have good things to say or to contribute but it's like they say something and you know they sort of brush it of as if what you're saying is uhh, 'how can you think about that, you know, you can't say that' and as a result you make them think that what ever they say, you know it doesn't really hold water. But I can understand that because it's, I've been through that, you know I've, I've been through. But it made me very hard and it made me very determined you know to actually learn and learn and learn and make sure that I was on top of what I was doing. And it was only at that point that I was actually recognised. You know I mean my first year, I always said that my first year was the difficult year for me, you know but (..) afterwards like you know, my second year, my final year was the most (..) you know happiest time of my university education because I was in control of events. Anything that I had, I'm pleased to say that people would listen to me and I was recognised in my field and when it comes to that they say, 'oh, let's leave that to P19, oh, see P19' and I was happy, I was proud at that time but it took me a long way to get to that that that stage. So I mean, in terms of uhh racism, it exists, I would say it exists. The difference I would make is people who are genuinely racist and people who are racist by accident. And may not even be aware that they are racist. And I do sympathise with those people but again, you know, I mean uhh, I find it (..) irritable, you know, irritating when some of the comments you know they make uhh, it sort of irritates me. You know, I mean, although I do forgive them, I sympathise with them a while, they don't know what they're talking about. But at the same time, you

know, that is no excuse but I blame, I blame the system (..) you know, rather than blaming them.

***INT: OK YOU SAID A COUPLE OF THINGS THERE THAT I'D REALLY LIKE TO PICK UP ON. THE FIRST OF WHICH WAS WHEN YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT LANGUAGE USE AND SAYING THAT THE 'BLACK' IS USED FOR THE NEGATIVE ALL THE TIME IN THE MEDIA, YOU KNOW, THE 'BLACK SHEEP OF THE FAMILY' AND ALL THE SAYINGS THAT WE HAVE. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT, I CAN'T REMEMBER WHICH COUNCIL IT WAS, LAMBETH COUNCIL OR ONE OF THE INNER LONDON BOROUGHS ANYWAY THAT WAS MAKING A REALLY CONCERTED EFFORT TO UHH NEUTRALISE THE LANGUAGE USE IF YOU LIKE AND THEY STOPPED CALLING BLACK BOARDS BLACK BOARDS, THEY WERE CALLED CHALK BOARDS. THEY STOPPED CALLING BLACK DUSTBIN LINERS BLACK BAGS, THEY WERE BIN LINERS, THEY WERE GREY BINLINERS OR SACKS OR SOMETHING - TAKING IT TO THAT EXTREME. DO YOU THINK THAT'S HELPFUL OR COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE, OR NOT HAVE AN OPINION?**

***P19: No I think, I I think that's helpful but you know, as I said it's a drop in the ocean. Obviously you know it's a starting point. You know it's got to start from somewhere. But umm I mean a place like Lambeth, obviously it would be a good starting point but I still think you know, it's a drop in the ocean. I would, it would be much more effective if it's coming from an area that is not predominantly black. Or if it's taken on board (..) it's good for it to come from that area because obviously the blacks have to stand for themselves you know, they have to fight for themselves - if they're not going to do it, who else is going to do it? So it's good to have come from that angle but you know, a step forward would be other councils adopting adopting that. And perhaps not just other councils, you know, I mean (..) we as academics as well. I mean I I was in a seminar once and umm somebody umm gave me his work to, an MPhil student, you know he did a presentation and wanted some feedback from me. And umm he said something like, you know in the course of his presentation, said something like 'a black hole'. And umm I said to him that well, it's, I don't think it's advisable to use those sort of umm terminologies where you think everybody understands it because I don't**

understand it, you know. And uhh he was surprised because he thought he was using something that everybody understood. I understood what he meant but I I refused to to actually accept it as as (laughs) as it meant or as you know, he was saying. I said to him, it would be better to use a different language, to actually explain what you mean. You know, rather than just using that sort of terminology, well you know, black night, no it was black box he said, yeah, black box, uhh which he took well. I mean, everybody knew what that meant. I would, I would prefer he actually explains what exactly he means. You know, rather than saying that, 'oh well this is a black box' and I think it's, it is also my duty to make sure that if I come across those things in my life, you know, if I'm in a position to to effect it or to change it or to make it clear to people or change it around, I will do that, you know and so the onus is also on us. And that's why if if umm Lambeth has done that, it's good news as far as I'm concerned.

***INT: YEAH. I THINK IT GOT A VERY BAD PRESS AT THE TIME, NOT BECAUSE THEY WERE MAKING THE EFFORT TO CHANGE THE LANGUAGE USE BUT BECAUSE THEY TOOK IT TO SUCH AN EXTREME THAT YOU WERE NO LONGER DEALING WITH THINGS THAT WERE MIS-NAMED, LIKE THEY WERE SAYING YOU CAN'T CALL A BLACK BOARD A BLACK BOARD, AND SO PEOPLE WERE SAYING WHY NOT? YOU KNOW, IT'S A BOARD AND IT'S BLACK. YOU KNOW, WHY SHOULD THE COLOUR BLACK BE TAKEN OUT OF EVERYBODY'S VOCABULARY IN CASE IT'S OFFENSIVE?**

***P19: Yep. I mean, they may have gone uhh to the extreme but I mean Lambeth as it was obviously, they are far left on the political spectrum. So that you know umm they are likely to to you know to do things like that.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK THAT HARMS THE REPUTATION AT ALL OR WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE (..) HAVE THEM DO IT ANYWAY ...**

***P19: Well, the thing is, when when they do that, in as much as it harms, you know, the reputation, umm it also brings certain things to light. I mean it was controversial and you know, controversy sells. Controversy, controversy umm umm breeds umm controversy, you know people are much (..) I'm just trying to think of it, there's a word for it but umm (..) in the commercial terms you know, controversy sells. You know and**

umm (..) people are much more likely to be exposed to these things because it's caused that sort of controversy. People are more likely to hear about it and then form an opinion. You know, so, Lambeth council did that and as such people heard about it , OK and they have formed an opinion as to whether they took it too much to the extreme, or they shouldn't have done that. That in itself is something. If they hadn't done that, perhaps, nobody would have talked about it.

***INT: YEAH THAT'S TRUE.**

***P19:** You know, so, it was brought to the media, the media picked it up because they thought you know, they were being too extreme. And as a result, a lot of people heard about it. So people would be informed, or people would be aware of these things. At the end of the day they will make up their mind whether to call a black board a black board or to call it a board, or to call it a white board or to call it what ever you do. So, it is bad, but you've got to look at it in perspective. OK You've got to look at it in perspective and on the balance I would argue that given the system that we're in, I would argue that on the whole, I think it's it's raised the awareness of people, you know, with regards to these things. At the end of the day, people have to decide whether to toe along those lines. I mean I didn't really hear about this, the Lambeth one, but it's just my observation you know through the media, you know, black sheep, black this, black, black, black, black, black, black, black, black. People are not aware of it. Even within our own environment.

***INT: SO THAT MAKES THEM THINK?**

***P19:** You know, that makes them think it's acceptable. (..) It depends on how (inaud) who say (..) who's not aware of it, saying, everyone says it. And if I come across people who say, and I can talk to them or tell them that you know it would be better if if you use something slightly different because you may be offending somebody. You don't know. You know, if I'm an external examiner and you offended me and I have the power to fail you then you know, I may as well use that power! (laughs) But you don't know so you just have to keep it out ! (laughs) Do you know what I mean? You don't know so just keep it out. Umm that was my advice to him, that if you don't know

about something, these sorts of things that are subject to interpretations, be careful how you use it. Especially in your (inaud)...

***INT: ...WE USED TO HAVE THAT WHEN FEMINISM WAS FIRST COMING INTO MAINSTREAM PSYCHOLOGY, THEY STARTED A SERIES OF LECTURES ON USING NON-SEXIST LANGUAGE AND SOME OF THAT WAS VERY EXTREME BUT LIKE YOU SAY, IT MADE YOU VERY AWARE OF THE WORDS THAT YOU USE...**

***P19: Yeah. Well yeah. I mean, I am equally guilty of that in terms of you know the feminism type, I mean I used to use he, he, he a lot, but then you know I, when I started thinking about these things, I also looked at it from the point that whatever I say here, I always have to make sure that umm, I mean I'm not perfect, but at least I am aware of it. You know, it's raised my awareness in that area, that if I say something I always think about it and also add a 'she', or even when I write, so it's good that I'm aware of it. Some people are not even aware of it and that's the danger. See what I mean? People are not aware.**

***INT: SO WHAT SORT OF REPUTATION DO YOU THINK EQUAL OPPORTUNITY HAS WITH THE GENERAL PUBLIC? I MEAN, WE'VE BEEN TALKING A LITTLE ABOUT POLITICAL CORRECTNESS TARNISHING IT BUT DO YOU THINK IT COMMANDS RESPECT IN PEOPLE OR IS IT SOMETHING THAT'S EASILY DISCARDED OR NOT THOUGHT OF OR?**

***P19: Well I mean, equal equal opportunities has you know the history of it in in America. When you look at the you know, (inaud) discrimination, quotas, and you know what have you. Umm, all these things came about because (..) you know black people were disadvantaged for years. And they were dehumanised. I mean it's the only place on earth that the blacks uhh, were given three-fourths or so of the status of a human being, enshrined in their constitution! You know, so, they actually had to make a lot of effort in sort of you know re-dressing or addressing that sort of situation because they were at a disadvantage right from the word go. And it was even enshrined in their constitution! (laughs) So again, they had to come up with things as well, you know, such as all these things. Again, in their legislation to make sure that those sort of things,**

sort of addressed. Now in England, we haven't had anything of that sort. Uhh, the the sort of discrimination that I think we have here is, the - the one that I would say is quite dangerous because it's in the minds of people. I mean, if you don't get a job because you're black (..) you already know that you didn't get a job because you're black. I mean, if they are careful or sensible enough to conceal it, in what, you know, their writings (..) you didn't have access to any information which would indicate that you didn't get the job because you were black. And umm, so it's very difficult, you know, here the way the equal opps. is is administered. But, the principle of it I think is is (..) is right and people respect the principle of it. That in a situation where umm a section of the community is less represented in that job, then of course you have to come up with solutions or suggestions to you know, to address that situation so that if, if say women are under-represented in the in this particular job, then you have to develop steps you know, to actually employ uhh women. And the question then is, are you just going to employ people because they are women, or we are going to employ them because you know, they are actually qualified to do the job?

***INT: THIS WAS GOING TO BE MY NEXT QUESTION. DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD DEVELOP TARGETS OR QUOTAS TO PUT PEOPLE IN THOSE POSITIONS WHERE THEY'RE UNDER-REPRESENTED OR WOULD YOU RATHER SEE IT WHERE WE'VE GOT POSITIVE ACTION IN THE U.K. WHERE YOU CAN ENCOURAGE UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS TO APPLY BUT YOU CAN ONLY SELECT ON MERIT...**

***P19: ...Oh yeah.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK THAT'S SUFFICIENT OR WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE TARGETS?**

***P19: I mean targets, no. I mean, as as an educated person you know I think it's, it's umm (..) what's the word but umm (..)**

***INT: INSULTING? (LAUGHS)**

***P19: Insulting, yeah, I mean this, if I, if I am to get a job because I'm black, I will find it very offensive. But again, you know, that could be highly concealed. If I get a job at**

a university where I know I'm actually qualified to do that job but again I also got it because I was black, I mean, (..) it it it's a very difficult situation because I will know that I got it, I got this job because I'm black because black people are under-represented in that environment. So, it means you know, I got the job. But I would also know that, well, I am qualified in that job, OK, I didn't get it because I wasn't qualified. In fact I am qualified for that job. I didn't get it because of (..) the practices that has been going on in the past, because they haven't been employing black people. So, I've happened to get in there, you know, but again, you know, I I have to face facts as well that not many black people are very qualified anyway. You know, there are you know black people who are qualified but it's only few. It's the minority that are qualified you know and umm, which will make life very difficult for them anyway because the sort of places that they will be seeking to go to will be predominantly white and umm first they will have difficulties in going, getting there, because they haven't got ANY contacts either, they they wouldn't know how to fill in the application form in the in the manner that will be acceptable by those people, unless they actually decide to teach you. If they don't decide to teach you, you won't get it. You know, there are ways of filling in an application form which is not accessible to everyone, you know, apart from your level of education, if you don't know how to fill in an application form, you don't know how to fill. If you don't know how to fill it in a particular way that will be acceptable to a particular industry, if you don't know it, you don't know it. You know, that's part of your, your education. So (..) the principle behind equal opportunities I think is good but but in practice, you know how you go about it is, I'm not sure, it's a bit difficult. I mean the quota system now (..) I wouldn't, I wouldn't want it but (..) it would depend on the level. I think it would depend on, certainly in my, on my level, I wouldn't want a quota system. But perhaps if you go down the scale, you know, if you go down the scale, maybe, it maybe acceptable but (..) I mean on the other hand people could also say that it is our level which should be acceptable because there are many of us to, I mean, we are few but the people that have come out, you know, we should be given that quota to enter certain places, of our choice. Because I know people that would want to be in the city, you know, I got friends that are barristers, I've got friends that are you know solicitors, that would want to work in certain places, but you know, they're not given the opportunity to work at those places.

***INT: BECAUSE OF THEIR COLOUR?**

***P19:** Well, I mean it's, it's difficult to say! You know and that is that is one thing, that is why you see and that is why perhaps the quota system in America uhh is is favoured by by some people there. I mean, my friends in America for example, are far successful, or have been far successful than the friends in the U.K. and, I mean I talk to my friends there and big salary, you know, big bucks, they're doing very well. I mean they they they've got good jobs, all the areas that they want to go to, they go to those areas. When I told my friend here, who was just visitor from America, but I think that the age is a problem here for us. I, I, I have to be honest, I've never looked at things from the race point because I mean it's not something I look at. If I need to look I'll probably be very frustrated so I don't really look at it from that angle at all! (laughs). I look at it from from age. And uhh, he said to me, 'but how? How is it so?' And he said to me in America, you know you don't even put your age there. I mean they don't know your age, they just take you on your qualifications. You know, so they don't know whether this guy is this or this or that. And you only fill an application out, according to him, after you've already got the job!

***INT: OH REALLY?**

***P19:** That's what he told me! He say you fill in the application form when you've already got the job. So that you know, umm (..) if anything is going to go against you, it's going to be at the interview, you know, and umm, if you're qualified, you shouldn't have problems at all in getting a job.

***INT: DO YOU SEE YOUR EDUCATION AS BEING A TOOL TO OVERCOME ANY OBSTACLES?**

***P19:** Oh yeah, I mean I, I think, you know I mean years, years back you know, possibly I wouldn't be saying what I'm saying know. Years back, I'd probably (..) it is a tool but it's the same tool that people, people, the people that I've left behind are not very happy. I mean I can look back in my years and make a distinction between categories of friends. The people that I had before I went to university and the people that I've, you know continued to remain friends with and the new friends that I've

acquired. Now the people that I had before coming to university, they were very very sceptical, suspicious (..) of you know whites in general, you know. They said well, you don't want to, you know, you don't want to do that you know they speak (inaud) you know they would never promote you they always have to keep you down, you will always be down. Those were the typical, you know, you couldn't play, for example, table tennis, as soon as you know a white comes, you know, you don't want to play the table tennis because they just, they've just come to spy on you, they're just coming to listen to what you say, you know. If if you go they will just go and say something against you.

***INT: VERY SUSPICIOUS.**

***P19:** Very suspicious, that was the relation. And it was, you know, very typical of those people. (..) I would have been like that if I was still there. OK Now, going to university has exposed me to a whole lot of issues. (..) I mean those same people who would also be guilty of umm sexism, OK, but they're probably not aware of it. But I'm looking at it from now, you know, where I'm sitting! (laughs) Do you know what I mean? But they could also be guilty of a whole lot of things that they are not aware of, OK but again, I've also, like you know, that that group of people, I'm looking to a group of people who (..) who are aware of these things but that also perpetrates their feelings or dislike. They are aware of these things but then that helps them you know, because they have developed arguments, nice arguments you know to support their views. OK? For me, it's been, it's exposed me to a whole range of issues and it's it's, for me it's beneficial because at the end of the day, you know, I can go anywhere in this world to work. You know, with that tool I have, I can go anywhere in this world to work. So, perhaps I will use it in the point that way, I'm, I'm using it to sort of reinforce my views about the superiority of men, about you know how this or that. It's rather helped me, or exposed me to the fact that IF I am against discrimination, then I should be against discrimination of all kinds. For example if somebody comes to me and tells me about a fact that this this tribe in Africa should be the dominant tribe, you know, I will say to you, well hang on, if you're in Europe and you're black and you're being discriminated against, you said, 'oh well hang on why should I be discriminated against?' So why is it when, if you go to your country, you can say that this this tribe

should be the predominant one? That is my view, you know, that, you know, education has exposed me to these things, so I'm able to think that way, you know, if somebody says something, I'll sort of contextualise it, I'll put that in perspective and say well hang on, how would you feel if if this and that.

***INT: DO YOU THINK THAT EDUCATION MAKES SUCH A DIFFERENCE THEN?**

***P19: Well, it makes, it makes a difference but again I mean it's, I would have, for example, people calling me coconut. Do you know what coconut is?**

***INT: YEAH.**

***P19: OK Yeah, I mean, somebody called me coconut because they said I may be black but you're probably white inside. From that point of view, because of the way maybe I think now. You know, and they are the very people, if they come to me and say 'oh well, P19, can you give me a a reference' I will say well hang on, I haven't seen you for so long, I can't give you a reference. Because my reputation is at stake now. I can't just give reference to anyone but you know they could be good friends of mine! But I haven't seen them for years, and I wouldn't be inclined to just give them you know, uhh risk my reputation for that. So that makes me, or distances me from the very people that you know, I set out with. So I may be seen from, there are so many ways you can look at it. You can look at it from your personal development point of view (..) you know, and say that well I've benefited from it. But you know, how do your friends see you?**

***INT: WELL THIS IS IT, BECAUSE THE GROUPS OF PEOPLE THAT I'VE BEEN SPEAKING TO SO FAR, A LOT OF THEM, BECAUSE I'M BASED IN CRANFIELD OBVIOUSLY AND A LOT OF IT'S BASED ON PERSONAL CONTACTS AND I'VE BEEN TO UNIVERSITY, SO MOST OF THE PEOPLE THAT I'VE SPOKEN TO HAVE GOT AT LEAST A BACHELORS DEGREE. AND YOU KNOW I'M ASKING WHAT SORT OF LEVEL OF DISCRIMINATION IS GOING ON AND MOST OF THEM SAY, 'WELL YOU KNOW IT DOESN'T REALLY HAPPEN AT THIS LEVEL. I SUPPOSE OVER THERE IT DOES.' YOU KNOW, NOBODY IS WILLING TO SAY, IT HAPPENS AT THIS LEVEL. IT**

SEEMS LIKE THE MOMENT YOU'VE GOT AN EDUCATION YOU'VE SUDDENLY GOT SOME MARVELLOUS KNOWLEDGE THAT MAKES YOU (..) IMMUNE ALMOST TO DISCRIMINATION. AND I DON'T BELIEVE THEM BUT LIKE YOU SAY, THEY'VE GOT THE REASONING NOW TO SUPPORT THEIR VIEWS, WHERE AS THE PEOPLE WITHOUT THE EDUCATION, THE PEOPLE LOWER DOWN, THE PEOPLE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE WORK LADDER IF YOU LIKE, WHERE ALL OF THIS DISCRIMINATION IS GOING ON AND I DON'T REALLY TRUST IT.

*P19: Well I mean it happens across the board, you know so that, you see the reason why they were probably talking that language is (..) they have refused to accept the fact that their colour, you know is an obstacle. And (..) similar I mean, I, like I said to you that I look at it from the age. Because you know you can tell that that was the point that I was labouring, you know! (laughs) I didn't say much about race because you see you get to a level where if you look at it from race you possibly wouldn't survive. You see it's, these things

TAPE ENDS AT THIS POINT AND IS TURNED OVER

Anyone who comes out of university, OK and start thinking that way, would be on the extreme left, would have extreme views about race. OK otherwise on the whole, if you come out of that institution, you, they're all likely to think the way they are thinking, you know, and it's possibly no fault of theirs (..) because...

*INT: ...WELL IT'S MOSTLY WHITE PEOPLE TO BE HONEST WITH YOU. THEY'RE SITTING THERE GOING 'WELL I'M AN EDUCATED PERSON, I THINK ABOUT IT, SO I DON'T PERPETRATE THESE THINGS'. WELL FAIR ENOUGH BUT THEY'VE THEN SORT OF (..) DISCOUNTED ANYTHING ELSE THAT'S GOING ON...

*P19: ...Well it's it's rather unfortunate but, and, you see people too at the bottom always, you know, that's why they are accused of being coconuts, because of the way they think. But when when, at the end of the day, it's either they're being selfish (..) because you know if you've gone through that system and you're still thinking of being

uhh, you're still thinking of your your colour being a hindrance or being an obstacle (..) in the labour market, then you know, where are you drifting? I mean where do you stand? You're making yourself, you're disadvantaging yourself. And we all know that, you know we are disadvantaged but there's no point in, in carrying it every time in your head that you are disadvantaged because it, it is psychological in a way as well. There is a psychological bit and there is a reality and I think in in both, there are barriers. I mean, to actually think psychologically that you are disadvantaged because you are black I think it's even the worse one. Do you know what I mean? And that is why those people will think that way. Because otherwise, I mean, they've got to think, you know, I'm not disadvantaged because I'm black. I'm disadvantaged because of my age, I'm disadvantaged because I haven't got any qualifications, or some people are much more qualified than I am. But if you have to think that you are disadvantaged because you are black then you won't survive! I mean I have people who have that tendency because you know at the time I met them they were doing their degree, and they had a tendency to think that way, that umm, they uhh that you know, discrimination, they will be discriminated against after their after their degree. But those people, I mean, I even doubted whether they would even go through their degree. One typical example I remember, this was one guy who was a Jamaican and umm he he knew a lot about you know the history of black people. I mean he he was in tune with it. Unfortunately he was doing a degree in maths (..) and uhh, he spent his time reading these things, you know, he'd come and talk to me about it and umm (..) but again, his mind was so much focused on black issues that he even had difficulties in in doing good work and you know, you know in university, most of the work is you know in group, group work. And you know he talks to me, and I say, 'listen, forget about it, you know, if you're here to do a degree, just do your degree'. And he said to me, 'come on P19, I mean are you saying to me that so many years of slavery and robbery, you know, it's only going to take fifty years, or this number of years to forget about it, I mean surely', I mean and this, this, this and that. And (..) I mean what he was saying as well, if he (..) if he was going to maintain that, he was going to have difficulties in even getting his degree. And I doubt whether the guy even got it in the end because umm, I knew, there was once I met him, he had even forgotten about his exams. So he told me the day before that it was it was nine o'clock and I saw him about ten o'clock and I said, 'oh I thought your

exam was nine o'clock' and he said, 'it's twelve o'clock'. I said, 'well no, you said it's nine' and he picked up the time, the timetable and it was nine o'clock and you know, he had missed it. But you know, you have those sort of, actually he was very sceptical.

***INT: HMM, IT SOUNDS LIKE HE WAS CARRYING THE BURDEN OF ALL BLACK PEOPLE PAST WITH HIM.**

***P19: Yeah, and if, if you do that, first you know you're not going to get your degree! (laughs) And they wouldn't be in that position for you to interview them. You only see those people, to interview them. You would never come across those people. And this guy is from Hansworth which is the core black area in in Birmingham and I mean his views are very extreme, you know, he's he's. He does a lot you know for the black community, organises Sunday schools, you know, teach children. He believes in that you know, he does all that. I may not have the time to do that, in as much as I want to save the black people, I would want to save them perhaps in a different way. But you know, he's that, he is that type. And those people you are not likely to - they possibly would not even speak to you. You know, they just look at you and say oh, there's a white girl coming and they just, don't even want to speak to you. So it's, it happens that way. I mean I remember when I used to work for (Company Name) as a (inaud) officer. I was asked to carry a survey in, in an inner city area which was predominantly black, you know. I I went there and you know the black community, they say to me, well listen, 'We've given you this information because you're black. In the past, we've had people, you know, in fact government paid big sums of money to consultants to come and get information from us, and then they use the same information against us. We don't know what they're writing with that information. They come, we talk to them, they go. We don't see any improvement in this area. The next thing we see is police people just coming to raid us, you know that'. You know, so they decided not to talk to any one. (..) And they decided to talk to me. Now, I'm not in control of my destiny. I collected the information, they asked me to promise them one thing; to bring it back to them what ever I sent to anyone. I couldn't do that. (..) Collected all the information, I told my boss about it, that they said they want to see what was written about them, and he say oh yeah, OK In the end, they didn't do it, and I walk in town,**

people see me, 'So, young man, where is the information, you know, you say you're going to bring?' What do I say? (..) Do you know what I mean?

***INT: WELL YEAH, YOU'RE STUCK IN THE SAME BUREAUCRACY THAT THEY ARE....**

***P19: Well yeah. So, so you know it's a catch twenty-two situation but you know I have to get on. I have forgotten about it, they haven't forgotten. (..) I have forgotten because I have to move on. They haven't forgotten because they have been victims of that. I collected, you know I was paid, at the end of everything, when I was getting my salary, I guess I was happy. (..) They would never forget about that sort of thing, you know. So (..)**

***INT: OK CAN I MOVE IT ON A LITTLE BIT AND GO BACK TO ORGANISATIONS AND THE INFLUENCE THE POLICIES CAN HAVE ON PEOPLE'S BEHAVIOUR. DO YOU THINK THAT IT CAN MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE IF YOU HAVE LIKE A STRICT POLICY SAYING THAT YOU MUSTN'T DISCRIMINATE ON A BASIS OF, WHETHER IT'S AGE OR SEX, OR RACE, OR NATIONALITY OR SEXUALITY OR WHAT EVER IT IS. IF YOU'VE GOT ALL OF THESE THINGS IN PLACE, DO YOU THINK IT IMPROVES THE WORK ARENA AT ALL, DO YOU THINK IT ACTUALLY MAKES ANY DIFFERENCE OR NOT?**

***P19: Well I think it makes, it makes, for me any difference, you know however slight it is, you know it's a difference. And umm the most important thing would be culture. I mean legislation yes is there to guide people. If you break it you know that you know, you have broken something and that you are liable to that. That is that is a step. That is a step. Now umm but of course, the most important thing is the culture. You need to cultivate that culture, in that environment, and how do you cultivate a culture in that environment? It's not just from the work place, you know, it's not just from the work place, it starts from, they say charity begins at home. It starts from way back. But of course if that hasn't happened then you know you need to give people the benefit of the doubt and we need to start from somewhere. So if the work place is the starting point, then so be it. You know, let's carry it on. However slight the difference would be,**

umm I'm likely to favour that as a step forward, you know, rather than to say well (..) legislation wouldn't help so let's forget about it. I think it helps. It's slight though but I mean, you know Rome wasn't built in a day. These things take a long time. The opportunities that black people are having now, years ago, you couldn't even dream about it. I mean you couldn't even think of a black person in Parliament, you know, in the House of Lords. We have them there, we've got three there you know in the Commons. So.

***INT: TO MY MIND, HAVING AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY MEANS THAT ALL GROUPS ARE FREE TO, TO BE EMPLOYED BY THAT ORGANISATION AND TO BE PROMOTED OR WHAT EVER - TO HAVE EQUAL TREATMENT AT WORK (..) UMM WITH A VIEW TO GETTING A WORKFORCE THAT REPRESENTS THE LOCAL POPULATION, DEMOGRAPHICALLY IF YOU LIKE. CAN YOU SEE ANY ADVANTAGES OF HAVING THAT DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE?**

***P19: What do you mean, as a result of having?**

***INT: YEAH, IF YOU'VE DONE ALL OF THIS AND YOU END UP WITH A DIVERSE WORKFORCE. CAN YOU SEE ANY BENEFITS TO GOING THROUGH THAT PROCESS, OF ACHIEVING YOUR AIM?**

***P19: Well, is it benefits, first, are you saying that, all things being equal, if this is achieved, where you get a representation of black, women, disabled what ever, do I see benefits in that? Is that what you're asking me?**

***INT: YES.**

***P19: Well yes, certainly. I mean umm, we are guilty of some of things, not just, the way I look at things now is you know, it's helped me to analyse and say well yeah, I'm guilty of of you know saying umm saying sexism. I have been exposed to it, so I'm aware of it now. But let's take an example, like you can say disabled people. I haven't, I've hardly come into contact with disabled people and so it's, I don't really know what to do. And the literature in that area as well, I haven't read it, I'm not well versed in that literature, so I don't even know how to refer to them. OK? Until I'm in a situation**

where I'm meeting a disabled person every day. Or seeing a disabled person every day and learning how to deal with him, I wouldn't even know how to cope with that. (..) And that can reinforce my views about able-bodied person, or able-bodied people. Equally, a person, like I said, who is born in this country, stayed in this country all his or her life, is uhh, my view is that it's likely to be a racist unless the person makes the effort not to be one. Whether genuine or not, the person is likely to be unless he or she makes the effort not to be one. So if this person is in a typical environment where you don't have any representation of all sections of the community, that is likely to reinforce his or her views, acquired views, about disabled people, black people, what ever.

***INT: IF THEY'RE NOT WORKING IN THAT SORT OF ENVIRONMENT DO YOU MEAN?**

***P19: Yeah, if they're not working in that sort of environment, that he sees every day. So I think yes, I mean you, if that, legislation, policies are in place for the organisation to have a representative you know work force, representative from the community, then as far as I'm concerned that's a good, you know that's good news.**

***INT: WHAT GOOD NEWS WOULD IT BRING FOR THE COMPANY? CAN YOU THINK OF ANY TANGIBLE BENEFITS?**

***P19: Well, I mean, it depends on the benefits, if you know, if you look at it from monetary terms, it may bring nothing. Going back to the example that I gave, in my sister's scenario, where employing my sister would mean that they're losing customers, you know, so (..) that means, you know, no benefits to that company. You know, but the fact that we live in a multicultural environment where black people are also contributing to the success of the country. We have we have black people who are sports personality and they're all clapping if Linford Christie comes first. You know British flag flying and people are happy. You know, they are happy to see that England has won one hundred metres race. We have Colin Jackson, hurdles, we, people are happy. You know they they they're not saying, oh not again, a black guy has won! I mean they're happy. They're happy. So if, those people who are happy to sit in front of their telly to applaud the black minority win, then equally they should be happy to see the black face who is equal, you know qualified to do their job, being in the work, in the**

work place, or the work force. Umm (..) it's it's difficult to sort of quantify the benefits, where do you look at it? I mean employers would want to look at it from monetary terms. You know but it's also beneficial if if you are in a predominantly black place and you're employing just say white people, that's doesn't, obviously I mean, it will, it will be beneficial to employ the black people so that they know and see that well hang on there's some of our people are also here. You know, another example would be, in these places like the DSS, tax office, hospitals, where you know black people also go to. They go there and they see just white people there, then maybe that sort of initial sort umm, what what's the word, but you know, they may not be able to feel very free and comfortable to come up with the sort of information that they need to come up with.

***INT: SO ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT THE REPUTATION OF THOSE ORGANISATIONS THEN?**

***P19: Well yeah, in that, in that sort of situation yeah, it would their reputation of that organisation in that it will affect their reputation you know in one way or the other. That they may not be seen as the type of organisation that you know likes, or would like to employ black people. So from that angle yes, there is reputation at stake. Umm but I (inaud) (..)**

***INT: IT'S JUST I WAS SPEAKING TO SOMEONE WHO WAS A RACE EQUALITY OFFICER AT ONE OF THE LONDON COUNCILS, AND HE SAID WE'VE DONE IT. YOU KNOW WE'VE HAD A VERY STRICT PROGRAMME IN PLACE FOR, I DON'T KNOW TEN OR FIFTEEN YEARS AND WE'VE GOT OUR REPRESENTATIVE WORK FORCE. I WAS LIKE OH BRILLIANT, WHAT HAPPENS NOW? WHAT'S THE IMPACT OF THAT? AND HE SAID IT BRINGS SO MUCH BLOODY TROUBLE! (LAUGHS) HE REALLY DID. HE SAID THAT THERE'S SO MUCH FEAR THAT COMES WITH IT BECAUSE ALL OF THE DIFFERENT GROUPS ARE SO AWARE THAT THEY'RE WORKING WITH DIFFERENT GROUPS THAT THE POWER GETS MISUSED AND PEOPLE ARE FEARFUL OF SAYING, 'YOU'RE NOT DOING YOUR JOB PROPERLY' BECAUSE YOU'RE A WHITE PERSON AND THEY'RE A BLACK PERSON, OR WHAT EVER (..) DISADVANTAGED GROUP THAT PERSON MAY BELONG TO, BRINGS A POWER IMBALANCE THAT HE SAID JUST GETS MISUSED SO**

MUCH THAT NOBODY LAUGHS ANY MORE, THERE'S NO BANTER,
THERE'S NO (..) UMM NO EASE BETWEEN PEOPLE.

*P19: Yeah, I mean you're right. I mean that that is true and that is true. I mean it's true, to be honest. Because I am for example, I am very cautious in going to umm Christmas parties for example. Uhh and umm for the, you know, for the mere reason that it is a place that people get drunk, people do all sorts of nasty things and uhh, it is also the time that you know, just one day you end up either degrading yourself, doing all sorts of things that you shouldn't do, you know, people get a slap. I mean I used to do a job somewhere in town, and uhh at the Christmas party, I didn't go. But the next day they said, oh god, they couldn't believe it, this one was snogging this one, this one stole a bottle of champagne, this one, they did this, oh somebody got slapped because you know he was snogging somebody's girlfriend. All sorts of stories, you know, this is just one night. Do you know what I mean. It's just one night. You could be a target in these sorts of places. I mean I have had as a (inaud) as a professional person I've had, I've seen many friends of people people that have been accused of sexual harassment and this, that, that, that, that, that. It happens, you know. And if you are a black person, you are in the position that people feel you're not supposed to be there, you know and you could be a target, there could be all sorts of set ups, all sorts of traps there for you.

*INT: AND YOU'D STAY AWAY BECAUSE OF THAT?

*P19: And you know, I'll stay away, which is not good. It's not good to do that. You know, it's not good but umm (..)

*INT: IT'S AN EASIER LIFE AS WELL!

*P19: Well yeah, if I have chosen to be in this environment and I have chosen to go, thread the path that I'm taking, I have to be able to recognise the short-comings in that area and then try to avoid that. OK? And I know it's not good. I should be able to go to these places. But then I also know that, you know, the world is not the ideal place, there are wicked people out there. You know the world is not the way every one thinks that it should be! I have to recognise that. I'll be a fool if I don't. And in recognising

that, you know, may limit my progress in a way, or may cause the sort of friction, tension, that you're talking about. But it happens everywhere. On that particular occasion, yeah, it may be between races, it may be between that but if it wasn't happening that way, it would happen in a different way elsewhere. So, yes, it brings about (..) that sort of tension in a lot of people. At the end of the day the employer has to decide is it detrimental (..) to the health of this company? If they decide it is detrimental then we will lose out! Our people will lose out in the end because they will say well we don't have to, if we employ them, we don't, we don't promote them...

***INT: YOU SEE THIS IS WHERE I'M LEFT NOW BECAUSE I'M SITTING HERE AND I'M THINKING I LIKE WORKING WITH A MIX OF PEOPLE, I ENJOY THE BUZZ OF IT, I'M USED TO LIVING IN MULTICULTURAL AREAS, I'M USED TO THIS, THIS AND THIS. AND THEN I SIT, FROM AN EMPLOYERS POINT OF VIEW AND I THINK, WHY SHOULD I BOTHER? IT'S EXPENSIVE TO GO ADVERTISE IN THE PLACES TO ATTRACT GROUPS THAT WE HAVEN'T PREVIOUSLY ATTRACTED, TO TO ADVERTISE IN LOCAL NEWSPAPERS OR WHAT EVER THE NEED IS, I MEAN IT TAKES A LOT (..) OF THOUGHT AND PLANNING AND OF MONEY BASICALLY, TO ATTRACT THAT WORKFORCE. AND THEN ONCE YOU'VE GOT IT, TO MAINTAIN IT AND TO KEEP IT ALL WORKING YOU'VE STILL GOT TO PUT ALL THESE POLICIES INTO PLACE, YOU'VE GOT TO DO THIS, YOU'VE GOT TO CHECK IT, YOU'VE GOT TO MONITOR IT, YOU'VE GOT TO, YOU KNOW IT'S A BIG NIGHTMARE. AND AT THE END OF THE DAY IT DOESN'T WORK. PEOPLE DON'T GET ON. PEOPLE DON'T KNOW HOW TO HAVE DECENT INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH EACH OTHER AND IT JUST SEEMS SUCH A SHAME!**

***P19: Yeah but those sorts of things will happen (..) anyway or anywhere. I mean...**

***INT: ...YEAH, BUT THEN HOW DO YOU CONVINC AN EMPLOYER THAT IT'S WORTH THEIR WHILE TO DO IT?**

***P19: Well I mean how do you convince an employer that it's worth their while to employ people. I mean...**

***INT: WELL THEY'LL NEED SOME PEOPLE, IT'S WHO THEY EMPLOY!**

***P19: (laughs) Yeah, they will have to employ people and then those sorts of issues about people not getting on with each other will happen anyway in every job.**

Unfortunately, if it's, if it's you know black or white then it causes the employer, they see a problem, that these things are happening because you know, it could be, it could happen because you know you've employed white, or male and female within the same job. You've employed disabled and able-bodied people in the same place. It could happen in what ever, even in universities. There are people who don't get along, 'oh this person gets on my nerves so I hate the space of this' you know it happens everywhere, do you know what I mean? It happens everywhere. But umm if people are going to use that as an excuse to say that well, if I have to go out of my way to employ black people (..) you know, then, at the end of the day it's going to cause all these problems to me (..) then I have to ask the person that you know, if you weren't employing these people do you think you wouldn't have problems of that nature? I would ask that person. Tell me the sort of problems that you would have if you were not employing people of mixed cultural backgrounds. You know, and the sort of problems you would have if you were employing people of sort of strict, same sort of cultural backgrounds. You would have some problems. You would have to deal with some problems of some kind. Do you know what I mean? You would definitely have to deal with some problems of some kinds any way so for me, it doesn't really make any any sense to me if if any argument to the effect that (..) we're not going to employ people of mixed cultural backgrounds because of the potential problems.

***INT: IT'S JUST YOU KNOW, IT REQUIRES AN EFFORT FOR EMPLOYERS TO DO IT...**

***P19: ...It's the same effort! Unless they're able to tell me that what what is the difference between the effort that it will require of them, you know, in dealing with problems of that nature, compared to you know the sort of effort that will be required of them if they were employing people of you know of similar cultural backgrounds. You know, if you ask them that, they will be stuck! Because what sort of effort? If people come to work and they're not doing their job, well you sack them. (..)**

*INT: YOU SEE THIS IS ANOTHER THING THAT THIS GUY WAS SAYING. HE SAID IT COMES TO THE POINT NOW WHERE A BLACK OFFICER ISN'T WORKING AS WELL AS THEY SHOULD BE. THE WHITE OFFICER IS AFRAID TO SAY ANYTHING BECAUSE THEY CAN TURN AROUND AND SAY, WELL YOU'RE ONLY SAYING THAT BECAUSE I'M BLACK. SO IT GOES DOWN LIKE A TRIBUNAL PATH, AND EVEN IF IT'S UPHELD IN THE MANAGER'S FAVOUR, YOU'VE STILL HAD TO GO DOWN THAT PATH. SO TO AVOID ANY SORT OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION, THE MANAGER DOESN'T SAY ANYTHING. SO THERE'S A LOT OF PEOPLE COASTING IN JOBS AND ABUSING THE POWER THAT (..)

*P19: Well in every situation you would have umm, you would have the negative and positive impact of it OK In every situation, you know, I mean I go to do my interviews and talk to them from, they're very pessimistic and say, 'oh well we never thought about it that way'. That's the way I'm thinking. You would definitely, there is no ideal situation, there's nothing like an ideal situation. There is nothing like that. You will always have the positive and the negative impact of events. If you're going to use a negative impact as a way, OK. of disassociating yourself, of setting rules and regulations, then you know, you have to ask yourself what you're in business for. I mean one of the things, now the trend in in business is globalisation, OK And to to be scared of having people of cultural background, I mean unless you are a private, uhh a public company that you know, you're not actually in business (..) you're not active, much of your effort, or you're not actually umm contributing so much in terms of money into that business, you know, you would be a fool not to even employ people of cultural, mixed cultural background.

*INT: YEAH, SO MUCH BUSINESS NOW IS INTERNATIONAL.

*P19: Well it's, now the trend is globalisation, internationalisation, you know in the private sector. I mean that is how they're making money. You've got to hire people who are Chinese, people who are black, people who are that or that. South Africa now people are rushing there, companies are rushing there. You can't just go there and meet them, you've got to have people who understand the system. So you'll be having people who, you know, in that sort of public companies who, I mean at the end of the

day they just sit there, they get their money anyway, (..) I mean those are the people who will be talking in that language. If you come across any serious employer, any serious employer in the private sector, who knows what they're doing, that wouldn't be a problem at all. They would have strict indicators of what is good, what you have to in your job and what you don't have to do. If you're doing that, your manager would have no hesitation in commending you. If you're not doing it, your manager would have no hesitation in saying that, 'listen P19, you're not meeting the targets. These are the targets you agreed to and these are', and you would know yourself if you are not meeting your targets. There would be nothing of that sort of uhh sort. And where that happened then it's a clear indication of somebody either abusing his or her power. So (..) I mean, to be honest, no serious employer would have problems with that, unless people in that sort of public areas who get their salaries anyway, irrespective of what they do! (laughs) You know.

***INT: WHEN YOU BRING THE COMMERCIAL ASPECT IN, IT WOULDN'T HAPPEN LIKE THAT?**

***P19:** Well no I seriously wouldn't think that way. I mean places where people are commercially minded (..) as they're in business, I mean. I mean I've been involved in doing my interviews, talking to private companies. I mean, you know, it's good news for them to even get people of mixed cultural background because at the end of the day it brings business anyway (..) to to their job. You know, they're getting business all over the world because they understand the culture of you know, Japan, I mean that's the beauty of having multicultural (..) people from multicultural backgrounds IN a company. Because you look at these things, you understand these things and then you know, you can go elsewhere and show or demonstrate your understanding of these things. And that gives you that sort of edge, competitive edge over your people, others who don't have that sort of, or are not privileged to have that sort of environment, so as far I'm concerned it's good news. And those who are not able to take that, you know, perhaps, you know they are resources short, they possibly are not doing very well.

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED.

PARTICIPANT NO. 20 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

***INT: OK I'LL START WITH A NICE GENERAL ONE - WHEN I SAY, BECAUSE I'M BANDYING AROUND THIS TERM "EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES" - WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND BY THAT TERM? WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU?**

***P20: To me, it means that everyone (..) irrespective of creed, colour or race, has the opportunity to fulfil a place in the workforce, IF they have the qualifications to do so. That's what it means to me.**

***INT: RIGHT, AND ARE THERE CERTAIN GROUPS THAT YOU THINK IT APPLIES TO?**

***P20: Umm (..) no, it should be everyone. It should be a universal thing, otherwise it's not equal.**

***INT: THAT'S A VERY GOOD POINT! UMM, WHAT SORT OF REPUTATION DO YOU THINK EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES HAS WITH WORKING PEOPLE IN GENERAL?**

***P20: Umm, I think the disabled have had a lot (..) of equal opportunity things (..) being available to them but that's because they've actually fought for it. Umm, it depends on where you work. Umm, gay people are beginning to become active. Umm, people of colour are represented by Race Relation Boards. I don't think that the Equal Opportunity Boards necessarily goes out of their way to help those people. Umm, and it's interesting because people of colour and women tend to get lumped together when we start to talk about equal opportunity. I'm not sure what that's trying to imply but I mean when you start talking about equal opportunity, they think if they employ a black woman, they've satisfied (..) on several levels, the equal opportunity, which is not necessarily correct.**

***INT: WHAT THEY TEND TO DO IS THAT THEY TALK ABOUT 'DISADVANTAGED GROUPS', SO WOMEN HAVE BEEN DISADVANTAGED, BLACK PEOPLE HAVE BEEN DISADVANTAGED, ANY NUMBER OF**

DIFFERENT PEOPLE, OR DIFFERENT GROUPS HAVE BEEN DISADVANTAGED BUT, UMM,

*P20: It depends on your interpretation of disadvantaged (getting wound up) in what way do you think women have been disadvantaged?

*INT: UMM, IN TERMS OF NOT BEING SELECTED FOR CERTAIN TYPES OF JOBS, WITHIN CERTAIN INDUSTRIES, OF NOT BEING PROMOTED EQUALLY WITH MEN ONCE YOU'RE IN A JOB, OF (..) UMM A LOT OF PEOPLE HAVE VERY OLD FASHIONED IDEAS ABOUT WHERE WOMEN SHOULD BE.

*P20: I think in the office environment, that's completely been turned around. Maybe on the uhh, factory floor as it were, that's still true.

*INT: HOW DO YOU THINK IT STANDS IN THE OFFICE, THEN?

*P20: In the office I think men are a dying breed (..) and women have (..) surpassed men in many levels. (..)

*INT: ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT SORT OF CLERICAL TYPE WORK OR (..)?

*P20: No I'm talking managerial. If you look at this company, you've got quite a few women in high-powered positions. Umm, the company I used to work for, (inaud - gives company name on the Times) you know, there there weren't a LOT but there were a few women on the board and most of the managers were women, you know. Umm I guess in massive corporations, a bit like Financial Times, women get to SO far, then when it comes to getting to the board level, they've got a hard job. But I mean, most of the managers were female (inaud), like back at [company name].

*INT: YEAH, SEE THAT'S THE 'GLASS CEILING' THAT GETS REFERRED TO.

*P20: Is it, well I see it as the 'old boys tie network'.

*INT: THE OLD BOYS NETWORK, YEAH?

*P20: Yeah.

*INT: DO YOU THINK THAT THAT'S QUITE RESPONSIBLE THEN FOR WOMEN NOT BEING PROMOTED?

*P20: Most definitely, most definitely.

*INT: YEAH? DO YOU THINK THAT APPLIES TO ETHNIC MINORITIES AS WELL?

*P20: Umm, ethnic minorities have got other problems but there is that, like 'cos the old boys network is so tight (..) that unless you're in, you know, you're you're just out. And once you start incorporating ethnic minorities in that they're like one step below anyway.

*INT: ONE STEP BELOW WHAT?

*P20: Well, your average, Caucasian male female.

*INT: WHAT IN THE HIERARCHY (..)

*P20: In the hierarchy of choice (..) and things that are made available to them and all kinds of things.

*INT: YEAH , YEAH (..) SO THE NETWORK EXCLUDES PEOPLE FROM MINORITY GROUPS AS WELL?

*P20: Most definitely, unless of course you were (..) privileged. So if you went to those kind of schools where you were in the 'in-crowd' then obviously the old boys network kicks in. But once you get to that kind of stage, you tend to forget your roots. You're no longer (..) seen as (..) an ethnic minority, you're one of the old boys.

*INT: I WANTED TO PICK UP ON WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT ETHNIC MINORITIES FACING A NUMBER OF OTHER PROBLEMS OUTSIDE OF THE NETWORK. WHAT SORT OF PROBLEMS WERE YOU MENTIONING?

*P20: Well just to become 'on par' ethnic minorities tend to have to work harder.

*INT: YEAH

*P20: Yeah, which means they're going, shall we say, twice the effort that Joe Blogg is having to do, just to get to the starting blocks as it were. I mean it continues, if you want to progress through life, you've got to work that much harder, or be seen to be working that much harder, and you've got to be seen to be that much FAIRER. You know, sometimes to the exclusion of your own (..) culture.

*INT: UMM, I THINK WHEN YOU ASKED ME WHAT I MEANT BY 'DISADVANTAGED' THAT'S WHAT I MEANT, THAT YOU HAVE TO BE TWICE AS GOOD AT EVERYTHING JUST TO BE CONSIDERED ON EQUAL TERMS, WHICH ARE TRULY, CLEARLY NOT EQUAL IF YOU'RE HAVING TO DO TWICE AS MUCH AS EVERYBODY ELSE.

*P20: OK.

*INT: OK, LET ME MOVE ON A LITTLE BIT AND TALK ABOUT THE LEVEL OF DISCRIMINATION THAT YOU THINK TAKES PLACE. YOU'VE MENTIONED SOME OCCASIONAL INCIDENCES OF HOW IT DOES HAPPEN. HOW PREVALENT DO YOU THINK IT IS? DO YOU IT HAPPENS A LOT AT WORK?

*P20: I think it's umm, a lot of it's unconscious. People don't realise they're doing it, you know umm. For instance we have a (..) well we have had a few gay people working with us and some some people can take them and some people can leave them (..) and it's unfortunate if the person who is above you can't abide you because then you stand no chance of progressing. OK, so you see what I mean?

*INT: SO THAT'S JUST IN HERE, DO YOU HAVE IDEA...

*P20: I think, I think it's pretty widespread. It depends (..) you know. It's like women clergy. I mean, the church old boys network just doesn't want to know about it, yet it's, they're forcing the issue and it's becoming (..) acceptable. Umm by the year 2100, it might be all women clergy! The men might be a thing of the past!

*INT: TAKEN OVER!

*P20: Exactly!

*INT: SO DO YOU THINK IT'S (..) IT HAPPENS MORE OFTEN IN CERTAIN TYPES OF INDUSTRY THEN?

*P20: Yes. I think umm (..) because, it's hard to say. It's it depends on the industry that you're in, it's more OBVIOUS that you're not one of the 'in-crowd', one of the boys. And therefore it hits you harder.

*INT: UMM, AND WHAT ABOUT, BECAUSE WE WERE TALKING THEN ABOUT BETWEEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF INDUSTRY, WHAT ABOUT WITHIN AN ORGANISATION, DO YOU THINK IT'S HAPPENING MORE AT SOME LEVELS THAN AT OTHERS OR?

*P20: If you manage to gain acceptance, which is the hardest thing, then it doesn't become so much of an issue. It's the initial gaining of acceptance and the uhh (..) well, the trust, gaining the trust of the people who are above you, who will accept your decisions on an equal basis. Once you've got that you're pretty much one half there.

*INT: DO YOU THINK HAVING UMM HOWEVER STRICT OR STRINGENT EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY WITHIN AN ORGANISATION CAN HELP TO GAIN THAT ACCEPTANCE OR THAT TRUST OR?

*P20: I think that sometimes it works to (..) the disadvantage. Because I mean you go to some places and they say OK we can't employ you because we've filled our quota of black, ethnic, disabled people.

*INT: DOES THAT HAPPEN?

*P20: Umm (..) I can imagine it would happen yes.

*INT: BECAUSE IT IS ACTUALLY ILLEGAL TO HAVE ANY TARGETS OR QUOTAS.

*P20: Yeah, I know, but I mean (..) it's it's OK to say you cannot discriminate against these people but once you say you cannot, once you feel that you have bent over backwards and filled your quota of these people umm, otherwise what stops what stops a company from all of a sudden becoming purely disabled workers? You know. And

some people feel that (..) well it depends on your disability, but a disabled person just is a, is an eyesore because they've got a company image. You know? I mean I know for a FACT that umm back at [company name], there was an [company name] culture that you had to fit into a certain mould before you were accepted. And when I first tried to apply for a job there, I didn't fit into the culture so therefore I didn't get the job. I subsequently got the job there because the person who employed me had actually been my boss at a previous employment and knew what I was capable of, and therefore I could bypass the [company name] culture interview and I was in.

***INT: DO YOU THINK THAT'S A REGULAR THING THAT MOST ORGANISATIONS HAVE A (..) A CULTURE...**

***P20: ..I think I think they've got an image in their mind of what they want their staff to look like. I mean, airlines won't employ fat people. Yeah? OK they say it's the it's the excess weight that the plane has to carry but that's absolute rubbish, you know, because I mean I most probably weigh a lot more than a really fat person. (..) You know, that's because, well, sometimes I'm muscular and sometimes I'm not. Uh huh?**

***INT: YEAH, STRANGE. SO LOOKS ARE VERY IMPORTANT THEN?**

***P20: Looks, are looks tend to be important. I mean I worked with one person, I thought that she was completely and utterly stupid because she said that her, all her friends had to be beautiful people and I thought to myself, well hang on, what does that mean? If you're ugly you're not going to get friendly with that person? I mean that's just someone else's quite bizarre approach to friendship, which I thought was very strange.**

***INT: I'M JUST TRYING TO WORK OUT, I MEAN THE REASON I'M ASKING ABOUT THIS IS BECAUSE I'M CURIOUS TO TRY AND WORK OUT HOW MUCH INFLUENCE POLICY CAN HAVE ON BEHAVIOUR. I MEAN I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT LEGISLATION, LEGISLATION IS ENTIRELY DIFFERENT - THAT'S LAW AND THERE ARE LOOPHOLES AND WAYS OF GETTING AROUND LAW IF YOU CHOOSE TO DO SO, BUT IF A COMPANY DOES INVEST IN A POLICY AND SAYS YOU KNOW YOU REALLY CAN'T EMPLOY**

SOMEONE BECAUSE THEY'RE PRETTY OR NOT PRETTY YOU CAN'T EMPLOY SOMEONE BECAUSE THEY'RE FAT OR THIN, YOU KNOW IT HAS TO BE BASED ON MERIT AND WE'VE PRODUCED THESE GUIDELINES THAT YOU MUST FOLLOW. DO YOU THINK IT WOULD ACTUALLY HAVE ANY EFFECT ON BEHAVIOUR OR NOT? WOULD PEOPLE RESPECT THOSE RULES OR WOULD THEY FIND LOOPHOLES AGAIN?

*P20: I tell you at the end of the day they'll find loopholes.

*INT: DO YOU THINK IT WOULD HELP TO HAVE SOMETHING IN PLACE RATHER THAN NOTHING, OR (..) ?

*P20: You've got to be careful with guidelines, because I mean who guidelines, setting them out to be to protect. I mean if it's not in a company's interest to employ (..) anybody in wheelchairs, for instance, this this building is not what I would consider to be a disabled-friendly building, because you've got to get to each floor via lifts and the lifts often break down, yeah? There isn't a ramp directly outside our front door, so it's not easily accessible. So that's one incidence where we have unintentionally discriminated against people in wheelchairs. You know? So if we wanted to employ people, we just couldn't. We're stuck up here in the aeries you see. So I mean, yes you can put down guidelines which will try to protect the individual but it will have an adverse affect on the companies. Because I mean, there are, if we decided we wanted to become an equal opportunities employers and employ people in wheelchairs, we would have to get the roads dug up, make adequate escape flights, we might have to make structural changes to the building, which isn't our building, yeah?

*INT: RIGHT, SO OUTSIDE OF WHEELCHAIRS ACCESS, WHAT ABOUT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL, OR WORKING TOWARD GETTING A REPRESENTATIVE WORKFORCE OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, FOR EXAMPLE?

*P20: Now that's interesting because, especially in the City, where most of the workforce actually commute, it's very difficult to kind of enforce that. You couldn't say that X percentage of your workforce had to be made up of locals.

*INT: NO, NOT THAT, I'M THINKING IN TERMS OF (..) UMM, LIKE IN HACKNEY, FOR EXAMPLE, IT'S 40% ETHNIC MINORITY, AND YET IF YOU GO INTO MOST BUSINESSES IN HACKNEY, IT'S NOT. YOU GET SORT OF 10 PERCENT MAYBE OF ETHNIC MINORITY PEOPLE WORKING (INAUD) AND THE BALANCE OF MEN AND WOMEN IS VERY RARELY 50/50. IT DEPENDS WHICH TYPE OF INDUSTRY YOU'RE LOOKING AT. IT'S NOT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD. AND WHEN YOU COME INTO THE CITY, MOST CITY COMPANIES ARE NOT REPRESENTATIVE OF ANY THING OTHER THAN CITY COMPANIES! YOU KNOW, AS YOU SAY, IT'S VERY MUCH THE BOYS NETWORK, AND IT'S BLOCKING PEOPLE OUT, NOT JUST THOSE IN A WHEELCHAIR BUT BLACK PEOPLE, BUT OLD PEOPLE, BUT YOUNG PEOPLE, WOMEN, ANY ANY NUMBER OF PEOPLE, PEOPLE WITH THE WRONG ACCENT, PEOPLE WITH THE WRONG FACE.

*P20: But then how would you try to, how could you then enforce, or put out recommendations that say that your company have to employ a percentage of the, or represent a percentage of the local community, when shall we say the local community was 90 percent Asian? And then you start a business there. What would happen then is that people would just relocate their business.

*INT: YEAH, WHY?

*P20: Because they wouldn't be able to have a company that's 90 percent Asian.

*INT: WHY?

*P20: Because it just might not necessarily be practical. The local community might not have the knowledge base, the skill base that's required to run your particular company.

*INT: UMM BUT I'M NOT TALKING SELECTING JUST TO DO THAT, I'M STILL TALKING ABOUT SELECTING ON MERIT BUT ALLOWING PEOPLE THAT AREN'T WHITE MALES INTO THE COMPANY AS WELL. PUTTING MEASURES INTO PLACE, EVEN IF IT IS A POLICY OR (..) I'M JUST SPOUTING OFF HERE, JUST MAKING THINGS UP JUST TO SEE HOW

POSSIBLE IT IS YOU THINK FOR A POLICY TO CHANGE PEOPLE'S, EMPLOYERS' BEHAVIOUR, EMPLOYEES' BEHAVIOUR.

*P20: (..) I think that we can try to lay down guidelines to say that you should TRY to but at the end of the day, how much effort are they going to be willing to put into it? If they have an immediate requirement to fill a job and five white males apply and one Asian woman, do they take the Asian in preference to five white males? Because now you've said, you've completely reversed it on it's head, and the Asian woman is being given preferential treatment.

*INT: NO I'M NOT SUGGESTING THAT AT ALL. I'M SUGGESTING THAT YOU STILL SELECT ON MERIT BUT THAT YOU MIGHT LOOK AT WHY, OUT OF SIX APPLICANTS, ONLY ONE IS FROM AN ETHNIC MINORITY. WHY HAVE YOU NOT GOT A WIDER RANGE OF PEOPLE APPLYING FOR THE JOB? WHAT IS IT THAT YOU'RE PUTTING IN THE ADVERT? WHAT CONDITIONS ARE YOU PUTTING IN THAT ARE UNNECESSARY? THAT SORT OF THING.

*P20: Hmm (..)

*INT: HAVE YOU ADVERTISED IN ...

*P20: Well that's that's what I'm trying to think - how would you how would you advertise yourself, other than putting a line in to say that you're an equal opportunity employer and hope that your potential candidates read this? I mean (..) advertising is a very interesting thing. I mean where do you advertise? Most of these jobs are advertised in (..) well most of these jobs aren't actually advertised. And when they are advertised, they're advertised in the specialist magazines, so you have to be of that ilk in the first instance before you're even going to know about the job. So if you're not in the culture, you're just completely out. Yeah, so if you wanted to be. I'm not saying that there aren't any ethnic minority people who read these magazines but there are a lot less of us than there are (..) male Caucasians. So, it's a bit of a difficult issue, I think.

*INT: THAT'S TRUE! ALRIGHT, SO LET'S TURN IT AROUND THE OTHER WAY THEN, IF YOU DID HAVE A FULLY REPRESENTATIVE WORKFORCE.

IF YOU HAD A NICE MIX OF PEOPLE AND THE BUILDING WAS WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE AND YOU KNOW, LA LA LA - YOU'VE DONE IT ALL. YOU'VE PUT THESE POLICIES OR ACTIONS INTO PLACE, WHATEVER, AND YOU'VE GOT YOUR WORKFORCE. CAN YOU SEE ANY CONSEQUENCES OF HAVING THAT MIX OF PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER? POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE?

*P20: Well, it does assume, for it all to work amicably, it does assume a certain level of awareness. I mean how (..) how aware of each ethnic minority is the average male Caucasian? Not very I would say. I mean, especially when you start thinking about religious umm festivals that have to be adhered to, you know we worked, I worked, again back at [company name], and this guy and in winter time he had to go home early every Friday night because his Jewish religion said that by sunset he had to be under wraps and all this kind of stuff (..) and we had to adhere to that, which is great, great that the company did it but it really messed up the working practice because we had occasions where on Friday night at half past five we had a problem (..) he was never there. So therefore you've got to be careful that if you are going to employ a diverse range of (..) umm cultures that you also have a diverse cover of your products so that if any one colleague pulls out, someone else could take his place. The way things tend to happen is that one person gets loaded with one task and they do that task and then as soon as that person isn't there, that task isn't done until they next re-appear. So then you you you have the problem - how do you ensure continuity of your business? Under these circumstances. I'm not saying it's going to happen all the time, I mean (..) we we have different religious festivals, which means some people will be sometimes and some people are going to be here at other times.

*INT: WELL IF YOU HAD A MIX THEN IT MIGHT WORK, THAT THERE WERE PEOPLE THERE AT ALL TIMES?

*P20: At all times, that's right. I can't see many people coming in on Christmas day myself but uhh!

*INT: WELL NO BUT THERE MIGHT BE NO-ONE TO DEAL WITH ON CHRISTMAS DAY ANYWAY! OK, SO RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS WOULD BE AN

ISSUE. CAN YOU THINK OF ANY OTHER PERSONAL ADVANTAGES OR DISADVANTAGES OF WORKING WITH A MIX OF PEOPLE?

*P20: A positive advantage is that umm you you would, because I'm, I have mixed-race children and I'm I'm insistent that wherever they live, it's what I classify being metropolitan, so people are not, where coloured people aren't the abnormal. I want somewhere there's a nice mix of races for them to grow up in. So if you were to kind of spread that culture to the workforce, everyone would become more tolerant of everyone else and hopefully we would have a more peaceful way of living. But I can't see it working myself.

*INT: WHY?

*P20: Because it's just not the way! (laughs but not funny)

*INT: WHY? WHAT IS IT THAT'S STOPPING IT?

*P20: Because it's (..) you've got (..) institutionalised racism running throughout the country at a very subliminal level (..) people are not (..) are racist without even realising they're racist, yeah? And umm I guess (..) it's a lot easier for my kids (..) and hopefully it will be even easier for their kids, so in the, in three or four generations time, this might all be a thing of the past. But as we stand at this moment in time, I think it would be very difficult for that kind of Utopia to exist.

*INT: I AM AN IDEALIST BUT I REALISE THAT MANY OF THE THINGS THAT I WISH FOR ARE JUST NOT POSSIBLE AT THIS STAGE IN TIME BUT I'M WONDERING (..) IF WE COULD SORT OF IDENTIFY EXACTLY WHAT THE BARRIERS ARE, THEN WE KNOW WHAT WE'VE GOT LEFT TO DISSEMBLE, IF YOU LIKE. TO TRY AND WORK OUT WHAT THE ADVANTAGES WOULD BE. BECAUSE AT THE MOMENT, THE WAY I'M LOOKING AT IT, GOVERNMENT BODIES (..) HAVE COUNCILS OR OR GOVERNMENT-FUNDED ORGANISATIONS WHERE THEY PUT ALL THESE POLICIES INTO PLACE. AND THE WAY IT WORKS AT THE MOMENT IS BECAUSE IT'S IMPOSED ON THEM, IT BRINGS ALL SORTS OF TROUBLE. SO LIKE, SOME OF THE INNER LONDON BOROUGHES HAVE GOT A REPRESENTATIVE

WORK FORCE OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND YOU THINK, OH YEAH YEAH, GREAT. YOU SPEAK TO THE PEOPLE WHO ARE WORKING THERE, AND THEY ALL SAY IT'S DREADFUL BECAUSE THEY'RE SO SCARED...

*P20: Because it's forced upon them.

*INT: YEAH

*P20: That's right.

*INT: THEY'RE SO SCARED OF SAYING THE WRONG THING, THAT THEY GET TAKEN DOWN A DISCIPLINARY PATH AND EVEN IF IT'S PROVED AGAINST THEM, THEY'VE STILL HAD TO GO DOWN THAT PATH AND IT'S MARKED ON THE RECORD, SO THEY DON'T SAY IT.

*P20: Exactly.

*INT: SO THERE ARE PEOPLE TAKING THE MICKEY LEFT, RIGHT AND CENTRE, ABUSING POWER AND ALL SORTS GOING ON, AND I JUST THOUGHT, WHAT A SHAME, YOU KNOW! YOU CAN'T, YOU CAN'T (..) RUSH THAT PROCESS OF PEOPLE GETTING KNOW EACH OTHER. ANY YET, I MEAN WHAT DO YOU DO THEN? I MEAN ONE OF THE BIG THINGS THAT SEEMS TO KEEP COMING UP IS LIKE A CONSCIOUSNESS (..) RAISING AWARENESS OF DIFFERENT CULTURES. AND THAT UNTIL YOU DO THAT, STICKING PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER IS NEVER GOING TO WORK. BUT THEN, FROM A CORPORATE POINT OF VIEW, WHY IS A BUSINESS EVER GOING TO BOTHER DOING THAT?

*P20: Exactly. What benefit is it? I mean what what benefit do they get out of employee comfort? (..) They've got employees and they want to produce goods, or what ever, and that's all they care about. At the end of the day, as long as you produce your quota, they're happy. They've made their money.

*INT: YEAH. BUT THEN THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST THAT PEOPLE WHO ARE DISSATISFIED WITH THEIR LOT AT WORK, THAT THEY DON'T THINK THEY'VE GOT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, OR THEY DON'T

THINK THEY'RE (..) WHAT EVER, THEY'VE GOT SOME GRIPE AT WORK,
AND THEY LOWER THEIR PRODUCTIVITY...

*P20: Oh yes, indeed. A happy workforce is a (..) productive workforce.

*INT: HOW TRUE DO YOU THINK THAT IS?

*P20: I think it's very true. I mean if people are, if people are disgruntled at work, they tend to spread dissension all over and everyone and soon, and it just takes one person who's got, who's constantly griping and griping and it just wears everyone down. And they get, they wake up and think, oh God I don't really want to go and face another day of this.

*INT: DO YOU THINK, IF YOU WERE WORKING IN THE SORT OF PLACE
WHERE YOU KNEW DAMN WELL YOU WERE BEING DISCRIMINATED
AGAINST, OR YOU WEREN'T BEING PROMOTED, OR YOU WEREN'T
WHATEVER...

*P20: I wouldn't stay there.

*INT: YOU WOULDN'T STAY THERE?

*P20: No.

*INT: SO THAT'S ONE ADVANTAGE TO IT; AN ORGANISATION THEN, IT
KEEPS YOU IN THE PLACE IF THEY PROVIDE YOU WITH EQUAL
OPPORTUNITIES!

*P20: Yes.

*INT: WOULD IT INCREASE YOUR JOB SATISFACTION OR SOMETHING IF
YOU WERE WORKING IN A PLACE WHERE THEY WERE REALLY
COMMITTED TO IT (EQUAL OPPORTUNITY) OR IS IT NOT REALLY
IMPORTANT?

*P20: Umm, I don't think, I think I've been fortunate because I don't think I've actually
had to face any umm (..) discrimination (..) in my employment. I mean, I think I was

refused a job once because of my colour, but then again it could have been because of my facial hair! But it was an American company and there were various, at the time they were very strict about those kind of things (..) umm (..) but in the people that employed me I don't think I've ever been discriminated against and I've been pretty much (..) allowed to get on with it and go as far as I think I can take myself. So it's always been positive reinforcement in my chosen field, as it were.

***INT: OK, I'LL JUST CHECK WHAT, UMM, (..) MONITORING PRACTICES I HAVEN'T ASKED YOU ABOUT! YOU KNOW THE OLD 'FILL IN THE BOX AT THE BACK OF THE APPLICATION FORM', WHAT'S YOUR VIEW ON THOSE?**

***P20: (..) I think it's very difficult to get people to be truthful when filling those things in, in all honesty.**

***INT: YEAH?**

***P20: Yeah, some people would like to put things down that (..) they think that you want to hear. Some people put things down that they wish they could do. Yeah, and some people just (.. - makes noise with mouth) don't bother with them. You know? Personally to the matter, I don't bother with them, as a rule.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK THEY ARE USEFUL OR NOT?**

***P20: Umm (..) they're useful to retain as a gauge but not to be not to be used as gospel. Because of the reasons I said before, because you cannot necessarily guarantee that the person who filled in has filled them in truthfully. You can even put in a statement saying 'please answer as truthfully as possible because none of this information is going to be used' but umm, that just all depends.**

***INT: DO YOU THINK THAT THE INFORMATION DOES GET USED (..) FOR PURPOSES OTHER THAN MONITORING?**

***P20: Yes, I do.**

***INT: IS THAT WHY PEOPLE LIE ABOUT WHAT THEY ..?**

*P20: It could be why they lie about it or why they're very careful about it. I mean (..) at the at the moment in the schools are trying to umm (..) ethnically pigeon-hole people. You know and they, fill out this nice questionnaire saying well what do you 'classify your child as being?' and their religious backgrounds and they say it's only for their schools but at the end of the day they're going to take it and they, a report's going to come out to say that in this borough, eighty per cent are G.O.B.s (I DIDN'T ASK WHAT THIS WAS) , so they're going to take these figures and do all kinds of things with them and I'm not sure it's going to be to the good of anyone. Other than to say (..) oi, this area has got more (..) shall we say ethnic people because I mean I know one (..) one parent who is now moving out of the area because they don't want their child to go to Dulwich college because there are too many Indians there.

*INT: YEAH? (..) WHY?

*P20: Because they want, they they don't feel that that's the right place for their child to brought up in. They want their child to be err (..) with more Caucasians. Which I think is a bit strange because I mean traditionally Indian children have always been pretty high performance. So if they want their child to perform, they really should try to get their kid in school with somewhere there's a high proportion of Indian children.

*INT: WELL THEY OBVIOUSLY THINK THERE'S GOING TO BE SOME DISADVANTAGE TO IT ...

*P20: Well, may be they just don't like Indians, I don't know. I think it's a bit strange. (..)

*INT: OK, I'LL JUST MOVE THAT ON A LITTLE BIT, WHEN YOU SAID ABOUT PIGEON-HOLING PEOPLE. THERE'S A SLIGHT MOVE IN THE U.K., IT'S ALREADY HAPPENED QUITE A BIT IN THE U.S., TO MOVE AWAY FROM EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, WHERE YOU'RE SAYING 'THIS IS A DISADVANTAGED GROUP AND THIS IS A DISADVANTAGED GROUP' AND SORT OF, VERY CLEARLY PIGEON-HOLING THINGS TO SAYING WELL 'O.K. IT'S A DIVERSE THING' YOU KNOW, THAT EVERYBODY IS GOING TO BRING SOMETHING DIFFERENT, IN TERMS OF THEIR EXPERIENCE, THEIR

AGE, THEIR ETHNIC IDENTITY, NOT NECESSARILY THE RACE OR THE MIX OF RACE YOU ARE, OR YOUR ACCENT, OR YOUR RELIGION, OR, YOU KNOW ANY NUMBER OF VARIABLES. EVERYBODY WOULD BRING A DIFFERENT COMBINATION IN, SO IT'S POINTLESS TO TRY AND SORT OF PUT THEM INTO NEAT LITTLE CATEGORIES BECAUSE PEOPLE DON'T FIT THOSE CATEGORIES VERY EASILY. SO THE MOOD IS THEN TO ALMOST ABANDON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND SAY WELL WE'LL MANAGE THE DIVERSITY THAT WE HAVE. WE'LL RUN DIVERSITY AWARENESS TRAINING', WE'LL DO THIS, WE'LL DO THAT. AND I SIT THERE AND I THINK, THIS SOUNDS LOVELY, YOU KNOW, ON AN IDEOLOGICAL GROUND IT SOUNDS, YOU KNOW, VERY NICE AND EVERYBODY WILL BE HAPPY, AND THEN I THINK BUT IT'S COMPLETELY IGNORING THAT SOME PEOPLE ARE DISADVANTAGED BECAUSE OF THEIR COLOUR OR THEIR AGE, OR THEIR SEX, OR WHATEVER, AND I WONDER WHETHER IF IT GETS USED AS SMOKE SCREEN, OR IF IT IS A GOOD THING. DO YOU HAVE AN OPINION ON THAT?

*P20: (..) Umm, to, I, I because I don't understand this umm concept, how they're going to (..) say we can go away from ethnic groups and make us one big melting pot. Because how can you then cater for your average male Caucasian, in that melting pot? It just doesn't fit in to that.

*INT: WELL I THINK THAT'S WHY THEY WERE DOING IT, BECAUSE THE AVERAGE WHITE (..) MAN WAS, UMM, THEY WERE FEARING A BACKLASH BASICALLY BECAUSE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES WAS LEAVING THAT PERSON OUT. SO THEY THOUGHT THAT IF THEY STARTED THIS DIVERSITY THING THEN THEY WOULD BE INCLUDED. YOU DON'T HAVE TO HAVE UMM (..) ANY SORT OF MINORITY PART IN YOU TO BE A PART OF OUR DIVERSE WORKFORCE...

*P20: But then, but then you've just taken a step backwards haven't you because then you're no longer (..) you're no longer (..) umm recognising the fact that there are differences. You put all into a big melting pot, and the guys who are coming to the top is going to be your (..pauses rhetorically) male Caucasians. So all the good work that

may have been done for women's rights and (..slight pause) black power (seemed to rush straight from "black power" straight into next word, almost to brush over it somehow - just my opinion!) and all the other bits and pieces have now been washed away and we're back to where we were thirty or forty years ago.

***INT: SO IT'S MORE OF A SMOKESCREEN?**

***P20:** It's much more much more a smokescreen. It's a, it's a, like I said, the backlash, the the, they're now frightened that they're going to be left out. Because there is now so much of a mix, the average (..) male Caucasian is becoming a minority (..) and there's umm, cosmopolitan (..) melting pot of mixed race people, are becoming the norm, and they're now suffering what the ethnic, pure pure ethnic minorities were suffering when they first came to this country. So it's gone like, turned itself on it's head.

***INT: IT'S NICE TO HEAR YOU SAY THAT BECAUSE I THOUGHT THAT TOO!
(LAUGHS) UMM I THINK THAT'S JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT I
WANTED TO ASK ACTUALLY. IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU...**

***P20:** Ohh, I wanted to get on my soap box about women and their (..)

***INT: OH GO ON, GET ON YOUR SOAP BOX THEN! WHAT DO YOU WANT
TO TELL ME ABOUT?**

***P20:** Well, women have gone a bit TOO far.

***INT: WHERE HAVE THEY GONE TOO FAR?**

***P20:** Well they have maternity leave for a start and men don't. I want paternity leave!

***INT: YES, WELL THAT WOULD BE EQUAL THEN WOULDN'T IT?**

***P20:** Weelllll (..) but now we say that women, again again it's this thing turning itself on the head, women have got now so many more rights than men that because they're deemed to be the uhh natural child-bearer, of course they're PHYSICALLY child-bearer but they don't necessarily, the person best equipped to look after the child. They are automatically given all this time off in lieu. Where as the poor man, he gets (..) the

day of the birth. And whatever holiday time he can scrape together to be with the uhh child at this early age. And the uhh first six months, as you well know, is the time when most impressions are made and bonding and so on take place. And we just don't, I mean Scandinavian countries allow (..) men time off, maybe we should come along with those, you know?

***INT: HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU THINK YOU SHOULD BE ALLOWED?**

***P20: Ooh, at least six months! (laughs)**

***INT: AT LEAST SIX MONTHS! WELL THERE WE GO YOU SEE, THAT'S THE SAME PROBLEM REALLY, YOU KNOW, WE WANT THIS, BUT DO EMPLOYERS WANT TO GIVE YOU THAT TIME OFF?**

***P20: Well, that's right.**

***INT: IS THERE ANY REASON WHY THEY SHOULD?**

***P20: Umm, it's the feel good factor. It's been, if you, I mean, this thing about keeping your staff happy. If they know that. If men go in there knowing that they will have equal opportunities as far as paternity is concerned, with women, OK, then we look at the maternity leave, they take a drop in salary, they're on like half pay for however long. And they may come back to work and are expected to come back to work, well that's that's fine. I mean, I'm quite willing to do that. As a man of the nineties! But umm, we're just not presented with the opportunity. I think legislation should be made, changed to allow you to come more in line with other countries, on that front.**

***INT: WELL, IF THE SOCIAL CHAPTER GETS SIGNED, WE MIGHT GET SOMEWHERE!**

***P20: Ooh, (laughs) that's a big if! It's a big if.**

***INT: NOW IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO GET ON YOUR SOAP BOX ABOUT?**

***P20: No that's my bit, that's my main gripe about women. My life is so easy!**

***INT: THAT'S IT, THEN. YOU HAVE THE BABIES THEN, P20!**

***P20: I was there, I was bitten, I know!**

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED