

EXCERPT 7: “Loneliness” (2’22”)

Female host: Now it is a well-worn broadcasting cliché to describe sthg as “the last taboo”, but when it comes to loneliness, I really don’t think it’s unreasonable. These days, people will burden you with the most intimate details of their sex lives & their bowel movements*. But not many of us will admit to being lonely - & this is a country, after all, where nearly a 1/3 of the population lives alone. A new survey of 4,000 people suggests that we’ve lost the art of making friends, & almost 6 out of 10 respondents just longed simply to have sb to have a coffee and a natter* with. Studies have shown that L can be as bad for your health as smoking & obesity. Well, [Esther Rantzen](#) has been busting taboos for years – Esther, good morning to you –

Esther Rantzen: Mmmh...

Host: & [she wrote recently about her own loneliness](#). & Christine Webber is a psychotherapist – Christine, welcome to the programme.

Christine Webber: Morning, thank you very much!

Host: Now, Esther, you wrote a long & very moving article about being L, & the reaction you got took your breath away.

Esther: It certainly did. Mmmh... People quite close to me were horrified that I didn’t have enough pride to stop me doing such a thing – that is was too personal, it was shame-making, & I had the most wonderful letter – entirely in capital letters – from someone I work with, called Ada Johnson, who lives in Scotland, she was the star of a programme I did, called *The Big Time*, & she said: *Never did I ever think I would read such an article. This is from someone who’s been on her own for 31 years & at the age of 81 never has time to... mope!*” And there is a sort of sad feel – she gives me a whole schedule of things I should do, ending up: *“Get a rescue dog*, so you can meet ordinary people on the common and have a chat. Be positive. Get up off your...”* and then there’s a row of dots. But there was that, which was very brisk – I loved it – but there were people closer to me who really felt that I had pulled off an emotional skin too many*, that it was wrong of me to do that. & someone expressed it really clearly, & wrote to me & said: *“L has a shaming quality, born out of the perception of social failure; it’s an ache that dares not speak its name for fear that people will think us needy, or at the very least lacking joie de vivre, and so will shun us like an empty restaurant.”*



NOTES

* *bowel movement*: défécation, selles (euphémisme).

* *natter* = *chat* (papoter bavarder)

* *rescue dog* = (1) *search-and-rescue dog* (“chien de sauvetage”); (2) *a dog that has been rescued from possible euthanasia* (sauvé de la mort à la SPA). Ce second sens est le bon ici.

* l’idée est qu’elle se serait trop révélée, qu’elle en aurait dit trop sur elle-même.

EXCERPT 8: “The Death of CD” (2’08”) [BBC Radio Scotland]

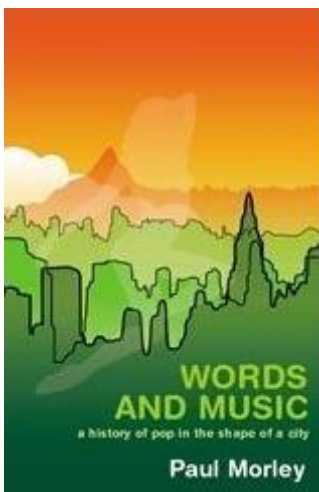
Host (Clare English): Very warm welcome to the show! I’m Clare English. Now, a good few years ago on the then *Art Show*, I interviewed a music journalist called Paul Morley – yes, you know him! – and he had a new book out. It predicted a revolution in the way we access & play music: the digital age was on the horizon, so there wd soon be no need for albums or CDs. Music wd be stored & played in thin air. At the time the concept seemed barking mad. I personally doubted that a revolution was going to happen any time soon. Well, how wrong can you be! Maybe a few of us cling to the vinyl format, & yes, I still have scores of CDs cluttering up my house, but I think by stealth I’ve bought into the digital era, & buying music online & downloading it. It’s possible to access it of course at practically anywhere, anytime – so that’s a plus as well. No surprise, then, that press reports suggest that day of the CD has come and might be about to go. This may be their last Xmas, as the major record labels are apparently poised to faze them out. With me now, Ed McCracken, a journalist and self-confessed music geek, & Rosamund West, editor of [The Skinny](#) magazine. Lovely to have both of you with us. & now this looks as if this might be it – the last hurrah, the last Xmas for the CD. Ed, **you got it, aren’t you, or are you?***

Ed McCracken: Well, d’you know, actually, I’m kind like yourself, I’ve kind of given up on the CD format almost by stealth. It’s kind of over the course of this past decade I’ve just kind of loosened my kind of icy, kind of firm grip on that format. & actually it feels quite good – so it does, you know, once you kind of untether yourself from those very shiny disks.

Host (Clare English): But do you think they’re on the way out?

Ed McCracken: Mmm... I don’t think they are on the way out as quickly as some of the reports might suggest. I think that, conversely, as opposed to this being the last Xmas for CDs, Xmas might actually be the saviour for the CD format, because if you think about it, the kind of people who buy CDs now are your kind of... of the older generation who haven’t quite migrated across onto like iTunes or [Spotify](#) online streaming.

Host (Clare English): Wish I hadn’t said that because I was just about to say: “Rosamund, you’re one of those people that’s going to buy CD” – you don’t look that old to me!



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ABOUT THIS APP

Spotify is a streaming music service that gives you access to millions of songs. Play, discover and share new music.

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* Sorry, I can’t make heads or tails of this!

EXCERPT 9: “The Term ‘Cougar’” (2’08”)

Female Host (GB): Now, I’m not quite sure why the term “cougar” began to be applied to an older woman sticking her claws into a younger man, but it’s certainly been used to describe Demi Moore, who married a man 15 yrs younger than her – although no such comment was made about her ex, Bruce Willis, who hooked up with someone 21 yrs younger. It also became the title of a TV sitcom, *Cougar Town*, & there’s now a dating website, cougarlife.com, which is now operating in this country. How keen are we to embrace the term? Well, Yvonne Roberts is a journalist & writer who I won’t be calling a cougar. Claudia Opdenkelder runs the website & is happy with the name. Claudia, why are you content with being called a cougar?

Claudia Opdenkelder (US): Well, the word *cougar* was made up, I guess, by some guys a long long time ago. So it’s always existed, it’s not a word that I made up. & we just thought we’d shed a little light on it, & embrace it, & change the word around, & revamp it for the 21st century. & it’s a strong, independent woman who knows what she wants, knows how to get it, has always taken care of herself, & has just maybe not put relationships first & foremost, & has taken care of business or, you know, her success first, before getting into a serious relationship or, you know, courting sb or living with somebody.

Female Host (GB): Yvonne, what’s your response to it as a term?

Yvonne Roberts: Well, er... I mean, as a term, the most obvious thing is it’s just very predatory, & I think the older version – you know, once you get into your 50s –you’re a jaguar. God knows what happens when you’re in your 60s, but... You know, on the surface, it looks like a great thing, there’s women, you say, women of 35+, & the men are 5 yrs younger or perhaps...

Claudia Opdenkelder (US): Minimum, minimum...

Yvonne Roberts: So, 30-35, that’s... you know... that’s no big deal, but when you start looking at Miss Cougar Canada, who’s 48, going out with a 21-yr-old, again, superficially, this is a sort of Mae West thing, you know: “Too much of a good thing is wonderful” – but actually do you really want to be, you know, on the Xbox* when you’re 52 & your boyfriend is 23? It doesn’t seem to work for me.

Claudia Opdenkelder (US): Well, my husband is 27, & I’m going to be 41. We’re 14 years apart, & he doesn’t sit around & play video games or drink beer with the boys. I think it’s a very individual thing. So...

NOTES

* Xbox: the video game console manufactured by Microsoft.



Egypt requires cash deposit for Old Fart Foreigners to marry young women

The Egyptian authorities have banned a 92-year-old man from marrying a 17-year-old girl, the Egyptian al-Akhbar newspaper has reported. The ministry of justice invoked a law which says the [age gap between spouses](#) should not exceed 25 years.

Egypt brought in the law prohibiting the marriage of elderly men to very young girls during the Gulf oil boom. It was an effort to prevent wealthy men from the Gulf states seeking young poor brides from the Egyptian countryside.

In special cases, the justice ministry does allow foreign men to marry Egyptian women more than 25 years their junior if they deposit a very large sum of money in the name of their wife at the Egyptian National Bank...

173 such marriages were allowed in the past year after the foreign husband deposited a sum equivalent to about US \$80,000 and was screened.