

Box 14.6. Field notes extract

507: Longdenville women, both addicts of Y&R [*The Young and the Restless*], since view it daily, say – it's about young people, about relations between rich and poor, tend always to go back to the first person you loved, e.g. in own family elder sister went with moslem boy, married off by parents to hindu man but she left husband, gone back to first man and had child by him.

614: result of my survey of all media: note 70% watched Y&R, news just less but then nothing else over 30%, asking who watched (I guess regularly 50% women, 30% men).

622: even panmen watch Y&R.

641: Rene: I discuss TV with sister, neighbours or with people in the health centre – have to get back by 12 to see it, when my neighbour gets back from her friends where she watches – we discuss, very exciting right now. Where Brad's first wife taken him away but he doesn't know why he's doing it; people who come from America saw it already.

(Me: most Trinidadians asked to describe the character of their islands in one word would say 'bacchanal' with a smile that suggests affectionate pride triumphing over shame.)

EY18: Women talk about Y&R: 'I prefer that, you see it is safer to talk about the celebrities business than to talk about people business, you won't get into trouble, nobody won't cuss you if you say Chancellor was with this one's husband you just won't get into trouble. Although it is gossip won't be anybody's personal life ... but it is just bacchanal, all them soaps is just bacchanal ... even if you don't like what is happening on the show you could even admire their earrings or their pearl necklaces; their hairdressing is exotic ... I would copy Brad's wife although I won't like to have a husband like Brad. I like Cricket, I like Tracy and I like Lauren.' Talking about marriage in Trinidad: 'I find it should be 50–50 not 30–70. The woman have to be strong, she have to believe in her vows no matter what ... that make me remember Y&R – Vickie want her marriage to work but Victor is in love with somebody else, but she is still holding on.'

ET21: Everybody does watch Y&R, 'when they tell me Mamy they like so and so's clothes in the picture, so I would sit down on Friday evenings and watch it to see the style. I don't have ties during the day. If watch it from TV I can copy the style. The last style copied was a style Ashley had – low cut across with a frill and a mini.' It is a black and white TV so she buy a black skirt, don't know what colour it really was. Copied Cassandra's jacket with the gathers on top; got the T shirt from Young and Restless.

(Source: Daniel Miller)