

<p>Interview Summary Sheet Project: Memories of Fiction: An Oral History of Reader's Lives</p>
<p>Reference No.</p>
<p>Interviewee name and title: Jackie Spencer</p>
<p>Interviewee DOB and place of birth: Early 1960s, Maidstone. Interviewee occupation: Civil servant/administrative work. Book group(s) attended: Putney.</p>
<p>Date(s) of recording: 30th June 2015 Location of recording: Fulham Interviewer: Amy Tooth Murphy Duration(s): 01.47.58 Summariser: Alison Chand</p>
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<p>Key themes: Family, childhood, education, reading, books, reading groups.</p>
<p>All books and authors mentioned (those discussed for >20 seconds in bold): Jill Murphy, <i>Whatever Next!</i> Miguel De Cervantes Saavedra, <i>Don Quixote</i> Margaret Hunt, <i>Grimm's Fairy Tales</i> Cecilia H. Hinde, <i>Floury Fingers</i> Abraham Verghese, <i>Cutting for Stone</i> Thomas Hardy, <i>The Mayor of Casterbridge</i> Thomas Hardy, <i>The Trumpet-Major</i> William Shakespeare, <i>Twelfth Night</i> Jane Austen, <i>Emma</i> Gerard Manley Hopkins Robert Ludlum, <i>The Bourne Identity</i> J. R. R. Tolkien Noel Langley, <i>The Land of Green Ginger</i> Tove Jansson, <i>Finn Family Moomintroll</i> Norman Hunter, <i>Professor Branestawm</i> <i>The Guardian</i> <i>Jackie</i> <i>Disco 45</i> Charles Dickens, <i>Oliver Twist</i> Penelope Lively, <i>Ammonites and Leaping Fish</i> Penelope Lively, <i>How it All Began</i> Penelope Lively, <i>Moon Tiger</i> Tan Twang Eng, <i>The Garden of Evening Mists</i></p>

Richard Flanagan, *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*
Ned Beaman, *The Teleportation Accident*
ML Stedman, *The Light Between Oceans*
Lindsey Kelk, *I Heart Vegas*
Simon Mawer, *The Glass Room*
Jonathan Franzen, *The Corrections*
Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *Crime and Punishment*
Alice Munro
 Leo Tolstoy
Claire Tomalin, *Charles Dickens: A Life*
Helen Macdonald, *H is for Hawk*
Donna Tartt, *The Goldfinch*
Zadie Smith, *NW*
Zadie Smith, *White Teeth*
Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*
Guy de Maupassant, *Short Stories of Guy de Maupassant*
 Daphne du Maurier, *Don't Look Now and Other Stories*
 Daphne du Maurier, *Jamaica Inn*
Salley Vickers, *Miss Garnet's Angel*
Kate Morton, *The House at Riverton*
Hilary Mantel, *Wolf Hall*
Hilary Mantel, *Bring Up The Bodies*
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah*
Robert Graves, *Goodbye to All That*
Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*
Enid Blyton, *Noddy*
Susan Gates and Charles Fuge, *Run! Run! It's Scary Pool!*
 AA Milne, *Winnie the Pooh*
Peter Stevenson, *My Big Book of Stories and Rhymes*
My Big Book of Fairy Tales
Chris Bentley, *Thunderbirds*

Interviewer/Summariser comments:

Part two of two

00:00:00	Introduction to interview, comments on lists of books, interviewer lays out plans for interview, mention of <i>Whatever Next!</i> (Jill Murphy). Date of birth confirmed.
00.01.40	Remarks on being brought up by mother as single mother, mother having lots of books, remarks on brother's reading, brother naming cat 'Slim' after book character. Comments on being tomboy, being passed brother's books rather than bought books. Comments on mother's books being adult books. Remarks on living in Cheltenham with mother, father living in London with third wife, staying with father while mother's house decorated. Remarks on lack of memory of father's reading, father's engineering work, interest in work/non-fiction books. Comments on stepmother listening to <i>The Archers</i> .

00.03.40	Comments on books as gifts, receiving book from elocution teacher about magic poems. Remarks on mother giving brother concise version of <i>Don Quixote</i> (Miguel De Cervantes Saavedra), being passed book from brother aged around seven (1969), not understanding book, remarks on memories of book. Comments on receiving fairytale books, <i>Grimm's Fairy Tales</i> (Margaret Hunt), <i>Floury Fingers</i> (Cecilia H. Hinde), cookery book for children, keeping <i>Floury Fingers</i> when mother moved house, remarks on recipes made from books, anecdote about making green meringues.
00.05.40	Comments on mother giving books because of own enthusiasm for reading, mother also giving book vouchers as presents when children were teenagers, keeping book receipts so that friends could change book gifts. Comments on choosing books with friends to use vouchers.
00.06.40	Remarks on shopping for books, disliking general shopping, preference for shopping for books in charity shops, interest in books people donate.
00.07.50	Comments on sometimes not reading books given as gifts, remarks on <i>Cutting for Stone</i> (Abraham Verghese), struggling to find time to read books outside reading group books. Remarks on enjoyment of receiving books as gifts, sister in law usually giving books as gifts, disappointment if sister in law buys different gift.
00.09.10	Remarks on mother recommending books, mother reducing numbers of books in house.
00.09.50	Comments on feeling pressure to learn to read, brother learning to read aged two, not remembering pressure to actually read. Remarks on enjoying reading as child, stopping reading aged 13 after reading Thomas Hardy book (1975).
00.10.40	Attempts to narrow down Thomas Hardy book read as teenager, mention of <i>The Mayor of Casterbridge</i> , comments on character having apoplectic fit in book, mention of <i>The Trumpet-Major</i> , description of red cover on book, illustrations in book. Comments on expectations of book, remarks on school choosing for pupils to study classic rather than contemporary fiction.
00.12.10	Remarks on studying <i>Twelfth Night</i> (William Shakespeare), comments on version of text read. Further comments on Thomas Hardy incident happening in early secondary school, being fed up of classic fiction, preference for contemporary fiction, struggling through Thomas Hardy book, difficulty of material, dense writing style/language, reading book at school, being asked to read out particular passages.
00.14.20	Comments on being happy to read out passages at school, further comments on mother's interest in theatre, being brought up going to plays. Further comments on difficulties with Thomas Hardy text, idea of character having fit resonating because of own epilepsy condition.
00.16.30	Comments on reading <i>Emma</i> (Jane Austen), poems by Gerard Manley Hopkins for A-level at college. Remarks on studying Shakespeare, <i>Twelfth Night</i> , <i>Macbeth</i> , Thomas Hardy at school.
00.17.20	Remarks on mother not interfering on drifting away from reading, comments on going out with friends as teenager, living in different part of Cheltenham to other teenagers at school. Comments on east end of Cheltenham being posher than west

	end. Lack of memory of loss of reading from life, time being taken up with teenage boredom, not being worried by gap in reading life.
00.19.20	Comments on joining library reading group to get back into reading, remarks on son's reading at school, son reading contemporary fiction at school, comments on son reading <i>The Bourne Identity</i> (Robert Ludlum), J. R. R. Tolkien books, son reading in evenings, reading by himself.
00.20.40	Remarks on reading with torch under bedclothes as child, having bookshelves in bedroom.
00.21.20	Interviewer mention of favourite childhood books, <i>The Land of Green Ginger</i> (Noel Langley), <i>Finn Family Moomintroll</i> (Tove Jansson), <i>Professor Branestawm</i> (Norman Hunter). Interviewee remarks on plot/characters of <i>Professor Branestawm</i> , description of physical book. Comments on interest in magic as child.
00.23.50	Comments on writing play with friend in Kent, characters as animals, putting on play for mothers. Remarks on making advertisements in garden with brother as child.
00.25.00	Remarks on membership of Puffin book club, Puffin as main publisher of children's books, receiving magazines/puzzles/discounted books, comments on bronze/silver/gold badges, keeping diary of books read [phone rings]. Comments on being around eight to ten in Puffin club (1970-1972).
00.27.00	Comments on lack of memory of picture books, further remarks on brother naming cat 'Slim'.
00.27.30	Remarks on learning to read at school, learning to spell 'cat' and 'dog'. Lack of memory of being read to by mother.
00.28.30	Further comments on lack of memory of reading in teenage years, being put off by Thomas Hardy, lack of memory of reading until joining library group.
00.29.20	Comments on reading newspaper, mother reading <i>The Guardian</i> , reading short extracts. Remarks on reading magazines, <i>Jackie</i> , <i>Disco 45</i> , comments on <i>Disco 45</i> as containing lyrics of songs in charts, magazine coming out fortnightly. Remarks on having pictures of The Sweets on bedroom wall.
00.31.20	Comments on decision to start to read again, mother continuing to give books, deciding to join library group, not wanting to buy books, joining library group for responsibility to read. Remarks on lack of expectations of reading group, differences between Hammersmith and Putney groups, departure of librarians from Hammersmith, group folding. Comments on being on waiting list for Fulham group, deciding to join Putney group. Comments on Putney group involving more discussion about actual books, Putney group members reading more serious fiction, mention of Charles Dickens, <i>Oliver Twist</i> , reading book for 200 th anniversary of Dickens's death at Hammersmith, otherwise less serious fiction. Comments on not reading non-fiction, reading less serious fiction. Comments on reading Penelope Lively at Putney. Further comments on different discussions in Putney group, interest in discussions of semantics.
00.36.50	Remarks on division of Putney group into two, older and newer members of book group, group starting up September 2001. Comments on greater interest in own group, freedom to go back

	and read material already covered by older members.
00.38.10	Comments on style of reading, not skimming, reading every single word, remarks on greater analysis of meanings of writing since joining book group. Remarks on group members analysing books differently.
00.39.10	Comments on not re-reading books, not liking to know ending when reading.
00.39.40	Further comments on starting to read again after joining group, going to pub with group members after meeting, meetings lasting an hour.
00.40.30	Remarks on <i>The Garden of Evening Mists</i> (Tan Twang Eng), gaining understanding of Japanese approach to war.
00.41.00	Comments on <i>The Narrow Road to the Deep North</i> (Richard Flanagan), remarks on plot, deepening understanding of war, historical fiction adding to historical knowledge.
00.41.50	Remarks on following up authors, re-reading chapters for explanation, looking for other books by same author because of reading group members' comments. Further comments on plot and characters of <i>The Narrow Road to the Deep North</i> . Further comments on not re-reading books/re-watching films, remarks on re-reading children's books.
00.44.00	Further comments on plot and characters of <i>The Garden of Evening Mists</i> , enjoyment of book.
00.46.40	Comments on <i>The Teleportation Accident</i> (Ned Beaman), book described as weird, remarks on plot, group being split between those who enjoyed/hated book, lack of similarity to other Ned Beaman material, reading book November 2014. Comments on group members' expectations of book.
00.49.20	Comments on <i>The Light Between Oceans</i> (M. L. Stedman), remarks on plot.
00.52.10	Remarks on liking 'page turner' books, husband buying <i>I Heart Vegas</i> (Lindsey Kelk) for trip to Las Vegas, disliking chick lit material, husband not understanding reading tastes.
00.53.40	Comments on getting married 1992, husband not knowing of period when interviewee stopped reading, not needing husband to read, being happy to attend book group/read alone. Comments on reading <i>The Light Between Oceans</i> around 2012.
00.55.20	Comments on being at Hammersmith book group during London Olympics, going to see diving events at Olympics.
00.55.50	Remarks on <i>The Glass Room</i> (Simon Mawer), comments on plot, remarks on treatment of Jews in Second World War, comments on reasons for liking books, enjoyment of books about war, not learning about war at school, learning about Industrial Revolution, war not being seen as suitable subject for girls at school.
00.59.00	Comments on importance of ways books are written, not minding difficult subjects if stories worded well, finding nineteenth century material difficult to read.
00.59.40	Remarks on not finishing two books because of dislike of story, <i>The Corrections</i> (Jonathan Franzen), <i>Crime and Punishment</i> (Fyodor Dostoyevsky). Further comments on plot of <i>The Corrections</i> , not caring what happened to characters. Further remarks on plot of <i>Crime and Punishment</i> , depressing nature of book.

01.02.20	Remarks on finding small font size difficult to read, classic books often being in small fonts. Comments on reading <i>Crime and Punishment</i> with Putney book group, reading <i>The Corrections</i> in 2013, <i>Crime and Punishment</i> in 2014.
01.03.30	Comments on months when book groups has two books, reading two books when books are short, not always knowing about second book, comments on reading group reading Alice Munro book. Comments on not being keen to read more Russian novelists, mention of Leo Tolstoy.
01.04.40	Remarks on reading <i>Charles Dickens: A Life</i> (Claire Tomalin), unusual for group to read non-fiction material, expectation not to enjoy book, surprise at enjoying book. Remarks on interest in returning to read Dickens, further mention of <i>Oliver Twist</i> , need to pick and choose books.
01.06.20	Remarks on <i>H is for Hawk</i> (Helen Macdonald), comments on plot, theme of grief.
01.08.00	Further comments on Penelope Lively, interest in reading <i>Ammonites and Leaping Fish</i> , mother going to see play of <i>Moon Tiger</i> , not enjoying play. Remarks on Penelope Lively, <i>How it All Began</i> , lack of memory of plot/appearance of book. Comments on usual lack of interest in biography, seeing Penelope Lively speaking at library, wanting to read <i>Ammonites and Leaping Fish</i> because of hearing Lively speak, buying copy for mother.
01.10.50	Remarks on <i>The Goldfinch</i> (Donna Tartt), comments on plot, dislike of reading sections dealing with drinking and drug taking, remarks on length of book, book group sometimes assigning long books for reading in a month, lack of interest in reading further Donna Tartt material.
01.13.50	Remarks on <i>NW</i> (Zadie Smith), comments on <i>White Teeth</i> , difficulties of reading stream of consciousness books. Comparison with unnamed Dickens book, remarks on lack of convenient places to stop in <i>NW</i> . Remarks on <i>NW</i> plot, lack of memory of characters. Comments on interest in reading <i>White Teeth</i> , difference between <i>NW</i> and Smith's other books.
01.16.20	Remarks on <i>Madame Bovary</i> (Gustave Flaubert), getting copy from Hammersmith library, being unable to obtain copy from Putney. Remarks on plot.
01.17.00	Comments on <i>Short Stories of Guy de Maupassant</i> , further comments on <i>Madame Bovary</i> . Remarks on particular Guy de Maupassant stories, individuality of stories. Comments on not having read many short stories as adult. Further remarks on Alice Munro book of short stories, reading group reading one or two collections of short stories per year. Mention of Daphne du Maurier short stories, Salley Vickers, <i>Miss Garnet's Angel</i> . Comments on being more unusual to read non-fiction than short stories in reading group.
01.20.00	Remarks on reading group members' views of non-fiction, members taking turns to make suggestions.
01.20.40	Remarks on <i>The House at Riverton</i> (Kate Morton), Richard and Judy book club recommendation. Comments on plot, further remarks on interest in historical fiction, book not being assigned by book group.
01.22.10	Remarks on shortlisted books for prizes, being less inclined to read prizewinning books, prizewinners being too wordy.

	Comments on WH Smith Thumping Good Read Award, looking at blurbs on backs of books.
01.23.40	Further comments on <i>Miss Garnet's Angel</i> , remarks on plot.
01.24.10	Comments on dislike of <i>Wolf Hall</i> (Hilary Mantel), liking <i>Bring up the Bodies</i> (Hilary Mantel), comments on differences between two books, difficulties with <i>Wolf Hall</i> , easier writing style in <i>Bring up the Bodies</i> . Remarks on not being interested in particular historical time periods. Comments on low expectations resulting in enjoyment, high expectations often resulting in disappointment.
01.26.10	Comments on not paying attention to hype about books/authors, hype raising awareness of books/authors.
01.26.50	Remarks on <i>Americanah</i> (Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie), reading book with Hammersmith group, reading <i>Goodbye to All That</i> (Robert Graves) when Putney group members read <i>Americanah</i> , remarks on feeling sense of obligation to read works by particular authors, reading <i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i> (Erich Maria Remarque) in same month. Remarks on lack of enjoyment of <i>Goodbye to All That</i> , enjoyment of <i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i> .
01.28.30	Remarks on Daphne du Maurier books, <i>Don't Look Now and Other Stories</i> , <i>Jamaica Inn</i> .
01.28.50	Further comments on plot of <i>Americanah</i> , memory of central character getting hair done.
01.31.00	Remarks on enjoyment of reading about other cultures, reading about other cultures more in non-fiction material.
01.31.40	Remarks on books read with son, <i>Whatever Next!</i> Description of book's appearance, being able to read book by heart. Remarks on plot.
01.33.10	Remarks on <i>Noddy</i> (Enid Blyton), taking book to France every year. Description of book's appearance, remarks on son finding French for 'yes, yes', being 'oui, oui' funny.
01.35.00	Comments on <i>Run! Run! It's Scary Poo!</i> (Susan Gates and Charles Fuge), mother finding book rude, remarks on plot, convincing mother to buy book, son finding book funny.
01.37.00	Remarks on books for starting son's reading, initially reading at ten o'clock every day, not starting son with picture books. Comments on reading <i>Winnie the Pooh</i> (A. A. Milne) to son. Son's books named as <i>My Big Book of Stories and Rhymes</i> (Peter Stevenson), <i>My Big Book of Fairy Tales</i> , interviewer describes books as collections, comments on illustrations. Remarks on modern nature of fairy tales, inclusion of poems and stories. Comments on reading to son as baby for very short periods of time to get son used to sound of voice. Interviewer memories of children's stories, comments on contents of different stories, dark nature of some illustrations. Interviewer talks through physical books. Remarks on son going on to read some stories himself.
01.42.40	Comments on son reading <i>Thunderbirds</i> (Chris Bentley), son's favourite <i>Thunderbirds</i> books, anecdote about grandmother reading about explosion in dramatic way. Remarks on son keeping <i>Thunderbirds</i> books, giving some away to neighbour. Comments on son watching <i>Thunderbirds</i> film, reading books in 2004-2005.

01.44.30	Interviewer summary of topics covered in interview. Interviewee remarks on not keeping reading diary, enjoying looking back at list of books read. Comments on books read by older members in group since 2001 origins.
01.46.00	Reflections on own reading, breadth of book group reading material.
01.46.40	Remarks on experience of being interviewed, enjoying thinking through books, remembering more than expected.
01.47.58	END