

<p>Interview Summary Sheet  Project: <b>Memories of Fiction: An Oral History of Reader's Lives</b></p>
<p>Reference No.</p>
<p>Interviewee name and title: Johanna Williams</p>
<p>Interviewee DOB and place of birth: 18<sup>th</sup> October 1951, Enfield  Interviewee occupation: Doctor  Book group(s) attended: Putney</p>
<p>Date(s) of recording: 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015  Location of recording: Putney Heath  Interviewer: Amy Tooth Murphy  Duration(s): 01.21.53  Summariser: Alison Chand</p>
<p>Copyright/Clearance:</p>
<p>Key themes: Family, reading, libraries, education, work, childhood, reading groups.</p>
<p>All books and authors mentioned (those discussed for &gt;20 seconds in bold):  R. M. Ballantyne, <i>The Coral Island</i>  <i>Thomas the Tank Engine</i>  <i>Look and Learn</i> annuals  <b>Enid Blyton</b>, <i>Noddy</i>  <b>Beatrix Potter</b>  <i>Jack and Jill</i>  <i>The Herald</i>  <i>The Guardian</i>  Jane Austen, <i>Sense and Sensibility</i>  Pearl Buck  <b>John Steinbeck</b>  <b>Thomas Hardy</b>  <b>Erich Kastner</b>, <i>Emil and the Detectives</i>  <i>Rupert</i> annuals  <i>Pinnocchio</i>  George Orwell, <i>1984</i>  William Shakespeare, <i>King Lear</i>  John Le Carre  Claire Tomalin, <i>Samuel Pepys, The Unequalled Self</i>  Khaled Hosseini, <i>The Kite Runner</i>, <i>A Thousand Splendid Suns</i>  David Guterson, <i>Snow Falling in Cedars</i>  <i>Reader's Digest</i>  Goodison</p>

Tim Severin  
 Rosemary Sutcliff, *The Eagle of the Ninth*  
 Roald Dahl  
 Eric Carle, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*  
 Dick King-Smith  
 Zadie Smith, *NW*  
**P. D. James**  
**Ruth Rendell**  
 John Wyndham  
**Terry Pratchett**  
 Jilly Cooper  
 Catherine Cookson  
 Mills and Boon  
 Daphne du Maurier, *Jamaica Inn*  
**J. Meade Falkner, *Moonfleet***  
**Donna Tartt, *The Goldfinch***  
 Guy de Maupassant  
**Louis de Bernieres, *Captain Corelli's Mandolin***  
 J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings, The Hobbit*  
**Johanna Lemon, *The Great Stink***  
 Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield, Oliver Twist*  
 Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre*  
 Anna Sewell, *Black Beauty*  
 Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*  
 Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*  
 Emily Bronte, *Wuthering Heights*  
 Paul Torday, *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen*  
 Irene Nemirovsky, *Suite Francaise*

Interviewer/Summariser comments:

Part one of two

00:00:00	Introduction to interview, remarks on family moving round south east England due to father's work as quantity surveyor, moving from birthplace of Enfield aged three, remarks on other areas lived in.
00:01:50	Remarks on mother's work, mother giving up work on having children, mother leaving school at fifteen during war to look after disabled sister, mother working for Board of Trade during war, mother's origins in Dorset, comments on grandfather's time in army during First and Second World War, grandfather's work running hotels, mother attending school in Portsmouth, travelling to and from Isle of Wight.
00:04:00	Remarks on experience of moving around as child, sadness at leaving friends.
00:04:20	Comments on four siblings, older brother, younger sisters, remarks on relationships with siblings.
00:05:20	Remarks on reasons for joining book group, moving to London from Lancashire, using book group as way to meet people.
00:06:00	Comments on memories of going to library aged seven/eight

	(1958-1959), library being part of childhood, taking lists of books to library, picking up shopping for mother. Remarks on visiting different libraries in childhood, distances to travel to library, walking to library aged nine/ten (1960-1961), going to library/school alone.
00.07.40	Memories of different library interiors, children's sections, specific mention of Purley library.
00.09.00	Remarks on primary and secondary school libraries, choosing books from book lists in advance of going to secondary school, mention of <i>The Coral Island</i> (R. M. Ballantyne), books about other countries, non-fiction books.
00.10.00	Comments on books at home, book of fairytales, brother getting <i>Thomas the Tank Engine</i> , memories of <i>Look and Learn</i> annuals, red covered books, <i>Noddy</i> (Enid Blyton), Beatrix Potter books, comments on enjoyment of <i>Thomas the Tank Engine</i> , fairytales, book about King Canute, remarks on lack of illustrations in book of fairytales.
00.11.30	Comments on asking mother to learn to read, learning to read at school in class of fifty, sounds being written on board, crayons in desk, reading <i>Jack and Jill</i> at school, sitting in rows.
00.12.40	Remarks on lack of memory of reading with parents, parents' reading habits, going to library with mother, memories of mother reading newspapers, mother attending language lessons, parents regretting lack of education, comments on parents reading <i>The Herald</i> and <i>The Guardian</i> .
00.14.20	Comments on not being stopped from reading newspapers, not having restrictions placed on reading, parents placing importance on education.
00.14.50	Remarks on enjoyment of reading in holidays, enjoyment of Enid Blyton books, remarks on Enid Blyton plots and themes, wanting to go to boarding school/have adventures. Remarks on other books read in childhood, Jane Austen books, Pearl Buck, John Steinbeck, reading Thomas Hardy because of mother's Dorset origins, comments on <i>Emil and the Detectives</i> (Erich Kastner), reading annuals, <i>Rupert</i> annuals, receiving annuals for Christmas.
00.16.40	Remarks on receiving books as presents for birthdays, requesting specific books, further mention of Enid Blyton, <i>Pinnocchio</i> , winning <i>Pinnocchio</i> as school prize aged eight (1959).
00.17.30	Comments on keeping some books, throwing away books when moving.
00.18.10	Remarks on expectations to attend university, interest in maths and science, father not encouraging study of maths and science, wanting to become doctor, enjoyment of studying science.
00.19.30	Comments on school not being good at teaching science, changing schools, taking evening classes in physics, disruption in education, father's support of changing schools from all girls' school to local school. Remarks on narrow nature of girls' schools, school work ethics/expectations of girls.
00.21.30	Comments on attending university 1975, Royal Free, London, remarks on time spent at university, comments on resilience staying away from home, studying medicine, preparations to study medicine, proportions of female medical students. Further comments on decision to study medicine, being surrounded by intelligent people.

00.24.40	Remarks on 'social reading' stopping during time at university, getting cheap tickets to plays/musicals as student, joining university societies, diving club, working hard at university, mention of going to see <i>1984</i> (George Orwell), Beethoven, Shakespeare performances, <i>King Lear</i> , enjoyment of living in London, working in evenings.
00.26.50	Comments on long working hours as trainee doctor, tiredness, desire to develop surgery speciality, remarks on different medical departments worked in, different areas lived in, brief mention of living in Canada, marriage, having family.
00.28.30	Further comments on time spent in Canada, going to work with husband, husband's work as anaesthetist, living in Calgary, differences between Canadian and British health services, spending a year in Canada in 1982.
00.29.40	Remarks on settling in Lancashire on return from Canada, marrying in 1978.
00.30.10	Comments on lack of time for hobbies, not reading much while working, interest in outdoors, walking, skiing, cross country skiing in Canada, camping, interest in music.
00.31.20	Remarks on reading materials while working, John Le Carre, <i>Samuel Pepys: The Unequalled Self</i> (Claire Tomalin), <i>The Kite Runner</i> (Khaled Hosseini). Comments on reasons for reading particular books, <i>Snow Falling on Cedars</i> (David Guterson). Comments on spell in life of only reading two books per year, not reading many books/magazines, reading <i>Reader's Digest</i> .
00.34.05	Description of self as reader, reading book every three weeks, regular reader.
00.34.40	Comments on preferred authors, John Steinbeck, Goodison, <i>The Kite Runner</i> (Khaled Hosseini), Claire Tomalin.
00.35.10	Further comments on interest in Steinbeck, depictions of people, other authors enjoyed, Tim Severin.
00.35.50	Comments on interest in biographies of interesting people, book about Isaac Newton, reading some historical fiction, non-fiction, reading <i>The Eagle of the Ninth</i> (Rosemary Sutcliff) as child, aged eleven (1962).
00.37.50	Remarks on sharing books with siblings, further comments on <i>Emil and the Detectives</i> , sharing books with school friends. Remarks on reading to own children, children's interest in Roald Dahl, <i>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</i> (Eric Carle), Dick King-Smith, children's interest in reading, reading to children in evenings, in bed, in living room.
00.39.00	Comments on children, children's education, children's engineering careers.
00.39.20	Comments on membership of libraries throughout life, even when too busy to read, taking own children to library, children's enjoyment of visiting library, opportunity to try different reading materials. Comments on being drawn to particular books, looking for particular authors, being attracted to covers/titles, reading popular authors, sometimes having too much of some authors, wanting to try new authors.
00.41.30	Remarks on buying books online, not using online recommendations, receiving book recommendations from sisters, friends, sons, different reading tastes of family members, friends.

00.42.30	Comments on dislike of <i>NW</i> (Zadie Smith), not finishing book, rarity of not finishing books.
00.43.40	Remarks on interest in thrillers, P. D. James, Ruth Rendell, enjoying crime novels.
00.44.40	Comments on science fiction books, John Wyndham, remarks on son's enjoyment of Terry Pratchett books, not minding Pratchett books.
00.45.30	Remarks on interest in romantic fiction as teenager, interviewer mention of Jilly Cooper, Catherine Cookson, Mills and Boon, lack of memory of books read as teenager, mention of Daphne du Maurier ( <i>Jamaica Inn</i> ), comments on <i>Moonfleet</i> (J. Meade Falkner), reasons for enjoyment of book, link to Dorset.
00.46.50	Further comments on Thomas Hardy, depiction of Dorset in Hardy books, great aunt being able to remember Hardy, family connections to Dorchester.
00.47.40	Comments on moving to Putney, looking for suitable book group in Lancashire, then London, joining Putney reading group. Remarks on split of reading group into two, numbers attending groups, potential for social connections within reading group, process of choosing books for reading groups.
00.51.00	Comments on books read with reading group, <i>NW</i> , <i>The Goldfinch</i> (Donna Tartt), enjoyment of book, tedium in middle section of book, reading Guy de Maupassant, reading books would not otherwise read. Remarks on not having been long with reading group. Remarks on nature of reading group discussions, different perceptions of different members, mixed opinions of <i>NW</i> and <i>The Goldfinch</i> .
00.53.00	Remarks on preferred genres, sometimes looking for specific authors/kinds of stories/topics, reasons for reading books, books recommended by Richard and Judy book club, mention of <i>Captain Corelli's Mandolin</i> (Louis de Bernieres), liking to read about places visited.
00.54.30	Comments on reading on holiday, while travelling, sometimes reading on bus, while waiting for appointments.
00.55.10	Comments on reading before going to bed, reading in sitting room, reading when waking up in night, only taking books out of library, not reading in libraries, sometimes sitting outside to read.
00.56.30	Remarks on reading group books taking up most of reading time, sometimes reading other books.
00.57.10	Further comments on sons, sons living in Vancouver/Loughborough, visiting sons, sons' careers, oldest son's birth in Canada, returning to UK when son aged three or four weeks, only planning to stay in Canada for a year.
00.58.50	Remarks on not keeping reading journal/written records of reading.
00.59.20	Further comments on newness to reading group, contributing to group, further comments on reading books would not otherwise have thought of, not completing books not interested in.
01.00.40	Comments on components of good books, need for good story, realistic characters, emotional involvement with books, talking to others about books, re-enforcing ideas about books, enjoyment of books being recommended by others, not feeling obliged to read books.

01.02.30	Further comments on library membership, differences between Roehampton and Putney reading groups. Comments on demographics of reading group, largely female membership, ethnic makeup of group members, accessibility of group to working members, further comments on split of reading group, group meeting times.
01.07.00	Comments on reading on Kindle when travelling, preference for physical books, not being averse to reading on Kindles, dislike of Amazon, differences between Kindle and physical books, breaking Kindle.
01.08.20	Further comments on reading to children, husband reading to children, not restricting children's reading, taking children to library.
01.09.30	Comments on husband's reading tastes, husband's interest in J. R. R. Tolkien, non-fiction, overlap with own reading tastes, sharing/discussing books with husband. Further comments on Tolkien, <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> , <i>The Hobbit</i> .
01.11.00	Remarks on non-fiction, reading <i>The Great Stink</i> (Johanna Lemon), comments on volunteering work, interest in gardening, history, activities to meet other people.
01.12.40	Comments on green nature of area of London lived in, missing friends in Lancashire, Lancashire landscape, returning to visit Lancashire, reasons for moving to Putney, father being born in Battersea, mother and sisters living in Hampshire, choosing Putney for greenery of area. Remarks on community in area.
01.15.00	Remarks on Lancashire authors, Beatrix Potter, books about history of areas lived in, remarks on unnamed Jewish author from Manchester.
01.16.30	Comments on Jane Austen books read, <i>Sense and Sensibility</i> , other classics read, <i>David Copperfield</i> , <i>Oliver Twist</i> (Charles Dickens), <i>Jane Eyre</i> (Charlotte Bronte), <i>Black Beauty</i> (Anna Sewell), reading books on school reading list, <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> (Daniel Defoe), <i>Gulliver's Travels</i> (Jonathan Swift), <i>Wuthering Heights</i> (Emily Bronte), reading Jane Austen after school years.
01.18.20	Interviewer lays out plans for next interview, further mention of <i>The Kite Runner</i> , passing book round, also reading <i>A Thousand Splendid Suns</i> . Remarks on reading <i>Salmon Fishing in the Yemen</i> (Paul Torday), <i>Suite Francaise</i> (Irene Nemirovsky), reading group members' views of particular books, members' expectations of discussion. Remarks on Japanese reading group member, further comments on newness to reading group, wanting to settle in group.
01.21.53	END

