INTERVIEW L20: PETER KEARNEY

Interviewer: Dr Fearghus Roulston
Interviewee: Peter Kearney [pseudonym]
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Location: Virtual
Transcriber: Naomi Wells

Textual Note: Annotations and observations appear in square brackets (e.g. [pauses], [laughs]). Partial, interrupted or unfinished utterances are denoted by a dash. False starts, filler words and non-lexical utterances (e.g. 'um', 'hmm') are not generally transcribed. Time codes appear at ten-minute intervals in square brackets in bold type.

FR: And in the light of that then, I know that you've sent me over that consent form, but if you could just say quickly–

PK: Oh yes.

FR: That you consent to being a part–

PK: I've filled that in.

FR: You have, yeah, so if you could just sort of verbally say that you consent to being recorded.

PK: Yeah, I'm very happy to be recorded, yes.

FR: Thank you very much Peter, and thanks for, thanks for offering to take part. So just to start off could you say your name and today's date?

PK: My name is Peter Kearney, the date today is twelfth of January 2021.

FR: Thank you very much. Okay, so it's kind of a, it's kind of a life history interview, so we're going to, the questions are going to move chronologically I suppose through questions about your, about your life. Obviously we might end up going sort of back and forth as, as we inevitably do with questions like that–

PK: Of course, yeah, yeah.

FR: But at least in terms of the kind of start of it we'll start with the kind of early part of your life, so if you could just say maybe where and when you were born.

PK: So I was born in Belfast, 1955, in a small street in the Market area, one of six children and until the age of five I lived in, with my grandfather and various aunts along with my mum and dad and various siblings, and then we moved to Lisburn Road, which was what

was called in those days a mixed area of Belfast, so Protestants and Catholics both living in the same streets.

FR: And that wouldn't have been the case in the Markets, was your impression?

PK: No, no, Markets was very, yeah, very definitely a Catholic area.

FR: Yeah, and it sounds like at least in that initial period quite a kind of a, a busy house or a full house, so–

PK: Indeed, yes, very busy household, lots of people coming and going, friends, relatives, all sorts, the place was never quiet [laughs].

FR: [laughs] But, but pleasantly so, it sounds like, like a nice home.

PK: Oh no, no, no, absolutely, I mean, I've very fond memories of, we called it fort-, it was forty-two, Little May Street and forever after was known as forty-two, and I carried on going back there to see my grandfather while he was alive, and my aunt indeed while she was alive.

FR: And they continued, they continued to live in the Markets after you'd moved out to the Lisburn Road.

PK: How do I feel about, well, as I say, there's a fairly strong bond to that area, it's like, I carried on visiting, my aunt died about ten, twelve years ago, so, you know, we were forever familiar with it and very familiar with the church, St Malachy's was, yeah, a landmark in many ways and, yeah, it was, I had, I suppose I had a couple of friends there, not many, but one of them proved to be very useful when I was stopped at a roadblock and he managed to vouch for me, so I was safe from a beating.

FR: Sometimes it's good to, to know the right name to say I guess in these–

PK: Indeed, indeed, yeah.

FR: So, so you moved to the Lisburn Road when you were five and you said it was a mixed area, would, would you have been conscious of that at the time? We're talking, you were five or six, maybe.

PK: Oh yes, yes, I think you were, well, you were introduced for it very quickly. The first Twelfth of July, you know, all the bunting and the flags out, except for the Catholic households, you could see, you know, who, so, you were conscious of the fact that you went to a different school from your neighbours, so the people you played with, you know, didn't go to school with you, so you were conscious of the fact they were Protestant and you were going, and because you were Catholic you were going to a different school.

FR: Different school and different church I suppose as well, so there's–

PK: Yeah, different, yeah, on Sunday, you know, you went up to, to mass at St Bridget's and everybody else, those who did go to church went elsewhere, a vari-, a variety of Protestant churches available for, catered for every taste.

FR: [laughs] That's one way of putting it [laughs], and so what did your, what did your parents do?

PK: Well, my mother was a waitress and my father worked in an office, and his job was basically to, he worked for the Ulster Licensed Printers Association and basically he ran their magazine, and now when, when, when I was born he was a bus conductor in Belfast, but he got this job, which suited him a lot better.

FR: So, so kind of like a journalist, it's interesting that you, you've then moved into journalism.

PK: Indeed, yes, absolutely, I even en-, yeah, ended up editing a trade newspaper [laughs].

FR: [laughs] Well, there you go, that's interesting, and would your family have been religious? You mentioned going to mass.

PK: Oh yeah, we, we were very observant Catholics, we all went to mass on Sunday, mother and father, you know, made sure we did, and there was no question about there being any other option and that continued, I think, certainly while I was living at home, although they would not be described as particularly pious. We, we went to church alright, but there wasn't much else in the way of religious fervour I would say, there was, sometimes we said the rosary at home, but not, I couldn't say that it was, you know, a constant.

FR: No, I mean, I think that's, that's really interesting and important because, you know, church observa-, church observance and people going to church in Northern Ireland is very high, but it doesn't necessarily mean that everyone's massively pious, it's just a kind of a, like, a thing that everyone does.

PK: Yeah, I mean, I could tell that there, in the contrast between, say, my aunt, who was a sort of regular attender at St Malachy's during the week and was involved in half a dozen different church-based organisations, you know, and neither my mother nor father were at all interested in that.

FR: Okay, yeah, that, that's a difference I guess, the kind of organisational culture stuff as well, and would your family, would your parents have been political at all?

PK: Not particularly. My father and I had, this is obviously when I was older now, debates about politics, and he was a sort of Labour man, a Labour supporter, but apart from that, no, there was no strong, it certainly wasn't a, a republican household at all, no, there was no sort of allegiance to republicanism and I suppose that you could say the nationalism was pretty light too, and my mother really wasn't at all interested in politics and said so frequently.

FR: [laughs] And were they both from Belfast themselves, they were both–?

PK: Sorry?

FR: Were they both also from Belfast, had they grown up in Belfast then?

PK: Yeah, they were, they were both from Belfast, yeah, yeah.

FR: And so you moved to the Lisburn Road in the, in the sixties and I suppose you must have started going to school as well.

PK: Yeah, yeah.

FR: So what are your memories of, of school in that period?

PK: So first, primary school was St Malachy's Christian Brothers, which was in Oxford Street in those days, tiny little building, well, God knows how they managed to get it all squeezed in, forty in a class and [laughs], but yeah, but somehow they managed to fit in and we were taught by, there were, there were at that stage, about half the teaching staff were brothers, Christian brothers, including the head and, yeah, fond memories of, I mean, it was a, it was a fairly rigid regime and people were punished with a leather strap for all sorts of things and they were not, they were certainly handy with the, the leather when, to impo-, **[00:10:00]** as a way of imposing discipline, but it wasn't only that, you know, the, the teachers were, to, you know, mainly they were all men, apart from one woman who took the reception, what would now be called the reception class, and they, you know, they were good teachers and I had a lot of time for them.

FR: No, that's, that's interesting, so by and large kind of fond memories of that period of school, even though it could be quite strict and the sort of discipline could sometimes be a wee bit–

PK: Yeah, yeah, I think that it helped, you know, I was kind of a sort of golden boy, so I was, you know, I was good at school, I was top of the class, so that, yeah, I, I would say that maybe some of my classmates have a different view of, you know, of primary school because, you know, I was, I was very, you know, I was a bit of a swot and I guess that meant the teachers were keener on me than they might be on others.

FR: Okay, no, sure, I mean, it, it helps if you're kind of doing well I guess to enjoy it, and that's, that's primary school, so then did, did you do a transfer test or is that–?

PK: Then, yeah, well, it was eleven-plus in those days.

FR: Eleven-plus as they called it, yeah, yeah.

PK: Yeah, which was chris-, at that time was also the, the main exam in England as well, they had the good sense to abolish it in England, but we continued with it for far longer than it deserved, but yeah, so that was, yeah, what they called a verbal reasoning test, you know,

and they, they sorted you out into grammar school and secondary modern, and I passed and went to St Mary's Christian Brothers, you know, there was lack, total lack of imagination, we just carried on with the Christian Brothers, up on the Glen Road, so yeah, that was, that was a bit of a journey, involved two buses, so we had to get a bus from Lisburn Road into town and then one out again up, up the Falls and up to the Glen Road.

FR: Okay, and what sort of date are we talking now?

PK: Sorry?

FR: What, what sort of date are we talking now, when you're going to–?

PK: So that was, that would have been 1966 to '73.

FR: Okay, cos that's what I'm thinking, some of the bus journeys, just from other people that I've spoken to, about exactly this actually, about getting buses to school, could sometimes be a wee bit kind of fraught with risk or danger or anxiety.

PK: Indeed, as, yeah, as, as the Troubles went on it became a bit random as to whether you would manage to get a bus or not. Sometimes people would give you lifts, but often you would find yourself having to make your own way up to St Mary's. In the end it was walking sometimes, you could walk across a path to Musgrave Hospital, up Kennedy Way and up that way, you know, which was avoiding going into the Falls Road itself where, you know, often there was something going on.

FR: But you could kind of circumvent it if you went around that way.

PK: Yeah, yeah, if you, yeah, it was a bloody long walk, I can tell you [laughs].

FR: [laughs] I can imagine and, so would your parents have, were they pleased that you'd gone to the grammar school, was that something that they were interested in or–?

PK: Oh yeah, yeah, they were very keen on us doing well, educationally, and were, yeah, were very pleased to see that I passed, yeah, I got a bike for a pass in the eleven-plus, a second-hand one, but [laughs] it was, it was a present and it was a reward for my doing well at school, yeah, so yeah, they were pleased about that. Funnily enough though, the first couple of years, St Mary's, the Christian Brothers were building a new school and it wasn't completely ready, the Glen Road operation, so the first year I spent in a, a makeshift primary school that had been converted in the Shaw Road, just past the, the, that leisure centre there, and then next two years St Mary's in Barrack Street which was the original grammar school, so yeah, we, we were quite a small crew actually, for those first three years, which was good in many ways.

FR: Aye, well, I was going to say, so what were your impressions of, of moving up from, sometimes it can be strange if you've been doing really well in primary school, or if you think that you're kind of the top of the class in primary school sometimes it can be quite

strange to go to grammar school and then suddenly you're maybe not, or other people are good as well, or you feel a bit, a bit at sea [laughs].

PK: Yes, yeah, no, no, in a way it was good cos, you know, there were a small, it was a small, it was still a small school those first three years, yeah, and then, you know, it wasn't till after you'd done your, what they call the junior certificate in those days that you went up to the, the main school with all its new facilities.

FR: And so I'm just trying to get the dates right, so what age would you have been then in sort of '67, '68, '69?

PK: So I was, yeah, I would've been twelve, thir-, yeah.

FR: Okay.

PK: Twelve, thirteen as, yeah, the Troubles kicked off, '68, in October '68 I would have been thirteen.

FR: Okay, and to what extent would you have been conscious of what was going on?

PK: Very conscious. I think by that time I'd become interested in politics and I suppose my nationalism was kind of inculcated by the Christian Brothers, who paid a lot of attention to hist-, Irish history, so we got quite a lot of the nationalist take on Ireland's relationships with Britain and I was, yeah, I was, I loved history and I was very keen, very keen on doing Irish history, so I ended up doing it, you know, for the *feis*, you know, you know, it's little competitions that schools ran, you know, on, to test you on Irish history and I think I got a *fáinne* out of it, though God knows where it's gone, I don't know what happened to it, yeah, so I was very keen on Irish history and as a result of that very keen on politics, but I have to say, partly it may be my father's influence, I was also interested in trade unionism and socialist politics, of, but of the sort of social democratic variety, so I was Labour supporter and I had, Northern Ireland Labour Party attracted me, they seemed to know what they were about, but, you know, I was, I suppose I was keen on, you know, I'd sort of been a left, a left, being left, on the left meant more to me than being a nationalist, I would say.

FR: Okay, that's really interesting, I think that's kind of a, a position that in some ways gets left behind by events or something, I think there's, it's a, it becomes harder and harder to adopt that position after sort of '68, '69, '70.

PK: Yeah, I think there was a big, quite a big debate going on, which I wasn't really particularly part of, but I'll tell you one thing and I don't know whether this is to go in the confidential bit, but a friend at school was, you know, a left-wing republican and he and I had fierce arguments about socialism and nationalism and republicanism and, but, I had a lot of respect for him and he was a member of PD, People's Democracy, at the time, and he encouraged me to go along to their demonstrations in Belfast outside the City Hall, so I did go on a few occasions and took **[00:20:00]** part in sit-downs, much to my mother's horror and, you know, I was, I was a regular reader of the People's Democracy newspaper *Free Citizen*, yeah, sought it out in various shops, so, you know, I, I don't know what the

trajectory might have been, but Sean's trajectory led him into the Provisionals and, you know, he was killed a few years after I left Belfast.

FR: I'm sorry, I'm sorry to hear that. In terms of the question of confidentiality, if you would like to review the transcript after we transcribe it and if there's anything that you would prefer not to have in it, we can, we can do that if, if you would like.

PK: Sure, sure, yeah.

FR: But yeah, so that's interesting, a kind of, on the one hand this kind of Labour, social democratic thing and then also the kind of, some involvement in, in People's Democracy and that, and that kind of politics, I always, I always–

PK: Yeah, yeah, it was per-, it was peripheral, like many of the things I did, so I then became a supporter of the Northern Ireland Labour Party and I did go canvassing in the 1970 election, general election for the candidates in south Belfast.

FR: What, what would you say was the kind of, the pitch, if you like, of the Northern Ireland Labour Party in that 1970 election like, what were they kind of, what was their read of the conflict, what was their read of the situation?

PK: I think their, their, the pitch at the time was that the, you know, the, the civil rights, this, you know, they were four square behind the civil rights campaign and, you know, the, the political reforms that were required should be pushed forward and I think they, that was very much their, their push and their pitch. Now obviously it's 1970, you know, things were beginning to change mightily in parts of Belfast and the Provisionals were now, were becoming a force, but I, I think, you know, if we kind of look back at that time, you know, they weren't, you know, they were a sort of a community-based organisation, you would not have had any dealings with them in south Belfast where we lived, you know, the sort of republican movement as such was not widespread, it was confined I think into parts of Belfast and parts of Derry, and obviously, obviously parts of, other parts of Northern Ireland, which of course I knew nothing about cos we never went anywhere, but like many Belfast people, my mother and father believed that, you know, a trip to Bangor was, you know, the height of sophistication and going any further than that was, you know–

FR: That's interesting actually, so no, no–

PK: Pointless [laughs].

FR: [laughs] So no trips to the countryside or anything like that when you were wee?

PK: No, no, no, I mean, no, we didn't, my mother was very antipathetic to the countryside, she hated it, she'd been evacuated there during the war, spent, I don't know, eighteen months in some God-awful farm, this is her description, you know, where country people she said were not, not to be trusted, so she had no use for the countryside at all.

FR: As, as someone who's from the countryside in Northern Ireland I think quite a lot of Belfast people still feel the same way [laughs].

PK: Still, do they [laughs].

FR: [laughs] In my, in my experience [laughs].

PK: Yeah, yeah, I'm sure they do, yeah, but people, yeah, I mean, obviously my siblings and so on have travelled a lot more than I have in Northern Ireland now, you know, but, and, but I don't think they experience the same prejudices, but certainly, yeah, no we, we, we, so therefore if you told me at the time in Belfast, you know, about Crossmaglen and Armagh and places, these were places, these were just places, I, I couldn't tell you, you know, where they were, you know.

FR: No, I think that's really interesting cos sometimes when you sort of read the history of that period you can obviously see all of it and you imagine that people at the time could see all of it, but of course your, your possible view of what's going on is sometimes pretty kind of confined like, geographically confined.

PK: Oh absolutely, yeah, I think there's every, you know, I mean, I would say that my own experience of the Troubles was, is a very personal one, very unique to me, obviously I was politically aware, but I lived in Lisburn Road, which was a peaceful, quiet, mixed area where there wasn't any real problems, and we had a policeman, this is an RUC sergeant who lived about three doors away from us, and came along one day to say, offer his support, to say, you know, any sign of trouble, any threats or anything, get on to me, and that was, my mother was very appreciative of that.

FR: So that's, that's interesting, so, you, as, you described where you were living as a mixed area, but would you have, would you say mixed, but majority Protestant?

PK: Yeah, oh yeah, definitely, sorry, yeah, it would definitely be majority Protestant, yeah, and, yeah, it was, if you went further, I mean, it was very close to the Malone Road, which was probably more mixed in many a ways, you know, wealthy Catholics and wealthy Protestants, you know, living side by side in very large houses with gardens, so yeah, I think that, yeah, it was, as I said, you know, on the Twelfth of July, you know, it was, you knew what the area was like, but, as I say, people don't believe me when I say this, but my mother used to take us to go and watch the parade on the Twelfth.

FR: Yeah?

PK: Yeah, so, cos it was at the top of the street and they walked up the Lisburn Road and, you know, we could actually wave at neighbours that we knew who were marching in their sort of regalia and bowler hats [laughs].

FR: [laughs] That's interesting, and so no, no kind of sense of hostility or, or kind of, sectarianism I suppose is the word, you didn't–?

PK: I think, I think at that time, so this is obviously when we were younger, it was a, a carnival, you know, it was a parade, it was a, you know, a sort of fun day out, and the music, you know, and that's, I still, I still have a fondness for marching bands, of all kinds now, and I think that's where it came from and, you know, it was a big occasion.

FR: Yeah, no, I think I have heard people, other people have said to me that certainly in the sixties the kind of hostility that can sometimes exist around the, the Twelfth in Belfast and other places now didn't really exist, it was more like, as you say, like a kind of a carnival thing. No, that's, that's interesting, and so then moving up into the sort of late sixties and the seventies, from what you're saying, your, that kind of everyday life in south Belfast, you weren't that affected by the, by the conflict.

PK: No, no, no, you wouldn't have been and, and life carried on much as it did before. Now I think my brother would probably say more about this than I would have done because he was a much more sociable character than me, so therefore he, you know, played football with Protestant friends and, you know, went out, he was a bit older than me, so, you know, he would go out to youth clubs and the like with Protestant friends and says that there was no tension about what was going on in the background, people avoided the subject rather than mentioned it and then, so I had one good friend I used to spend a lot of time with who, a neighbour from across the road from a Protestant background and again, we never, we never really talked about, we talked about football, we talked about sport, we talked about, **[00:30:00]** you know, Marvel comics, you know, we talked about anything, but we didn't talk about what was happening in the city.

FR: No, I mean, it's, it's amazing how easily you can find, you can avoid whole, whole areas, whole reams of conversation and just focus on other things and, yeah.

PK: Yeah, and now it, it may well have been that we did that deliberately because we didn't want to fall out, rather than because we weren't interested, cos as I, I was interested.

FR: But I suppose there's, you can be interested, but you know when you don't, it's not the time to talk about it [laughs] I suppose.

PK: Yeah, exactly, exactly, so, so, but in school obviously that was a different matter, so with people like Sean or other classmates, yes, it was topic of discussion, you know, like, what was happening, what was going on, who was responsible. I remember a teacher asking the class how many people here have thrown stones at British soldiers, so about two thirds of the class put their hands up, it mightn't have been that many, it might have been less than that, but, yeah, but it was the majority, yeah, definitely.

FR: No, that, I mean, that's, that probably, that probably sounds about right, and did you have any interactions with, with soldiers then when there were kind of soldiers on the streets, coming into–?

PK: As I say, no, no, we wouldn't have seen them in south Belfast and, yeah, we, we saw them, you know, occasionally when, you know, in town, you know, running about, particularly when, you know, when we were going on to school, to and from school, you

would see them, but, and they never came into school [indecipherable], the police didn't come in either, you know, I noticed that, that was a thing that stopped happening in Catholic schools. You used to have regular police, you know, come in to talk about, you know, road safety and stuff like that and, and then about, I think about drugs, there was, there was one discussion about, and, but that was, that all stopped as soon as the Troubles started, so we wouldn't, we'd not see them, we'd not see them and we'd not see them on school grounds either.

FR: That's interesting, I've never, I've never heard that before, but I suppose it, it makes, it makes sense now that you, now that you say it, and so what about, you, you mentioned going to those kind of People Democracy sit-ins, what was the, what was the kind of atmosphere like at those, or what was the kind of feeling or the conversation or the mood?

PK: Well, I mean, I, I, again, I always enjoyed it, it was exciting, it was exciting, and there were speeches from Michael Farrell and people like that who got the crowd really wound up and, and you felt as if, you know, there was a, change was happening and there was a chance of something good coming out of it, but you were also aware of the, you know, the weight of the forces against you really, of the, the government and the unionist party of course was still in its pomp then, and Sean used to point out to me, see that guy over there, now he's a special branch officer [laughs], he's not actually one of us, you know, so, so you were conscious of being a, and then, and then when we sat down one time, you know, we were all hustled off by the police, you know, who, again, you know, this is only one incident and it doesn't say a lot, you know, we were shouting SS RUC, but in fact, the two policemen who lifted me off the ground and put me on the pavement were not exactly gentle, but they certainly were not violent, so yeah, that, that was, as I say, only a brief glancing view of what was happening, you know, I would not say that was typical of people's experience.

FR: No, but it's, no, it's really interesting and cer-, like, to me, as a slightly younger Northern Irish person, that kind of early People's Democracy moment always seems like a really kind of optimistic one.

PK: It was indeed, it was indeed, yeah, and obviously we knew when it happened at Burntollet and the Paisleyites and the attacks, you know, but it had kind of made us even, you know, firmer in our conviction that, you know, a sort of left-wing change was what was required, but even then, you know, I was thinking, sort of reformist that I was, and am, that, you know, you change things through elections, you know, and you win elections and, you know, get into government and then that's what you do, you change things, and I kind of was conscious that People's Democracy was very much a student phenomenon, you know, and wasn't, you know, didn't have much strength in depth, so people like me and Sean and a few others, you know, were, you know, all of that age group, you know, sixteen, seventeen, and, you know, we were caught up in the, the excitement of it, but, yeah, it felt somehow it was a bit sort of student unionish.

FR: I, I understand, I understand what you mean, and certainly I can see how the kind of Irish Labour Party has got a kind of a, a grounding in electoral politics in a way that People's Democracy didn't.

PK: Yeah, yeah, so, so when I was in the Northern Ireland Labour Party doing the canvassing, I, I met trade unionists for the first time, you know, people who were, you know, from both traditions, who were, you know, trying, organising, you know, in, on the union side, and obviously very deeply affected by the, the sectarian hate that was now growing, and they were, they were experiencing it at first hand in factories and so on, people were now getting up to things that they thought had gone with, the, in the twenties, thirties, you know, when the shipyard was, you know, attacking Catholics.

FR: The expulsions and the, yeah.

PK: Yeah, yeah, and, and, you know, they told me things like, you know, they thought those days had gone and now they were, they were terrified that they were coming back.

FR: And the trade union movement as I understand it was, kind of continued to be a cross-sectarian or a cross-religious movement all the way through.

PK: Yeah, yeah, and that, that appealed to me, and I think obviously, this is now in hindsight, I think obviously one of the reasons that it appealed to me, because I was living in a, you know, a mixed community, a, well, you know, a Protestant community and had good friends there and, and that, that was my, my own [indecipherable] was that people, you know, could get on with each other, so, so that, that I think made it an attractive proposition.

FR: Yeah, no, that, that makes sense and it, it's kind of interesting that with the Christian Brothers on the one hand you're getting this grounding in historical Irish nationalism, but then there's the kind of, your sense of living in a mixed community kind of pulls you in another direction, so there's kind of two things, two things going on.

PK: Yeah, yeah.

FR: So what about then leaving school?

PK: Yeah, well, so I moved schools and went from the Christian Brothers to St Malachy's College to do my A-levels. Now that, partly it was this business of not being able to get to school, and in fact, on one occasion I was half an hour late for an exam, for, for, you know, for O-level exam, and I begin to think that, you know, this is getting a bit crazy and then I had an altercation I suppose with the headteacher because I wanted to do art A-levels, as an A-level, and he thought that was a waste of time and wasn't going to approve it, and so I, I believe I might have called him a name.

FR: [laughs] Okay.

PK: To which he thought, you know, he took exception, so anyway, I thought that, you know, **[00:40:00]** I could, if I could swap to St Malachy's College then I could, and I think also there was, there was a part of me that knew that, you know, there were very few people from my part of the world who were at St Mary's, sorry, yeah, at St Mary's, you know, it was, so it was hard to sort of, at that stage, you know, like, make the kind of friends that you wanted to, you know, because, you know, nobody lived near you, so I did know that there

were a couple of guys nearby who lived in, who worked at, they went to St Malachy's, so all those reasons made me think I could spend the last two years doing my A-levels and I could do a art A-level at St Malachy's, so I switched.

FR: Right, that, that all makes sense, and what were your other, what were your other A-levels?

PK: Oh the, so I did, I did economics and politics, history and English, so I did four.

FR: Four, yeah.

PK: English literature, yeah.

FR: And what was that like then, moving to, moving to the new school for the last two years?

PK: Well, it was a bit odd at first, but actually it was great and, you know, I made very good friends, some of whom are still my friends. At St Malachy's I kind of threw myself into it and, you know, met a lot of people with whom I had more in common, so yeah, it was, it was very good and I, I enjoyed it. It was a strange couple of years though in many ways because, so this is '71 now and Bloody Sunday happened and I remember the teacher, you know, we, well, there were a number of, to go back a bit, there were a number of school strikes, cos if you remember at that time there were various acts of civil disobedience, the SDLP in particularly was encouraging rent strikes and various other acts of civil disobedience against the English government and, and so our school was very caught up in this too and we went on strike a couple of times at St Malachy's, you know, walked out in the middle of classes to show, to show that we weren't just staying in bed [laughs] and not going to school, we would go to school and then come, walk out, and obviously Bloody Sunday, you know, that, you know, there was a walk-out then, and I remember actually the teacher, or the politics teacher saying, cos there was a module in the, the A-level called British constitution and he said I'm not going to talk to you about the British constitution today after what's happened, and, you know, we all clapped because we knew where he was coming from, and, so yeah, it was, and then I was elected, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland at the time, Willie Whitelaw, wanted to meet, wanted to meet sixth formers, you know, from both traditions, cross-community, and so I was among the four of us elected from St Malachy's to go, and interestingly, they allowed us to be elected rather than just choosing four people who, you know, they would know would keep their nose clean [laughs], and we went to Stormont, or was it Hillsborough Castle, I think it might've been Hillsborough, I think it might've been Hillsborough and were entertained by Mr Whitelaw and William van Straubenzee, who was the junior minister for Northern Ireland, you know, both ri-, you know, landed gentry and from, you know, that background and all the behaviour associated with it, you know, and they were insisting on plying us with whiskey, even though we were not eighteen yet, and, you know, but it, it all ended, you know, in tears [laughs] when one of our number, Eamonn, you know, who's now a lecturer at Queen's University, you know, decided that he had had enough, you know, and he didn't want any fucking whiskey, he wanted an answer to why his father's shop had been burned down while the B-Specials, you know, looked on, and that, you know, so, exit two chastened ministers.

FR: [laughs] Wow, that must have been a very strange experience.

PK: It was, but it was a sort of interesting insight into how they try and conduct politics at these levels, you know, sort of condescension and patronising–

FR: Yeah, no, that–

PK: Which didn't go down well, yeah, so yeah, so kind of the upshot of a lot of this was I was becoming increasingly disillusioned with Northern Ireland, it was, it seemed like it was in a, it was a dead end, that sectarianism was gaining the upper hand, and that came to a head when one of my school friends at St Malachy's was shot and his brother was killed as they were making their way to school. Their father, who was a eminent surgeon and obviously a high profile Catholic, had been targeted by the UDF and, you know, took the, when he was driving his car full of his sons to their schools [indecipherable] they opened fire.

FR: Awful.

PK: So yeah, I mean, there's not many people in Belfast at that time who don't have a story to tell of that nature, but it kind of, so the conversation then with friends was, you know, what's the point of staying here, it's, you know, going to hell in a handbasket, you know, I was disillusioned, Northern Ireland Labour Party was on the point of collapse at that time and I was becoming less interested. PD had kind of sort of also split between various factions, you know, it didn't seem, it didn't seem that, you know, there was much future, and then there was just the pull of saying actually I want to broaden my horizons a bit, I want to get out and go somewhere else and talk to different people who don't care whether you're Protestant or Catholic or, you know, have a different outlook. So there was the attraction of, of, you know, and I've talked to a lot of people who're my era who've gone, who left Belfast, and say that, you know, one of the things that, you know, it's, it's easier to forget that in many ways Belfast could have been Leeds or, you know, Newcastle and people thinking, do you know, I'd like to see a bit of life outside this city, and in many ways it's, yeah, it's no different, you know, there's a, there's a, there's definitely a pull of, you know, let's go somewhere different, let's get away from home and live your own life, live independently, and those, those things are just as much a factor in eighteen-year-olds as, in Belfast as they are anywhere else.

FR: No, I think that's a, that's a really good point and, as you say, it's not, you know, it's, it would be a mistake to sort of see the Troubles as providing the only or the primary motivation, there's also just all the usual motivations that people have for leaving home when they're eighteen.

PK: Yeah, yeah, so yeah, so all those factors made me think I will, I do want to go to university and I will apply for universities anywhere in England, Scotland, but not Queen's.

FR: And what did your, what did your parents make of this?

PK: They **[00:50:00]** were both pleased and concerned. I think they were worried, you know, after the sort of hanging about with the PD and so on they were a bit worried about, you know, where I'd end up, even though I was, you know, becoming more and more, you know, Labour and, but I was always having political arguments, so, with them, with my dad, so I think they were pleased I was going away, but with some concern about how I'd manage, you know, the same's true of every parent I think when their child leaves home.

FR: Yeah, no, that, that makes sense, and did you have a particular kind of location in mind, or was it just a list of universities or–?

PK: There was a list of places and I fancied the University of Warwick because it was on a campus in the countryside and that seemed like something very different, you know, I'd applied, I'd also applied to Liverpool and Leeds, but they felt like cities, you know, city universities [indecipherable], and of course I went to Warwick on the campus in the countryside and actually only spent one year there and I lived in cities the other two, so, so in fact it was, you know [laughs], I wasn't that keen on campus when I first, up close to it.

FR: [laughs] Yeah, it seems, it seems nice from far away, it's a very beautiful building, Warwick, but–

PK: Yeah, yeah, yeah, it felt a bit sort of isolated and, you know, you know, out of the way and a bit, you know, self-regarding.

FR: [laughs] Yeah, I know, I know what you mean I think, so, so you moved over to Warwick for that first year.

PK: Yeah, so I went to Warwick, got accepted there and then so I lived in Coventry first year, and I joined the local Labour Party because it, partly it seemed a way of meeting people who weren't students, of course, half the membership were students, but, you know, but there were lots of other people there as well and again, you know, I sort of got very involved in trade union matters and trade union disputes, of which there were many, cos Coventry was a car manufacturing city and there were a lot of strikes and, you know, we, you know, we ended up supporting them and, you know, going on demonstrations and outside factory gates and all that kind of stuff, yeah.

FR: Yeah, yeah.

PK: But I'll tell you the only real contact I had with the countryside as it turned out was I joined the, well, I didn't, one day, the anti-hunt saboteurs.

FR: [laughs] Okay, yeah.

PK: [laughs] That was because there, well, there was a girl I was interested, she was very keen on it and I thought oh well, that would be something, something different, yeah, so, but that, that didn't, that fizzled out [laughs].

FR: [laughs] I, I know a few people who do the, do the hunt sabs stuff in Brighton and it seems like quite a stressful thing.

PK: Oh really.

FR: Yeah, to have to kind of, I don't know, to try and picket the, the fox hunters and stuff, I wouldn't fancy it myself, but–

PK: Well, yeah, we, we, you know, we never actually got to, saw, you know, the fox or the fox hunters as it turned out, but, you know, it was great, it was a good day out.

FR: [laughs] You get to see the, the countryside a little bit, at least.

PK: Yeah, we did, you know, winter, you know, beautiful Warwickshire countryside, yeah, early, at six o'clock in the morning, yeah.

FR: And what, what did you make of kind of England in general then, what were your impressions when you moved over?

PK: Sorry?

FR: What were your impressions of England, kind of in general when you moved over?

PK: Well, England, I, I kind of got, I suppose and this is, this is, you know, the fundamental thing about what I grew to like about England was I, I, we got to know people in the Labour movement and, and I got to respect their, their view of England, you know, how it could be better, you know, they weren't, you know, tub-thumping, British Empire, you know, you know, reactionaries, they were people who wanted change and they were trade unionists, as I say, you know, they were on the left, and they, they had a respectable historical tradition of, you know, fighting for change and fighting for reform, so I grew to respect people, it was, you know, a couple of elderly sort of municipal socialists who had a big effect on me in terms of, you know, saying what, what, what you needed to do to improve the lives of working people and how, you know, you could make national change, but also local change, you know, do things locally and make a difference to people and so I was, became very, very aware of that, which was a tradition which had not really had much, much publicity, so and, you know, I got to know about the, the story of the Levellers and the Peasant Revolt and all these things which I had no understanding of before, and, you know, the sort of Chartist movement, you know, and its links actually, you know, with Irish nationalism, you know, is interesting, but these are all things that kind of had been a mystery to me and I learnt a lot about that, so I did a module on labour history, yeah, in the UK and the US, you know, and really enjoyed it. So the people I knew from that tradition were the ones I, you know, were my friends and, you know, as well as the students and some of, you know, the students at the university. I, I joined the Labour Party, as I say, with a bit of reluctance in, in the political sense, so, so although they, you know, I wanted to meet people, you know, kind of, initially I was very sceptical of Harold Wilson and, you know, that lot who were in charge at the time and sort of, but I was persuaded to join by people that I met, and there was at that time a fight in the Labour Party's youth wing,

student wing, between the supporters of Troops Out movement and sort of the kind of more constitutional wing of the party that clearly I guess supported the SDLP, and I think they wanted to, you know, this was, this was at the university rather than the city, they wanted to enlist me as a, somebody who actually had experience of Northern Ireland, you know, as opposed to what I'd call the sort of, you know, the middle-class Trots who were, you know, banging on about Troops Out and had no und-, no knowledge or understanding of anything, you know, just read a bit about it, so, so yeah, so I was involved in the National Organisation of Labour Students, policy-making on Ireland, but I, to tell you the truth I didn't like it, all that berating each other at conferences [laughs], it struck me as being a bit of a waste of time.

FR: It's all a little bit kind of theatrical or whatever.

PK: Yeah, exactly, yeah, so I quickly, you know, I, I, but I became slightly notorious then in some circles, cos obviously, like in every student union, Warwick student union had its various far left organisations, some of whom supported Troops Out movement, some of whom supported something else, you know, because there wasn't quite the right line, and there would be frequent debates at the students' union, you know, **[01:00:00]** support this resolution, you know, and, you know, support that, and it came down to one about the, supporting the armed struggle and I could not at that time, you know, I couldn't support that, so I made a speech from the rostrum and then the, one guy who was a republican, Official, Stickies, gave me a, thumped me in full view of about three hundred people, which I didn't think was very good for his cause, because, you know, he called me a disgrace to nationalism, that sort of thing, but, so, you know, he was quickly dragged, dragged away before anything [indecipherable].

FR: And was, was this another Northern Irish person then?

PK: No, this, this was the guy from the Republic.

FR: Right, okay.

PK: Irish.

FR: From the South, okay, that sounds, I don't know, that's, it's, it's interesting, it's interesting to think of passions kind of running that high, not, not in Northern Ireland, if you see what I mean, like, in England.

PK: Yeah, well, of course then passions began to run very high, obviously we're now talking about the Provos' bombing campaign in England–

FR: Of course, yeah.

PK: And Birmingham, the Birmingham bombs were, I'm trying to remember the date now, but certainly I was conscious of, you know, and it was the only time I experienced any, if you like, direct anti-Irish feeling.

FR: That's intere-, so I think it was 1974, the Birmingham bomb.

PK: Yeah, yeah, so I was still in Coventry at the time and I was going out with a girl from the city, and we were refused entry as soon as they heard me speak, two pubs and one restaurant, on different occasions.

FR: With, with an explanation, would they say because you're Irish or–

PK: Yes, straightforwardly they said well, one guy said look, it's not you mate, but, you know, if anybody hears you in here I don't want any trouble breaking out.

FR: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

PK: So, you know, if you'd go somewhere else I'd be grateful, yeah, so and, you know, other people I knew experienced similar and worse, you know, instances of people, you know, pulling knives on them and things in pubs because of their, they were from Northern Ireland, well, I mean, they didn't make the distinction really whether they were from Northern Ireland or not.

FR: No, or Irish, yeah, and how did, how did you feel about that, given that you are kind of, on one hand you're up on a rostrum saying that you don't support Troops Out, you don't support the armed struggle?

PK: Yeah, well, I felt pretty pissed off about it [laughs], yeah, but I, I knew there's also a sort of undercurrent and, and the, the thing, there were two things that struck me when I went to England about English people and their understanding of Ireland. The first was a sort of, there's a complete lack of knowledge about what the problem was, and I used to spend endless nights trying to, you know, give people a crack or some, Britain's history in Ireland and, you know, kind of no one had any idea. Even some of the more sophisticated people, you know, who prided themselves on educational attainment, or had, you know, were shocked and surprised and, you know, that it wasn't just Catholics and Protestants can't stand each other, you know, which is what, you know, they, they had been told and, so I'd, yeah, I'd, so it was a bit frustrating, and the other thing was the sort of slight condescension, so, do you know, it was often banter about people's accents, you know, and you could see, so they would laugh, you know, when Paisley came on, you know, shouting [indecipherable] and doing Paisley impressions, so, but, you know, there was an undercurrent of, these people speak funny, and the second, there was another incident which I, you know, I was really appalled by, I was sitting in the lounge of the students' union, or the students' union leisure area, nearly, it was, it must have been a holiday cos there were very few people around, but there were a few people watching, you know, in those days nobody had access to their own TVs in their rooms, so they would go to a communal one and watch the news, for example, and there were, and Garrett Fitzgerald was on, he was the taoiseach at the time and I don't know whether you'd know, but he, do you know, he's got a very quick way of talking, you know, and he was explaining something about, you know, his relationship with the British government, and that group of people started to laugh, you know, because he sounded funny and they were sort of doing the diddly dee, you know, kind of stuff, like he was Terry Wogan or something, you know, and that, I found that really unpleasant, and it

was spontaneous, you know, wasn't, you know, whipped up by somebody or other, so those were, so a couple of things that made me think, you know, underneath the skin of quite a few people is this superiority about Ireland.

FR: And would, would that also have been the case in the Labour movement or was that less so the case in the Labour movement, do you think?

PK: Well, I, less so I would've thought, you know, I didn't get that impression certainly from, I mean, I bet there were a few people like that, but I suppose I didn't move in those circles, you know, but yeah, there was a, the sort of, there was a sort of shaking of heads occasionally, you know, when people talked about Ireland.

FR: The, the kind of irrational Ireland thing, which is definitely a, a trope, and what about going back and forth, so would you have been going back to Northern Ireland, holidays, summers, things like that?

PK: Yeah, yeah, I would go, go holidays, well, yeah, the first, I think only for the first year, cos then I started to get jobs in Coventry and Leamington and places, you know, which were well paid and meant that I didn't have to go back, so yeah, I would, I would spend less time going back as the years progressed.

FR: Sure, I mean, it's kind of strange, strange to go back when you're, when you've been living away.

PK: Yeah, yeah, I think I very quickly became conscious of the fact that, you know, there wasn't very much for me because, as I was saying, quite a lot of my friends and classmates had also left Northern Ireland, so it wasn't like you could go back and instantly, you know, recreate the old, you know, social life. There were one or two people I did see frequently, there's a friend of mine who went to Queen's University and I spent a lot of time with him at Queen's, various Queen's events, but apart from that, not very much, no.

FR: What about your siblings, would they have stayed in the North or did they leave also?

PK: They all stayed.

FR: Oh wow.

PK: Yeah, apart from my youngest brother, who at this time obviously I didn't have very much to do with because he was so much younger than me, you know, so yeah, now he, he lives, now lives in Stratford-on-Avon, and he's a postman there, but the, all, all four of the others stayed in Belfast.

FR: Okay, and would you have stayed in touch with them?

PK: Oh yes, yes, yes, definitely, you know, but, but, as I say, I mean, you know, you make your own social life and, so at this **[01:10:00]** time I didn't have much to do with my older brother who was, I think actually he got, he, well, he became attached to a girl quite quickly,

you know, at the youth club and they became a couple and then they got married, so, and then they very quickly had kids, so again, you know, not much in the way of socialising, if you're a sort of returning student, you know, and my sister, who is a couple of years younger than me, you know, had her own friends and her own, but, yeah, so apart from these couple of guys I knew from, at Queen's, yeah, there wasn't, you know, much to attract me back now. As I say, most of my pals, if you like, had, had left, so, two went to Scotland, one went to London, one went to Manchester.

FR: Okay, and you, I think you said in your email that you moved from, from the midlands then down to London.

PK: Yes, yes.

FR: Was that, was that after university or what, what did you do after university?

PK: That was after university, yeah. I resisted it, I didn't fancy the idea of London, you know, and, but after I worked I, so I worked in Coventry for a while, you know, in a job straight after graduation to make some money and then I went off to travel, so I had my gap year the year after I'd left university, so I travelled round Europe and then came back, wanted to get a job in journalism, tried loads of places, you know, I wanted to stay in the midlands, you know, cos I'd got used to it, I'd got friends there, you know, but it, you know, there wasn't, there was nothing happening, there was no jobs appearing, so I applied to a hundred, no, hang on, no, it wasn't a hundred, fifty, fifty different newspapers and eventually one of them said come down for an interview, sorry, no, I've got the chronology wrong, sorry. I did go to London, a friend of mine says there's this guy, who I knew from Belfast actually, who had been at school with me and lives in London and he said there's a room available and, you know, you'll come, come on down, you know, you know, you'll find a job no trouble at all, and so it, so it proved, you know, within two weeks of getting, three weeks of getting there I got a job on a local paper in Uxbridge, which I too-, I got two jobs offered actually, one was in Crawley and one was in Uxbridge, I took the one in Uxbridge because it was on the end of a tube line, so yeah, and, and again, so I then moved, you know, to Hanwell, which is a sort of suburb that nobody knows anything about and–

FR: Yeah, I don't, I don't know the, I don't know the name myself, no.

PK: Yeah, it's, it's between Ealing and Southall, you know, both of which are much more well known and, but it was handy for work and it was cheap, and then I got to know sort of another group of people who I had to explain the Irish situation to [laughs].

FR: [laughs] Sure, and so what was the job exactly on the newspaper, were you a reporter or a copywriter or–?

PK: A reporter, yeah, so I was a junior reporter on the *Uxbridge Gazette*.

FR: Okay, and what was that like?

PK: That was great, I really enjoyed it, I met some very good friends who remained friends for the rest of my life and, yeah, it, and you learned everything, you learnt about courts, you learnt, you know, about police, crime reporting, anything that went on, local government politics, you know, scandals involving developers, of which there were plenty, yeah, yeah, I got a good grounding, you know. Heathrow was on the patch, so, you know, there was often good stories coming out of there, so yeah, I particularly enjoyed it, and, but, and then of course we, we, we had a national strike in 1978.

FR: '78, yeah.

PK: Which, part of the winter of discontent, of course nobody remembers that local journalists went on strike as well as the binmen and, you know, the health service and so on, yeah, so, you know, there was a, I mean, we had our own particular, I mean, we were, it wasn't a government, you know, imposed rule that we were fighting about, but, you know, we, we, you know, we went on strike about a wage settlement and were on strike for five weeks.

FR: Okay, and are you, you would still be quite involved in both the kind of trade union movement, but also the labour movement I guess, yeah.

PK: Yes, yes, so I, I became heavily involved in the National Union of Journalists then, yeah, again, at the London level, you know, it was a London-wide strike.

FR: Yeah, and what was your, what was your sense then of the winter of discontent like, did you feel, did yous feel like you were going to win [laughs]?

PK: Yeah, well, we all thought we were part of something, yes, yeah, there was definitely a sense of that this was, you know, the, the sort of trade union movement as a whole, you know, getting together and, you know, squeezing the government and we hoped that they would have a, a good result, of course it didn't, but no, I, I mean, it was kind of, it was a revelation for a lot of people actually, I mean, I suppose I, I was a bit steeped into it by then, but a lot of my colleagues were pretty shocked at the behaviour of the employers and, and, and had their first taste, if you like, of solidarity, with print unions and so on refusing to, you know, pass picket lines and so on, so yeah, they, it, it radicalised a few people actually.

FR: No, I can, I can imagine that, yeah.

PK: But yeah, yeah, there was a sense of, that we were a, that the movement was having an impact, yeah.

FR: Yeah, absolutely, and then moving into the, the eighties I suppose, that, that kind of optimistic trade union moment kind of disappears–

PK: Yeah, yeah.

FR: At least it seems like to me.

PK: Yeah, so I carried on being involved cos there was various, obviously, things that Thatcher was doing that the unions were opposed to, that we carried on, you know, the restrictions on union activity and so on and, yeah, there was this, the NUJ was obviously involved in that too, and there were, there were a number of strikes actually, you know, we used to go to support colleagues on picket lines in the midlands, we were in Nottingham, we were in Manchester, were we in Manchester, no, no, we were in Liverpool, yeah, yeah, I spent many a happy hour on a cold coach driving across, driving across the motorways of England in that period.

FR: Absolutely, and what about the kind of Irish dimension to labour and trade union politics in this period, were you still invested in that or less so?

PK: Well, I had, I had said, I'd got a slightly, I'd tended to avoid it, to be honest, and I didn't get involved, I didn't join any group. There was, I think there was a few, few organisations, but of course, but I did become involved because I joined the Greater London Council–

FR: Oh okay.

PK: In 1983, largely because, so one of the local politicians who I had a lot of time for was the GLC member for Hayes and Harlington, which was my patch, and his name was John McDonnell–

FR: Of course, right, okay.

PK: And I became very friendly with John and I used to, you know, write him up well in the, in the paper, for which he was **[01:20:00]** grateful and, so he became the deputy leader of the GLC and, and offered me a job on his team, at the press office.

FR: Oh how interesting.

PK: So it was exciting time, you know, with Ken Livingstone being in charge and, and, as I say, I had a lot of time for John and the salary was great [laughs], so basically, you know, it all came together.

FR: This is, this is the period where the GLC has a, a relatively large amount of money and is kind of–

PK: Yes, yes, exactly.

FR: Investing a lot in various kind of social initiatives, right?

PK: Yeah, and also it was tackling questions about racism and sexism and, you know, anti-gay discrimination, so it was, you know, it was a wonderful sort of time to be there, but of course John and Ken Livingstone were very interested in the Irish situation and became quite involved in various initiatives which, you know, John and I, at that stage had had a good enough relationship for me to say I'm not supporting you in this, you know, I think you're too close to Sinn Féin and I can't, you know, I'm not, and he said fine, I wouldn't ask

you to do anything that you didn't want to do, yeah, so I, I have to think, the only thing I remember doing was it was some, there was some delegation of republicans coming to County Hall and there was also a press conference, you know, with a lot of media there for something else, and my job was to make sure they didn't get wind that there was a republican delegation in the, in County Hall at the time, so I had to distract them for two or three hours, which wasn't too difficult given that, you know, there were any number of bars in, in the place and, you know, they were easily distracted, so, but, but yeah, that was, that was my boss's instructions to me.

FR: You had to keep the two groups away from one another [laughs].

PK: Yeah, yeah, because it'll only end in trouble, yeah, cos obviously, you know, the, you know, the story has developed since, but the GLC was a target for all the right-wing press.

FR: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

PK: On, you know, every possible ground and of course that was one of them and, yeah, so again, that, that was it really, I mean, I didn't, I didn't get involved in the discussions about, on the, about Ireland and–

FR: Well, it's interesting, I sup-, sorry, sorry to interrupt you, I was just going to say I think there's sort of two things with the GLC and Ireland, because on the one hand you've got the involvement in the conflict and the involvement with Sinn Féin and all of that, but then there's also along with the kind of anti-racist initiatives there's an attempt to kind of see the Irish community in London as also a disadvantaged community, Irish-, Irishness gets put on the local census and stuff like that.

PK: Yeah, oh no, no, I, yes, you're absolutely right and I, I was, you know, supportive of that, yeah, and went to a couple of meetings with various people from, various academics I think from what was then Polytechnic of North London.

FR: That's right, yeah.

PK: And, yeah, there was quite a lot of material being produced, there was a series of lectures, the Terence MacSwiney lectures, which the, John McDonnell had supported, so yes, so those things, which I thought, you know, were not problematic from my point of view because I didn't think that, you know, Si-, that, you know, Sinn Féin were, I didn't, you know, I didn't agree with Sinn Féin's campaign and therefore I felt that, you know, there were, but there were other aspects to the, the story of Ireland and England that needed talking about and that was one of them.

FR: Absolutely.

PK: The treatment of Irish people in, in England, and it's funny, I mean, there was quite a live debate at the time about, you know, whether it was on a par with what was happening to black people and, and women and the lesbian/gay community, and I think, you know, there

was quite sort of a lot of toing and froing about, you know, some people on the GLC saying, you know, you can't compare these two because you're all white.

FR: [laughs] Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

PK: But, yeah, and that was quite an interesting discussion.

FR: Yeah, no, I've, I've read a little bit about that kind of, kind of historically, that debate in the, in the GLC, but it's so, it's so int-, it's so fascinating to hear about that actually that, I'm quite interested in that, in that period, from a kind of a left politics point of view like, the GLC managed to do a lot of really interesting things.

PK: Yeah, yeah, they did and they were far ahead of anyone else at the time, you know, the thinking about everything, you know, even local economic, you know, progress.

FR: Absolutely.

PK: They, they, you know, they made an effort to sort of examine what was going on, what was really going on in society in London at the time, and it's of great regret that, that there's never been anything like that since, you know, the mayor's office is in no way able to do any of these things.

FR: No, they don't get given the autonomy really, you realise it's kind of a, yeah.

PK: No, no, but, you know, it's funny that a lot of things the GLC did that were considered to be completely radical or ridiculous, you know, even the Labour Party at the time, I remember Neil Kinnock, you know, going on about it, are now commonplace and accepted, and they get no credit for it, the left gets no credit for it, you know.

FR: I know, absolutely. So what about, you were, you said before that you weren't so sure about moving to London, what did you, in terms of kind of social life and stuff like that, how did you find it?

PK: Sorry, social life in?

FR: London.

PK: In London, great, I was a young man, no ties, I had plenty of money in my pocket and, yeah, London was a great place to be and I met a lot of people, and so I was active in the Labour Party, that was one social circle, but there were others, you know, obviously in the NUJ, journalists, you know, I got very involved in all sorts of campaigns, I met people that way and, yeah, it was, it was an interesting period though. For the first time I became sort of more conscious of my Northern Irish identity, and I'll tell you why, I mean, so I'd got, I was very interested in the Irish community in, in London and, so, particularly culturally, so I became much more interested during this period in Irish music, and so I would go to Irish pubs. There was, there was nothing very much where I lived, so, which was a bit of a blow, but then, but there was, you know, I would go, make, go to Camden, go to Holloway Road,

you know, go to all the Irish pubs and listen to music, and I also became interested in some of the cultural issues attendant to, you know, Irish life in London, and what I felt though was very much that everything was built on the assumption that we were talking the twenty-six counties, and, and I use the word counties there because there was an awful lot of county-based stuff.

FR: The kind of the associational culture stuff.

PK: Yeah, so, you know, lots of stuff about, you know, you know, we come from, we come from Limerick, we come from Kerry, Kerry, all this stuff, and it was almost like Northern Ireland, you know, and the Six Counties, Antrim, Down, you know, **[01:30:00]** Armagh, you know, were not in the mix, weren't talked about in the same way culturally, that Northern Ireland had become the Troubles and nothing, nothing much else, you know, so it was a, it was a political issue, but it was not, there was nothing else about it you could really say, and I thought that was disrespectful and, you know, missing a lot about, you know, what people in Northern Ireland were like, you know, so, this is, this is when, you know, I became interested in the sense about, you know, well, what's it like for Protestants, so, two things happened. I got very friendly with a, a guy who was a local reporter, he was from a Protestant background, and also a young woman who worked for the Department of Transport, yeah, who was a unionist background, quite, you know, middle-class unionist background, and, you know, we would have chats about our lives and our experience and what we thought about the political situation, and I found myself becoming aware of the fact I had a lot more in common with them than divided us.

FR: Yes, yes, I see what you mean.

PK: In terms of how we saw ourselves as Northern Irish first, before Irish or British, you know, and there was something rather unique about our life experiences which is not shared by people who have lived in the Republic of Ireland, or people who have lived in Great Britain, you know, and are English or Scottish or Welsh, so trying to define that was harder, but I'd put it like this, it's, you know, you've been brought up in a, an environment where the BBC is your, you know, your go-to channel, you know, and all that that entails, so, so you're used to English life as it's portrayed on the BBC and, and also how different that is from Northern Ireland, but how, also how very different it is from, you know, if you've been brought up in Dublin, you know. I'm sort of interested in, and talking to my friends at this time about it made me think that, you know, there's, there's a gap here that, that people aren't talking about, what it's like to be Northern Irish, and what it's like to be Northern Irish in the Republic of Ireland and what it's like to be Northern Irish in the U-, in, in Great Britain, [indecipherable] the first time I've consciously talked about that.

FR: Would you have thought of yourself as Irish before this kind of moment or before this kind of–

PK: Yes, yes, yes, I would have said just Irish, but, you know, and I was kind of aware that, that that was a sort of political statement, you know, so you were, you were, you were always being given forms to fill in, you know, and what do you put down, you know, do you, I always put Irish, you know, but there's nothing to say Northern Irish [laughs].

FR: [laughs] No, sure.

PK: There's nothing on the form, it just says British or Irish.

FR: Yeah, that's right.

PK: And I certainly do not consider myself British, in the sense of, in what I've come to know it as, and I'm, you know, and, but I'm not Irish in the sense that I know it either, you know, so, so, you know, going to these plays and Irish music things in, in Ireland, I would think again, you know, there's nothing that specifically addresses me.

FR: I think that's, it's really interesting and I think what you said about how Northern Ireland in that kind of scene, the kind of Irish scene in London existed as the Troubles, but not really as anything else, I think that's a really interesting way to think about it, and kind of reduced to just this one set of associations.

PK: Yeah, yeah.

FR: No, it's really interesting.

PK: And even when you had, you know, when I got into a conversation with somebody in a pub on the Holloway Road, you would say, you know, oh I'm from Belfast, och, och, terrible, terrible.

FR: [laughs] Sure, and that's, that's the end of it, that's the end of it, yeah.

PK: Yeah, yeah.

FR: Okay, that's really interesting, and so, and I think then in your email you said that you now live in, in Lancashire, is that right?

PK: No, I live in York, York, yeah.

FR: York, York, okay.

PK: So yeah, I lived in London and I, briefly, I lived in Barcelona. So after the GLC was abolished I got a job working for London local councils, you know, the, the Labour ones, this was a thing called the Association of London Authorities, and sort of after that, I got fed up with that and decided I wanted to travel again and relearn Spanish and so on, and so I went to live in Barcelona, which probably wasn't the right place to go to learn Spanish [laughs], as I discovered, but it was fine then, I think it would be even harder now, but, so and I got quite, and, you know, I got, I, I worked as a freelance journalist for various different media in the UK and Ireland, I did stuff for the *Irish Times* about Spain, and I was, and again, you know, I became conscious of, you know, talking to Spanish people about, and I found them more interested in what was going on in Ireland–

FR: Strangely, strangely enough.

PK: And of course being in Catalonia, they were particularly interested in, in, you know, the differences, you know, and so, you know, that was all, but that was kind of, you know, a period and then I, I'd met a woman before I left, who was to become my wife, so, so I returned to London and we had children. I became a councillor on London borough of Southwark and briefly after that, you know, I, I got involved in politics, but very much at the London borough level, so I, I was chair of education and then when that all got too much we decided to head off to somewhere a bit more sensible [laughs], so no, I mean, the truth was that my wife was offered a job running a charity based in York and we had sort of been thinking that, you know, London was getting a bit, you know, too much, we weren't enjoying it and we were finding, you know, a lot of the travel a struggle, so we moved to York with our two daughters and, yeah, it's been wonderful from the point of view of quality of life, yeah.

FR: Yeah, it's a, it's a beautiful, it's a beautiful city.

PK: Yeah, yeah, and it has lots and lots of lovely countryside, which of course we're not allowed to go and see now [laughs] cos of, thanks to those lockdown whatever, whatever the Derbyshire police think lockdown means [laughs].

FR: Yeah, we're, we're not allowed to go and get a coffee or anything like that, no, apparently not [laughs].

PK: Yeah, I know, so yeah, so interestingly, about three years ago, or two years ago, some people at the, connected with the university here, had set up York Irish Society, which is the first time I've, there's been anything of that nature in the city.

FR: That's interesting.

PK: Which, you know, there's, **[01:40:00]** I mean, city, the, it's a funny thing there, that there used to be an Irish club in York up until the 1970s, but, you know, apart from that nothing much, you know. You can hear Irish music though in a couple of pubs and, but the, the York Irish Society is doing its level best now to, you know, provide a supportive environment for Irish and people who like the Irish in, in York, but I also have mentioned to them, you know, remember the North of Ireland and to be fair to them they've had, organised a few lectures about Northern Ireland, about Northern, Northern Irish culture, you know, poetry, writers like Brian Moore and Brian, Brian Friel and Seamus Heaney and so on, so it's been, yeah, a bit more than just the Troubles.

FR: [laughs] It's, it's good, that's good to hear, and that kind of takes us quite nicely I think into the sort of final set of questions, which are slightly more kind of I guess reflective questions, but actually just before we get into that I was going to ask two things, so first of all, you mentioned being in Birmingham during the Birmingham bombings, and the kind hostility. Were you living in London then during the sort of bombings that happened around the time of the–?

PK: Yes, yes, yes, I was and again, I was refused entry to a pub. So this is a slightly different situation and this, this is a sort of local in Hanwell that I have patronised, or I had patronised, for years and the landlord, so I go in, this is the day after the bombings in, when they'd, I think they'd, Downing Street might have been one of the targets then, and I go in for my usual pint and get told you've got a nerve coming in here after what's happened, and I said look, it's got nothing to do with me, and then he says, but even so I'm not serving you.

FR: You know, in a, in a local pub or in a pub that you've been going to that must be especially kind of galling.

PK: Yeah, yeah, it was. Now the landlord wasn't a very nice man anyway [laughs], so it wasn't out of character so to speak, in that sense, but, you know, it was like, you know, almost an excuse and he, yeah, so I never, never went back there while he was in charge, but, but yeah, that was the, the only thing I noticed.

FR: Okay, and then I think my other question was just going to be what are your memories of the kind of peace process happening?

PK: Well, I, I followed it avidly on TV, you know, watched it and was really, I mean, I was, I was, I was convinced it wouldn't happen to tell you the truth, you know, I was, I was convinced it would not come off. Maybe I'd sort of been inured to disappointment after so many years that, you know, something good would happen, so I was kind of, yeah, completely overjoyed and when, when the, the Agreement was signed. As I say, by then, you know, I've not got any involvement in the party at that level, and I don't believe that the York Labour Party even discussed Ireland in the time I was chair of the constituency.

FR: That's, that's interesting because I was going to ask just thinking back to, you were saying when you were involved in the GLC you had some reservations about the links with Sinn Féin, and did you feel any reservations about the peace process in relation to that or were you just kind of–?

PK: No, no, I didn't, I thought it was the right thing to do. Now I had a friend who was in the SDLP for years and he was, you know, a great companion and he, I mean, he had an interesting background, he was English, son of a diplomat, born in South Africa, you know, very, you know, wealthy privileged family. He had gone to Queen's and fallen in love with the place, but he, he, when I met him he was actually working at the Trades Union Congress, TUC, you know, I kind of knew a lot of people there and, you know, he and I became friends and he went back to Belfast and sort of married a local girl, you know, and he was, he was, and then became very involved in the SDLP, so he was telling me, you know, giving me, you know, a lot of insider information about it, you know, how the talks were going, but, but also the sort of political side and, you know, he was, and when John Hume first sort of was putting out feelers, if you like, to have that discussion with Gerry Adams and was being berated for it, you know, I sent him a message, you know, via this guy, you know, to say good on you mate, you know, this is what lots, lots of people who you won't hear from are tell-, you know, this is the right thing to do, and so yeah, I wasn't, I thought it was the right thing to do, I thought you needed to get the cunts out of the equation before you could make any progress, so yeah, I supported that. As I say, I was, you know, heart in my mouth a

lot of the time whether it would actually work or not, particularly, you know, since the Paisleyites were determined to say no.

FR: Absolutely, trying to, tried to, tried to sabotage it really up until the last minute.

PK: Yeah, yeah.

FR: And I suppose some of the–

PK: So yeah, it was, it was, yeah.

FR: Yeah, it's hard for, I was a child while it was happening, so it's kind of hard for me to think of it as something that might not have happened if you see what I mean. For me it's kind of set in stone, yeah.

PK: Yeah, yeah, you become used to it, you know, as being there, yeah.

FR: No, it's, it's really interesting, and then I suppose just some final questions about like, how you feel about Northern Ireland now really. So one thing we've been asking people is where do you think of as, as home? Quite a hard question [laughs].

PK: Yeah, well, I mean, I sort of think that I've moved around a lot and I suppose this, Northern Ireland is still home, so home in the sense, I mean, there's two definitions of home I think, so there's the first, the home, you know, your house where your family are, where your loved ones are, you know, and obviously that changes over time because, you know, you have kids, my kids have both moved away to different parts of England now, so home is where, you know, Julia and I live, you know, and that, that place is York at the moment, but it could have been anywhere else, you know, it could have been London, yeah, we could have moved to Edinburgh or, you know, we were thinking about that, we could have moved to Bristol, we were thinking about that, you know, so these, these places are not my home, I never found London home, I was never able to call it home.

FR: That's interesting.

PK: Even when I was deeply involved in the politics of a local ward in, in Southwark, you know, I was, it never felt like home, so, so in that sense, yeah, it's, Northern Ireland is home, so it's obviously, my family are still there in the sense of my siblings and my mother's still alive, she's ninety-three, she lives there and I think probably I would say that I'd spend, when I'm there now I feel more at home.

FR: That's interesting.

PK: Yeah, and, and I've become sort of more aware of its, you know, geography, quite apart from anything else, so I've been around more places and travelled around more places and met people around, so quite a lot of my freelance, no, I wouldn't say quite a lot, sorry, a strand of my freelance journalism has involved writing about Northern Ireland, its artistic, cultural scene, **[01:50:00]** so, you know, I've done articles about the Lyric Theatre and, you

know, the arts centres in different parts of, you know, and I went to the Seamus Heaney's HomePlace, so, you know, these, I feel, you know, at home in these places, you know, so, in a way that I might not if I went to, I don't know, Perth in Scotland or, you know, Cardiff in Wales, you know, so, so yes, I feel very much at home, and obviously now I see much more of my siblings than I did when they were all, had their own families to look after, so yeah, get around a bit more that way.

FR: That's really interesting, and especially in light of what you were saying earlier about that kind of sense that Northern Irishness as opposed to Irishness or whatever was a kind of a, a separate identity in some ways.

PK: Yeah, yeah, well, as, I should also say that I spent a period in the Republic of Ireland.

FR: Oh did you?

PK: Yeah, sorry, I'd forgotten about it [laughs], so, but a few years ago I had a kind of midlife crisis I think and decided that I needed to go and, and write a novel and the only way to do this, the only way to make sure I did, because I'd been thinking about it for decades, was to go on a creative writing course, and a friend of a friend persuaded me to go to the one in Limerick, which I thought was a very good idea because I knew if I went to do a creative writing course in Dublin or Cork I would never get any work done [laughs], be too many, too many bloody distractions, and I wouldn't do it in Belfast because that would feel like, you know, a bit odd, you know, so, so I went to Limerick and Limerick has many attractions, but it's not the best, it's not the most exciting city in Ireland.

FR: I've actually never, I've never been, I lived in Dublin for a few years, but I've never been to Limerick.

PK: Oh right, right, well, yeah, not many people have, you know, and, yeah, I got a lot of banter from siblings about, you know, stab, it's called stab city.

FR: Stab city, I've, I've heard, I've heard people say that, yeah.

PK: Yeah, no, none of that's true either, you know, it's–

FR: No, I'm sure.

PK: It's fairly, you know, dull [laughs]. I mean, you know, there's a bit of artistic cultural life, but, you know, I mean, compared to Galway it's, you know, nothing, but, so it was a nice, beautiful place, and a lovely flat overlooking the River Shannon, so it was great, but, you know, again, you know, talking to people there, so it was a very mixed group of people, some, some a bit older, some a bit younger, about Northern Ireland and, you know, it's, it was interesting how little they knew.

FR: Absolutely.

PK: And, and about how little appreciation they had and we, we did a module on migration at, I think it was sort of more of an English lit really, and I was talking about migration and saying of course I emigrated, you know, but I will appear on no official statistics.

FR: Right, yeah.

PK: Because I just moved from one part of the United Kingdom to another part, and they don't measure the number of people who travel from Swindon to London, you know, in exactly that way, but, you know, believe you me it is, it is migration, and so they were really sort of puzzled about this and it took a while to explain. The other side of it was that being in Limerick and being in the Republic, or being in Limerick in particular, was a reminder that everything was very much the same only it wasn't quite as Belfast, you see what I mean, you know, it's a–

FR: I do.

PK: It's a diff-, at slight variance with what you expect, you know.

FR: No, I, I know what you mean, I mean, I went to university in Dublin and on the one ha-, I mean, I would have called myself Irish and everything, I thought of myself as Irish, but did I feel Irish in Dublin, I'm not totally sure that I did really, people didn't treat me like I was Irish, people treated me like I was Northern Irish, so I don't know, it's kind, it's, it's a strange kind of difference, but there is a difference.

PK: It is, and I think that we're going to have to get to grips with it because I think a united Ireland is in prospect.

FR: Yeah.

PK: You can debate whether it's ten years or twenty years or thirty years, but it is coming, at some stage, but the problem is that until people begin to get to grips with how we are different, and how we are not just, so I think there's an assumption among many people in the Republic that if you're Catholic you're a nationalist, and if you're a nationalist you're just like them, but that's not true, you [laughs], no, your political affiliation has got nothing to do with your cultural affiliation and, as I was saying, that thing about, you know, Northern Ireland has been part of the United King-, sorry, separate, I mean, they were both part of a united UK, separate from the Republic for a hundred years, that separation has created cultural divides, not just political ones and, you know, as I say, even it's something as simple as, you know, you know, you, you, support for Man United and Liverpool and Everton and, you know, no, certainly a lot of people have no connection with the GAA–

FR: No, sure, sure.

PK: And people used to, you know, be used to watching the BBC all the time, you know, and getting the news from, you know, and, and their reflection, if you like, of, of British culture from the BBC, and their music, music appreciations or, you know, their cultural interests, they're all defined by that lived experience, and they are different from the hundred years

that the Republic of Ireland has been an independent country with its own news service and, you know, sports and, you know, affiliation, if you like, and until we decide to start talking about how those things can be accommodated, it's not the, we're, you know, we're not going to get very far.

FR: I think–

PK: [phone rings] Sorry, I'm going to ignore this because I know it's a scam, yeah, so.

FR: [laughs] I think your, I think your–

PK: Hold on a minute while I–

FR: No bother.

PK: Hello, hello [pauses], they've given up.

FR: That's annoying, scam calls. So I was just going to ask, well, I've actually, I've got two questions, but the, the first one I was going to ask you, you spoke about the, your kind of relationship to like, trade union culture and that kind of history of trade union culture in Britain after you moved over, and I just, I don't, this is kind of a hard question again, but do you have a sense of how moving to England kind of changed you?

PK: Sorry, how?

FR: How it changed you or if you changed as a result of, of moving over here.

PK: Oh yeah, yeah, no, I think, I think I've sort of got a, yeah, I've, I would say an appreciation of, of a different kind of England than the one that might present itself to people who've, who've not lived here, and I think that, I was, that was, I was at a conference and Bob Geldof was speaking and somebody jumped up and said how dare you accept, I think he, it was an MBE or something he got, you know, an honorary one, you know, when the British Empire has caused, you know, such suffering in Ireland, and he said look, your conception of what that award is about is completely different from mine, you know, this, the England that I know is the one that gave, you know, the, his band and his life **[02:00:00]** meaning, that accepted him, you know, he, and he said, you know, the musical scene and, you know, the people I met, the, the, are, you know, are not, you know, British imperialists, there is a different side to England that if you, you know, that is tolerant, broadminded, interested in, you know, new ideas and cares less about, you know, where you're from than, you know, where you, you know, who you are and that's, that's the England I know, and I think that's, that's my feeling about it too, and I don't think if I had spent all my time in Belfast I would have realised that, I wouldn't have been conscious of it, I would have seen it very differently.

FR: That, that makes, that makes sense, sorry, go on.

PK: So yeah, so I have a lot, I've a lot to be thankful for, for this country. I did mean to say that, you know, I'm, obviously I am embarrassed at the moment about what's happened in England because of Brexit, which is an absolute disaster, and I'm not quite sure, you know, where we're heading, but obviously if Scotland heads off, which, you know, looks to me more likely than ever, I've been talking to, I've got a very good friend in Northern Ireland, in Belfast, who voted no in the referendum last time and he's definitely going to vote yes this time and I think he's very typical of a lot of people who've, you know, had enough, so yeah, it's all embarrassing at the moment to be associated with this kind of little, little Englander, with a government like the one we have that talks crap about Britain and its, you know, like, I see all the time and seems to have a ready audience for it, but, so yeah, yeah, it's difficult at the moment to, to think that it's, that it's a sort of wonderful place [laughs], a tolerant place, a liberal place, it doesn't, doesn't feel so much that now, yeah.

FR: It's harder to see that kind of other Britain I suppose.

PK: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

FR: And then my, my last question just, I want, this is as much personal interest as anything else, but did you ever write the novel in the end?

PK: Sorry, I didn't catch that.

FR: Sorry, did you, did you, did you finish the novel?

PK: Oh the novel, yes, yes, I did, I did, I haven't found a publisher yet, but [laughs] *nil desperandum*, and I'm sure that someone will pick it up or if not, I've said if I haven't found a publisher by the summer I'll publish it myself. It is as you may have guessed about Northern Ireland in the sixties, so.

FR: Well, I hope that it finds a publisher and I look forward to reading it if it, if it does.

PK: Yeah, yeah, so tell me about yourself Fearghus, are you, you based in Manchester now?

FR: No, no, I, I actually did used to live in Manchester, but I moved to Dublin from, I'm from Ballymena.

PK: Oh right, yeah.

FR: So sort of rural north Antrim.

PK: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, I know where, I did end up going to Ballymena, yeah [laughs].

FR: [laughs] I wouldn't, I wouldn't recommend it too much now, but, and then I moved to Dublin and then I moved to Scotland for a wee while and then down to Manchester and now I live in Brighton.

PK: Brighton, oh right, okay, so yeah, you've moved around even more than I have, yeah, yeah, how, so how long you been in the, in the, in Britain then?

FR: It must be ten, it must be ten, I'm trying to think, I'm thirty-two, so it must be ten, ten years.

PK: Ten years, right, yeah, and do you think you'll stay?

FR: [sighs] I don't know, I don't know, increasingly, I don't really feel like I want to.

PK: Yeah, no, I can't, can't blame you.

FR: Yeah, I mean, my partner's French.

PK: Yeah, gosh.

FR: There's not a huge amount keeping us here at the minute, to be honest, with Brexit and with, yeah, I don't know [laughs].

PK: Yeah, no, no, I can see, I can see what, what, why people might, of your age and stage would think why not go abroad, you know.

FR: But, I mean, like yourself, I feel reasonably invested in a kind of version of the British Labour left tradition, you know, and I, I like England and there are lots of things that I've really enjoyed about living, especially in Manchester, I found Manchester a really great city to live in, but.

PK: Yeah, yeah, no my niece, my niece lives in Manchester, yeah, she's, thinks it's great, yeah. It's interesting the, the, about half of the mixed generation of my, so, so this is my nieces and nephews, are living in England, for various reasons, so, you know, whereas my, let's say, you know, four of my siblings decided to stay put, but yeah. Well, there's one final thing I want to say about, you know, one of the things that you're conscious of if you've lived away from Northern Ireland is that you feel slightly restricted, put it like that, in opining about the, you know, Northern Ireland politics at the moment, you know, you feel because you haven't sort of spent all that time there, you know, you haven't the right to–

FR: Absolutely.

PK: You know, say what, you know, what people should be doing by way of voting or, you know, what the, how the DUP should do its policies and so on, so you find, you find yourself slightly cautious about that, when of course, you know, certainly when I was living there and afterwards, you know, I had a lot to say about, yeah, all of that.

FR: Yeah, no, I, I completely agree with you. It's something that I find quite hard in terms of obviously writing about Northern Ireland, which I do for this job, but also I'm writing a book based on my PhD research and it feels quite strange to me to sit in, on the south coast of England writing a book about Northern Ireland and not, not really being there, not really

feeling a, a sense of what's going on there properly, obviously I've still got friends and stuff, but it's not, it's a not proper connection, is it.

PK: No, that's right, you feel, yeah, but, but then of course James Joyce wrote about Ireland from Paris and, what was the other place, Trieste.

FR: Trieste, yeah, Trieste.

PK: So you use him as a sort of model I think.

FR: Well, he, he did a pretty good job, so yeah, that's [laughs]–

PK: So, no, it's been really nice to talk to you Fearghus.

FR: Yeah, and you, thank you so much for your time.

PK: Really, really enjoyed it, and could you tell us sort of what happens now, so, so you'll do all of these interviews and then you write a report and what, how will it be published, will it be published?

FR: Okay, so we'll, we're going to transcribe the interviews, or we've been transcribing them, but that's going to be ongoing I suppose for the next few months, and then we'll have all the transcripts, all of the recordings, so that, it's going to be the transcripts and the archives are going, sorry, the transcripts and the recordings are going to be archived in Manchester Central Library, and then we're going to write a book, so it's going to be a, yeah, like, we haven't got a publisher yet, but I think Manchester University Press is probably the most likely one, because I've got a contract with them and my, my boss has got a contract with them, so probably them, and it'll be turned into a book and it might also be turned into some kind of academic papers, which'll be published in, in kind of academic journals, and in terms of, yeah, we're, we're happy to kind of keep you–

PK: Keep us in touch, yeah.

FR: Absolutely, yeah, and as I said–

PK: About what happens, yeah.

FR: As I said to you if you want to take a look at the transcript, either just out of interest or because you want to check that there's nothing that you don't want to kind of take out or anything like that, I'm happy to send you the transcript when it's done.

PK: Okay, yeah, that's fine.

FR: Alright.

PK: That's brilliant, alright, so I'll send you, I'll send you the, when I print these things off and then so I can post, I can post the consent form, so you have the right bit of paper.

FR: Oh that's, that's, that's fantastic, yeah, I don't know if you have an address for me, but I can send you an email with an address.

PK: Could you do that, yeah.

FR: Yes, okay, that's great, I'll do that and that's fine, but yeah, listen, thank you so much for your time.

PK: Okay, not at all, really enjoyed it, thanks Fearghus.

FR: Okay, I enjoyed it, thanks Peter, take care, all the best, bye, bye.

INTERVIEW ENDS