

L23: ANNE ORD INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Interviewee: Anne Ord
Interviewer: Dr Fearghus Roulston
Interview summarisers: Dr Hilary White and Prof Liam Harte
The interview was recorded as a single audio file with no section breaks

L23: Anne Ord	Start time: 00:00:00	Finish time: 01:51:50	Duration: 01:51:50	Brief description of content:
00:00–09:59	Born in Belfast and raised in Holywood, Co. Down. Lists the many places she has lived in in NI and England, saying 'I've moved round so much you won't be able to keep up'. Her mother was Catholic and her father a convert, which displeased his Protestant family and his employers in the NI civil service. Anne was brought up Catholic, but 'used to hate going to church'. Reveals that her paternal grandmother was an English-born Protestant who was taken to NI by her father in the 1920s after her parents' divorce. Growing up, Anne played happily with all the local children and only had 'sporadic conversations' with them about religion. However, relations changed every year in the weeks before the Twelfth of July, when she and other Catholic children 'would be ignored and not played with'.			
10:00–19:59	She enjoyed watching Orange parades as a child, but also found them 'a wee bit sinister'. Explains that her father 'immersed himself in' Catholicism out of love for her mother, but his interest faded after her death. Her paternal grandfather was a member of the UVF and her grandmother received 'vindictive letters' from relatives in the US who disapproved of her son marrying a Catholic. Her maternal grandfather, conversely, supported Sinn Féin. Discusses her family's move to Carryduff in Co. Down in 1968, when Anne was fifteen. Says she felt 'very lonely' there initially. Mentions that she married her husband, David, in 1977.			
20:00–29:59	She was on a family holiday in Sussex when the Troubles started in 1969 and was nervous about returning to Belfast by ferry. Discusses the disruption caused by the conflict, trying to avoid the riots with her friends, all the time wanting to be 'a normal teenager'. Belfast became 'very unsafe' and people wouldn't go out: it was 'a ghost town' at night and 'no bands came'. When she started seeing David they would 'stay local' because 'there was nowhere to go'. Went to college in England in 1975 and couldn't believe 'how freeing that was': a 'completely different atmosphere'. Before that she worked for the Ulster Bank in Belfast, where she was the subject of speculation about her religious background.			
30:00–39:59	While it was 'very subtle', she says that she was treated differently when work colleagues identified her as Catholic. Mentions that her parents both worked in the tax office, which is how they met in Enniskillen. Recalls the day in 1971 when she accidentally breached an unmanned checkpoint in Belfast and suddenly there was 'a massive explosion'. Although shaken by it, she returned to work straight afterwards. Remembers Black Friday in July 1972, when 'twenty bombs went off in about an hour and a half'. Her manager took his staff into the bank's safe for a while, then sent them all home, but 'you didn't know what you were going out into'. She went to get the bus home, but 'there was no bus station'.			
40:00–49:59	Explains that she and friends would sometimes drive to Dublin for the weekend to have 'a normal time'. Recalls musicians there singing humorous songs about the Troubles, providing 'a bit of light relief'. Says that her parents weren't very political, though they were 'quite liberal', and she describes herself in similar terms. David's Presbyterian parents were 'very unionist', however, and he			

	<p>himself was inducted into Orange culture as a child, but later developed a liberal outlook and supported Irish reunification. Recalls how she and he first met at their shared school bus stop in Carryduff, but didn't begin dating until after they had left school.</p>
50:00–59:59	<p>David moved to Welwyn Garden City after school while she stayed in Belfast, but eventually she 'just had enough'. She took some A-levels and went to Hatfield Polytechnic, then married David in 1977. They moved back to NI in 1980 and stayed until 1984, during which time their two sons were born. Lived in the Belfast suburb of Glengormley, where there was 'no ill-feeling' from neighbours, although in other areas couples in 'mixed' marriages were sectarian targets, so they didn't want their sons 'to grow up in this place'. Also, David was made redundant in 1982 and ended up doing contract work in England, so Anne moved over and they bought a house in Cambridgeshire. Say it 'felt safe' and they were 'relieved to be there'. Discusses the tensions their getting married in a Catholic church caused among David's parents and relations.</p>
01:00:00–01:09:59	<p>Recalls how, in her teens, her mother did her 'utmost' to dissuade her from seeing David and said that Anne 'shouldn't even been considering going out with someone who wasn't Catholic'. On moving to England in 1975, she 'couldn't quite get over how wonderful it was to be' there, 'away from it all', although she did get homesick. Explains that her parents moved to Enniskillen at this time because Carryduff had become a hotbed of loyalist activity following the 1973 Sunningdale Agreement and Ulster Workers' Council strike in May 1974. Recalls her own experiences during this 'dreadful' period, which were instrumental in Anne deciding 'once and for all I'm out, I'm getting out of here'.</p>
01:10:00–01:19:59	<p>Describes her pleasant life in Welwyn Garden City. Mentions occasional instances of subtle Irish stereotyping, but no overt hostility following IRA attacks in England. The discussion returns to her experiences in Glengormley with two young children, and the factors that caused them to return to England. Reveals that she was 'a teacher for years', but is now retired. Says she calls herself Irish, has an Irish passport and 'would never call myself English or British'. Admits that growing up in Holywood, she felt herself to be 'separate from the Republic', whereas when she holidayed with her mother's relations in Enniskillen the area seemed 'more connected with the Republic'. Mentions excursions to Donegal beaches as a child, and stories of her parents and others crossing the border to buy cheaper butter and tobacco in the ROI and smuggle them into NI.</p>
01:20:00–01:29:59	<p>Describes the view that people in the ROI are 'proper Irish' and people in NI 'neither Irish nor British'. Recalls an occasion in Welwyn when her Irishness was dismissed, which she found 'so hurtful'. Remembers a paradisaal visit to her aunt in the Sussex village of Kingston in 1969, and her 'deep hankering' to live in a similar place. Her third child, a daughter, was born in Cambridgeshire in 1987. She thinks her children would 'very much' regard themselves as Irish and says all three carry Irish passports. Claims that 'all sorts of life experiences can change your sense of identity and belonging', citing Brexit as an example, in that it strengthened her sense of being 'Irish and European'. Says she greatly welcomed the NI peace process, despite disliking Ian Paisley and Martin McGuinness.</p>
01:30:00–01:39:59	<p>Says that she has lived in England for over forty years and is 'very immersed in life over here', yet still feels Irish and would move back to NI but for her family ties in England. Explains that she and David eventually divorced and that her father moved over from Enniskillen to live with her. Six years ago she married Alan, with whom she lives in the Bedfordshire village of Langford. Discusses what her three children are doing and where they currently live. Mentions that she still</p>

	has a cousin living in Belfast and recalls recently taking Alan to visit some of the pubs and venues in the city that she frequented in her early life there.
01:40:00–01:51:50	Describes exploring contemporary Belfast and taking pleasure in the really 'nice atmosphere' in the city. Reflects on having lived in NI during different phases of the Troubles and the anxieties that eventually prompted her family's permanent move to England. Explains that her father moved first to Liverpool to stay with her brother, but never settled there because, she thinks, 'he always felt that he should live with me because I was his daughter'. He duly spent eight years with her, up until his death in 2016, although Anne thinks he regretted leaving NI, as he was 'very much a lover of Ireland and Ulster'. The interview ends with Anne and Fearghus comparing their experiences of living outside NI and the challenges of maintaining family ties there as parents and other relations grow older.