

[0:00:00]

Kieran Connell: So, to begin with, I was going to ask you about, to defer a little bit from the questions that I sent round, actually, a bit naughty, but I was going to ask you about your political formations and the kind of key moments in your political formations, and the extent to which that did or did not influence you ending up in the Centre. If anyone wants ...?

Chris Pawling: Great question.

Ros Brunt: You started to see...

Chris Pawling: Senior members should go first.

Ros Brunt: I'm in the middle – yes, so if you – go on, Trevor.

Trevor Millum: What do you mean by formations?

Kieran Connell: Well, how you were formed politically.

Trevor Millum: Ah, right.

Kieran Connell: I mean, I know there's not one simple moment that you can identify but what made you gravitate towards political positions.

Trevor Millum: Well, I grew up in a Conservative household but it was pretty fluid. Then, being a radical sixth former, joined the young socialists just to show that I could think for myself. So that was my background when I came up to university. While I was doing my history degree, I was pretty non-political, really. I remember going to Harold Wilson's rally in the centre of Birmingham, and followed the usual trajectory of being exhilarated by a Labour victory and then let down, which is really how you can chart most Labour victories. And just being a probably self-Left-ish person, probably more involved with Third World charity than with any kind of direction action, until... moving into the Centre, obviously you either react against the general consensus of politics or religion or whatever it might be, or you are pulled towards it it seems to me, whatever situation you are in. And so, of course, I became, for me, more radical which was never very radical, but I was very much involved with the sit in.

Kieran Connell: So that was '69?

Trevor Millum: Yeah.

Kieran Connell: And you were still...?

Trevor Millum: I was then at my... second year of my research, yeah. I think partly because I saw that as, if you like, practical action, something was happening and it needed to be done, so needed to be there.

Kieran Connell: Could you give us a bit of an overview of the reasons behind the sit-in? I know that you were involved as well, Chris, but just how did it come about, what was it about?

Trevor Millum: It was, at least on the surface, it was simply about representation as I-

Ros Brunt: I think it was, yeah.

Trevor Millum: It was about something as basic as democracy.

Chris Pawling: Participation.

Trevor Millum: Why are we excluded?

Chris Pawling: That's right.

[0:03:17]

Trevor Millum: I mean-

Chris Pawling: It wasn't about representation on a different committees when the different sort of levels with the university, that's right.

Trevor Millum: Which I still think is a no-brainer. It's not even that radical which is... having a voice. And just these stuffed shirts at the top who just didn't listen and who were condescending-

Chris Pawling: Yes.

Trevor Millum: One thing I didn't like was being condescended to. So that was quite a radicalising moment, if you like. And there were – I mean, the Vietnam War was going on so I did take part in one or two demo's and things. I always wondered what the point of some demos were, so I wasn't a great attender. And then I suppose because I carried on my interest in Third World, when I was deciding what I was going to do that's what attracted me, I suppose, to the practical again when I decided I was going to do PGCE and I went to teach in Africa. So theory went out the window in the way. I made a decision I wanted to do something which in a small way might make a difference.

Kieran Connell: So that was after you'd finished at the Centre?

Trevor Millum: Yeah. I always finish things, as I said. Wait until I entirely finished my PhD.

Ros Brunt: Very good.

Trevor Millum: Did all that, packed my bags properly, and obviously a bit anally retentive, and went on to Africa which is a decision I never regretted, although I did spend time in a very small history department stock room that smelt mainly of the years of accumulated bat droppings where I revised my thesis into the book form, because it needed to be cut in half. I remember thinking what a bizarre situation that was. There I was practically in the middle of Africa with no communication apart from the odd letter writing about women's magazines. And I think the little – I brought the book with me just in case you didn't recognise me, I could hold it up... This little introduction I've written says (inaudible 0:05:40)... So that's the kind of...

Kieran Connell: It sounds like your, kind of, politics then as a student was informed practice, practical considerations like the sit-in or protests if you felt they were practical rather than being for the sake of protesting.

Trevor Millum: Oh yeah.

Kieran Connell: Does that fit in with – how does that relate to your political formations?

Ros Brunt: When you said about one moment, I think it was one moment for me but it was '68 when I was not at Birmingham, I did a year at Essex, and that was one of the first sit-ins. Very different from Birmingham City, and I remember discussing it when I did come to the Centre, the difference between Essex and Birmingham, that Birmingham was, in fact, very organised – very well organised, more a trade union thing I felt, very well worked out and mass. And, of course, Essex was like a comprehensive school in terms of size then. But Essex was more – it was just – and the sit-in then was about some people came to the university who were going to talk about – they came from a nuclear facility, I think Aldermaston, they were going to talk in what appeared to be a neutral fashion about their work. There were four people who actually got expelled and became very famous, and one is now a Lord, four people who actually started this, 'We cannot have this.' And I remember writing a letter to my mother, 'If this had been the...' The argument was we could have stopped the Nazi's against the Holocaust, this is the equivalent, these guys do germ warfare, and we're giving them a platform. So it actually came from that. It didn't come from anything to do with representation. It came from this particular thing, but it led into – I remember the very first

demonstration I went on was the vice chancellor who Essex had thought – it was the first university of the new universities then like Sussex and York and so on, campus universities, rather remote from everywhere, to say we won't be... what was the phrase? We won't stand in for your parents. There was a phrase for it.

Chris Pawling: In loco parentis.

Ros Brunt: In loco parentis. That this vice chancellor at Essex who was the most Liberal guy, Sloman, thought our new university is going to be quite different, we're going to give students freedom. So he thought – and they didn't have a student's union, for instance, because he said, 'We're all in the same boat, staff and students mix, we all eat together,' and so he was – so why suddenly is his house surrounded? He actually lived on campus, and it was an awful thing we did, I regretted it afterwards. We did this demonstration arising from this nuclear issue, surrounded his house, and in fact only his young son and his housekeeper was in; it was an awful thing to do because it must have been very scary for them, and all we did was surround this house and let down the vice chancellor's tyres. But after that, it just snowballed, and we were hearing about this stuff coming from France, and we had non-stop general assemblies. And you'd get people walking out saying, 'Well, I'm going to Paris!' And then what turned out to be a hoax. We had telegrams from Sartre and Bertrand Russell, and these would be read out and be learnt much later that these were hoaxes. So we thought we were right up there, Essex and Paris. And we actually talked about it without any cynicism as a revolution; we talked about it as the Essex revolution. And it went on for most of the summer term. Staff joined up. This vice chancellor, it broke him actually because he couldn't – he'd actually done the wreath lectures on a new idea of a university that this was this everybody together thing, and there's no difference between staff and students, so why are they – they've got nothing to protest around. And it then dissipated, and I remember at the end of the summer term it was – people were lighting bonfires for no reason on the – and mindless vandalism. So it sort of petered out. But it did change me hugely, and I really look back at – I used to say to myself why was I – when I was an undergraduate, yes, we had the first Vietnam talk-in in '65; we were the first university.

[0:10:22]

Chris Pawling: Teach-in?

Ros Brunt: Teach-in, that's the world, teach-in, it all came from America and went to... So there were things like that that I was part of and very interested in politics, but I would have been Liberal then. And then I thought to myself, 'Why didn't I...?' All my life up until, sort of, 21 I have been slumbering and this is... But when I came to the Centre, I wasn't thinking of it mainly – I was interested that should be your first question, because I then did decide – I had two more years of grant left. As a result of all the disruption, I spent the first year at the Centre, and this was really also my downfall, completing the MA from Essex because it had all been so disrupted so people carried on. I should have not come to the Centre that year. Anyway, came. But I was coming to the Centre because I wanted to do the particular research. I wasn't thinking of it as political. And when I got there it seemed to be me I had taken a real step back because we were doing first paragraph – we were doing practical criticism with Richard Hoggart, and it had been in my final year when Richard Hoggart used to do these... And I thought, geez. The Essex course, which went along with the sit-in as well, had been so stimulating, so exciting, so interdisciplinary, where you've got Goldman, you've got Lucatch, all this was new to me, was really a head banger, very, very exciting interdisciplinary-

Kieran Connell: So who were the people involved in that course then?

Ros Brunt: The main person was someone called Stanley Mitchell who had translated Lucatch, was a Russian specialist. He, in fact, had a nervous breakdown over the sit-in. A lot of relationships were breaking up amongst the staff and everything, and he had a chequered academic career. He had been at Birmingham, you will find he was at – he knew Stuart Hall from having been a lecturer I think in the German department before he went to Essex.

Chris Pawling: I didn't know that.

Ros Brunt: But he had said up this MA sociology of literature which was just amazing. It was so Avant Garde. We tend to think of the Centre as being, but in fact, as I say, it did seem like a step back, particularly because of the Hoggart practical criticisms we were doing that. We did that business in undergraduate.

[0:12:42]

Trevor Millum: I remember one session like that.

Ros Brunt: He did them every week. We did close reading every Monday afternoon with Hoggart. Hoggart ran it. And I thought, no, this is... really, you must remember Tiger Tiger.

Trevor Millum: That's the only one I remember.

Kieran Connell: Richard mentioned that as well.

Ros Brunt: Yes, but there were-

Chris Pawling: Name another text.

Ros Brunt: Yes, I do have to struggle with that.

Chris Pawling: Faulkner but I don't know he did Faulkner with you?

Ros Brunt: We did beautiful – Larry suggested doing Beautiful Losers, Larry Grossberg.

Chris Pawling: No, Lawrence, he used to do a lot of...

Ros Brunt: Oh yes, as an undergraduate. We did do Lawrence. And Richard Hoggart's speciality, which I have a lot of time for, actually, was this close reading, but he would do the paragraphs. It was very hard for us. I thought what are we doing here? We're just listening to this.

Kieran Connell: That leads me on to the next question. Are you from a similar kind of...?

Chris Pawling: No, I'm a bit later than all these.

Ros Brunt: So young!

Chris Pawling: I went to university in '67 and then – so my first year was coming across participatory politics, people coming down to talk to us in the common room, the Mason Lounge common room, about the need to get involved with representative politics. It was interesting, actually. Some older students. But, before that, when I was at school, I suppose politics came from my father who was in the Labour party and who was a trade union official, and he was somebody who was very heavily into discussing nationalisation, that kind of thing, he was really interested. He was self-taught, and his brother was in the Communist party, so we had Left book club stuff at home, that kind of thing. My uncle had a lot of Left book club stuff. And so I got used to those arguments, almost like a political cultural capital thing, and you bring with it from that kind of background. So I was already Labour party when I went to university, and then you've got all these students talking about the need to get more involved and all the rest of it. And then the anti-Vietnam demo, that year, my second year, which was '68/69 and so I got involved with that, the anti-Vietnam campaign. And then I went to Germany, because I was doing English and German combined, I went to Germany and spent some time in Frankfurt at university, and at that time the Left were very evolved, organised, in the anti-Vietnam campaign and Cohn-Bendit was there, he'd come across from Paris. So it was very Libertarian Marcuse politics, really, which was interesting. So I can remember going to demo's where you went into department stores and liberated toys for kids at Christmas, that kind of thing. Anyway, so that was all happening before I came back and did my finals. So there wasn't one thing I would say that radicalised me, but I suppose the year abroad in Germany was important for me because it crystallised things in a way, and the debates were at a high level as well among students,

the politics, the intellectual life and all the rest of it, so that was crucial. So by the time I came back I was already immersed in all that.

[0:16:43]

Kieran Connell: So you came back in – that would have been '69 then?

Chris Pawling: Yeah, I came back in '69, yes, '69/'70 to do finals. And I had already – I spent part of my year abroad at Marburg University and we had a seminar on Lucatch, and so I had come across Lucatch and I was reading. So I wanted to develop that. So after my final year, I had done the Centre course as an undergraduate and you could do an option course, so in my final year I decided I would go to the Centre and do some work on Marxist's sociology but trying to find the British or English context by going back to the thirties and doing some work on Christopher Caldwell on Marxist criticism, and seeing Caldwell as the English Lucatch kind of thing. So that was where I came from, really. I also got involved with IS in my final year, International Socialists, which then became SWP. So there was an interesting tension, I think, at that time between those who were involved with IMG or IS and the work in the Centre. And it's an interesting interview with Stuart quite recently, I think it was in (inaudible 0:17:59) where he talks about that, that he felt that some of those that were involved with that kind of politics thought they could re-create the thirties in the Centre in a rather simple way. But we felt that some of the work that was going on in the Centre was a bit idealistic, abstract and not connected to what was going on, so if you were down selling socialist work on a Friday morning at Longbridge, the car factory, how did that relate to what you were doing at the Centre? So, I mean, we kind to develop those kinds of arguments in the Centre. I suppose a bit after the moment missed was it-

Ros Brunt: Yes, it would have been.

Chris Pawling: And the whole thing about the politics of intellectual life, what did that mean to say talk about the politics of intellectual life.

Kieran Connell: I suppose the sit-in would have been one quite important event within an early stage of those debates.

Ros Brunt: Yes.

Trevor Millum: Yeah, I think the sit-in was interesting in that for the people at the Centre it was almost like a no-brainer. It wasn't suddenly, 'Oh, here's the sit-in and we're all radicalised.' I think maybe I overdid that bit. It was a bit like, 'Of course we are part of it.' They caught up to where we are, almost.

Ros Brunt: And, in fact, it was quite late for Birmingham to have a sit-in. Most places had them the year before.

Trevor Millum: I do remember, and I don't know if you remember this, but part of my naivety or my desire to get things out in the open, there was a seminar, an afternoon seminar, where for some reason I brought up the issue of politics and the Centre with direct reference to some of the associate students, if you like. There were a couple of guys who used to come, John Gossling was one... I can't remember the name of the other chap, who clearly were not Left wing. I just remember raising the issue, saying, 'Well, if this is the case, we should...'

Ros Brunt: Were they there in the room?

Trevor Millum: No.

Ros Brunt: Oh right.

Trevor Millum: We should say so, because it's not fair. I feel as if these people are being slightly left out because we don't maybe perhaps approve of their politics. Well, is that right? And there was a real stunned silence around the table of what to do. And then there was a discussion as to whether this was true or not, and whether it was a good thing or a bad thing and so on. It was fairly early on; before we

were up in the Tower. I remember three – my three years there, we were in three different buildings. We were in a strange almost prefab right next to-

[0:21:27]

Ros Brunt: At the back I think.

Trevor Millum: Chamberlain Tower. Then we were in a different prefab behind the main building which was-

Ros Brunt: Oh, that's the one I remember, right.

Trevor Millum: And then we moved into palatial accommodation in the arts tower or wherever it was.

Ros Brunt: English.

Kieran Connell: Fourth.

Ros Brunt: No, it wasn't the tower then, it was the English – the arts building, where the English already were.

Trevor Millum: This discussion was in the second of those prefabs round the back.

Ros Brunt: The original – right, didn't know about the original hut, right.

Trevor Millum: And that clearly was another moment at which this issue was brought up which would not have been an issue that would be discussed in most other seminar groups, I think.

Ros Brunt: But when Hoggart was probably still there, because – we took the sit-in, that was I remember as one of the first projects, we actually collected all the papers about it-

Kieran Connell: Paul Willis wrote it up.

Ros Brunt: Hmm?

Kieran Connell: Paul Willis-

Ros Brunt: Paul Willis wrote it up, did he? Right, I'd forgotten that, yes.

Chris Pawling: And there are photographs as well of people with this thing about the head gear.

Ros Brunt: Oh right.

Trevor Millum: I wrote in a paper on the photographs, of course, visual analysis, the pictures used in the newspapers. I went down to the Birmingham Post offices and I was allowed to look at all the photographs taken, and then I was able to ask the question, well, out of all those photographs that were taken, why choose these particular ones.

Kieran Connell: So, in a sense, that shows even from that very early stage the political leadings and the practical work that was being done.

Ros Brunt: But also a massive amount of work that wasn't our individual thesis, and also wasn't published. When you think now that was extraordinary that amount of work, there wasn't a sense then of publishing. In a way, we were a bit safeguarded by – Richard was publishing in The Listener or... he was always having things published and then collected and so on. And Stuart was – they were both broadcasters. So there wasn't the pressure – we didn't think in terms of publication until we got to the working papers and the journals and so on. But, at that time, people putting enormous amount of work in, developing some sort of theories, because I remember a labelling theory, we were influenced by the National Conference for Deviancy was just coming in then, and things like Labelling theory and so on, and how the – there was a whole thing about the numbers who were at a sit-in, how you counted them, the great majority and the great majority of students still went on with

their daily – it was only a minority. And we looked at things like that which was also what the deviancy conference was starting to look at in terms of the media and so on. And stereotyping and things. So we were also developing theory at the same time through that, but there was no idea that this massive amount of work would be published.

[0:24:32]

Trevor Millum: Super true life action pics, that's what my paper was called, I remember now.

Ros Brunt: Right.

Trevor Millum: Just came back to me.

Ros Brunt: Have you got a copy?

Trevor Millum: No.

Kieran Connell: I mean, talking about how it seemed normal for the Centre to take part in a sit-in, I don't know if any of you remember this but do you remember Mermaid student magazine?

Ros Brunt: Yes, I used to write for Mermaid. You found one of my articles.

Kieran Connell: There's an edition of Mermaid written in 1968, special edition, which Stuart, I believe, I think edited or certainly he wrote a long post-script which had almost all Centre people talking about the nature of the university, and I think you were involved in it as well.

Trevor Millum: I wrote one called (inaudible 0:25:04) which was about finance, yeah.

Kieran Connell: That was 1968, and then the following year the sit-in.

Trevor Millum: It was called *To Serve with Love: The University*.

Kieran Connell: Yeah.

Ros Brunt: Oh, I remember! Yes, yes.

Kieran Connell: Stuart had forgotten about that. I made copies for him and sent him copies. But I guess that shows...

Trevor Millum: Ros is right. We were doing a huge amount of other writing that we just thought was part of the job, almost. So it was very full-on. And quite a lot of us were also doing bits of teaching. I taught a couple of mornings a week down at Matthew Boulton Technical College.

Kieran Connell: General studies?

Trevor Millum: That was the (inaudible 0:25:48). A class with paint mixers.

Chris Pawling: Motor vehicle mechanics.

Trevor Millum: We all remember those occasions, don't we? Should have put me off teaching for life. So we had seminars on Monday and Tuesday for most of the day. I did some teaching on Wednesday and Thursday, and tried to do my own research and stuff for the seminars and other little collectives that might be going on during the remaining time.

Chris Pawling: That's what I did, exactly the same. Teaching-

Kieran Connell: That's one of my questions, actually, what...?

Chris Pawling: Tuesday and Wednesday teaching. Well, Monday and Tuesday were seminars for us, Wednesday and Thursday you'd get your part-time teaching organised, maybe – I remember even teaching on a Friday night, actually. And then you'd try and get your work done in the intervening-

Trevor Millum: Goodness knows where we had any personal lives.

[0:26:45]

Chris Pawling: It was really complicated, actually.

Trevor Millum: We didn't spend a lot of the time in the pub, actually, that's for sure.

Chris Pawling: No, that's right. It was actually quite – especially if you didn't have a grant then you did need to do the teaching.

Kieran Connell: What was the working – you kind of nicely napped it now, actually, already but one of my questions was going to be what did the working week look like? So that was the name for you as well, Ros?

Ros Brunt: Yes. What I can't remember is why – we didn't seem to – even if we weren't teaching, we didn't seem to hang around. It wasn't a Centre that you just go in like post-graduates now have a room or something. I know it was a bit different when we moved over, but I can't remember going into the huts just to be with other post-graduates and chat.

Chris Pawling: I think it was different when we went to the arts block. When we were on the top floor of the arts block, there was that seminar-

Ros Brunt: Yes, I was never on the arts block.

Chris Pawling: People used to hang around there and talk. We did, actually. And in Hoggart's room, actually, because Hoggart had a room that he didn't use so we could use that with all his books there. And, actually, that meant there was a place to sit and discuss so we did use – so maybe it changed then.

Ros Brunt: Right, maybe it changed, yes.

Chris Pawling: It was more when. It was usually on a Friday. I remember Stuart coming in, it was always a mess, and he said, 'God, these people how they talk about organising revolution, they can't even bloody get the library...' To tidy up the library. And it was always on a Friday afternoon, it was always in a mess. But that was – so there was a sense in which people could hang around there, but that was probably a bit later on.

Ros Brunt: I can't remember in the huts that we hung around. We just had the two-

Trevor Millum: Before and after-

Ros Brunt: On those actual days.

Chris Pawling: On seminars, yes.

Trevor Millum: If you haven't got a space to work in quiet then why would you come then? You would be working at home probably. I generally used to come in because I had so many piles of magazines and stuff and I couldn't access at home, wasn't going to carry them backwards and forwards, so some of us worked at home but generally I had to be there, so wherever I was I created a territorial empire around me. And that caused a couple of disagreements, one with Richard and one with Stuart; very mild but I was told to take the barriers down. But in terms of work, I remember being very work focussed and very excited about what I was doing, that's why. So I remember particularly in my first year I'd go out maybe – I'd be visiting Christine who was doing a PGCE, she had a flat somewhere Moseley way, and my way back to my flat which was in Harbourne I'd stop by at the Centre, and this would be 11pm, do two hours of work and go home, because I had been thinking about it and I

thought I know – the next bit I want to look at is this. And so I've got some ideas about how this would...

[0:29:53]

Ros Brunt: I think it would have been quite creepy late at night.

Trevor Millum: Had a key, I got in, I didn't care. Nobody came to ask me – if somebody did and ask me I'd say, 'I'm working.' And, in a way, that was really – that time of night I found something really quite powerful in terms of work. That was only that year, didn't do that after Chris and I got married, but I did call in and get on with stuff at any moment I could get hold of because I needed to be there.

Ros Brunt: Yes, because the stuff was there.

Kieran Connell: You talked at the beginning all about, in a sense, your broadly Left political formation, whether it's practical sit-ins or in different formations at Birmingham or elsewhere. Was the pull of the Centre its politics or was the pull of the Centre you (inaudible 0:30:47) to this, the intellectual work that it was doing, or was it both? How, in the first instance-?

Chris Pawling: I think it has to be said it was both, for me. You couldn't separate one from the other because the intellectual work was, in a sense, engaged or was engaged with some notion of a transformatory politics or transformative politics, I think, even if it wasn't of the second kind, you could say it was all Marxist politics and all that. It was Libertarian, Left Libertarian, various kinds of tendencies, but you could tell that the way in which that worked and was shaping – understood Stuart, I'm talking about, that's when I was of that kind. So it fitted in, for example, in my case with what I had been doing in Germany and all the rest of it, and the politics, IS and so on, so it was both the ideas and the politics, really. Although there was some tension, I think, around the politics and the feeling that perhaps those who were involved with Left politics were tending to see those who were not actually "practically involved" as theoreticians or... do you know what I mean? And then those were involved as a, kind of, rather workerist, do you know what I mean? So there was that kind of tension, you can't forget that, but at the same time I think I was drawn to the Centre because of what it seemed to offer in the sense of the combination of the two; theory and practice combination.

Kieran Connell: The intellectual, the political and the political work was intellectual, in that sense.

Chris Pawling: And particular ways to shaping it.

Ros Brunt: Yes, because that had changed a lot by the time you came.

Trevor Millum: It was very different when I arrived. I didn't go there for any political reason. I was just really interested in what I wanted to research. I had done some research – my dissertation, my final year of the history degree, was into popular magazines in the 1930's and so I was very familiar with going down to Collingdale and all that stuff. I therefore knew about the Centre and that was the big decision, because some people said, oh, changing from history to what was officially English department, don't forget, you'll never be able to get a grant to do that. And other people said, 'Yeah, give it a try.' I remember thinking, yeah, funnily enough its background goes to a talk I heard on what was before Radio 3, the Third Programme, about mass media by John Warden, John... I can't remember his exact name now... I listened to it and I thought that's really interesting. I actually wrote to the BBC to give a copy of the paper and having done that I was therefore in touch with this guy, and he ran a conference at Granford/Granley/one of those RAF type places on mass media which I went to. And, of course, somebody from the Centre, very, very early days of the Centre, somebody called Stephen who rode a motorbike, came to it as well and so that was a very non-political except it was very critical of the media, it was just – that was part of it, kind of thing, but it didn't have an overtly political agenda. And so having been to that conference and written that dissertation, the natural move of where do I go from here, I don't want to do straight historical research, I wanted to do something much more interesting, and there was the Centre on my doorstep.

Ros Brunt: But you hadn't actually been over the doorstep, presumably?

Trevor Millum: No, I hadn't, because we didn't have undergraduate...

[0:34:49]

Ros Brunt: So you wouldn't have known Stuart Hall or Rob Richard?

Trevor Millum: No, I obviously read Public Riots and I'd read Richard Hoggart and so on, so I knew they were there and that was a really good place to go. I thought I'm at the university already, it's a no brainer, I don't even have to move. As I say, I was not aware apart from the fact that I knew Stuart was involved with the Left which was fine by me. I didn't-

Ros Brunt: And Catherine Hall was – you were with Catherine, weren't you?

Trevor Millum: That's right. She was here. So it all evolved, really, and very glad of it because the move was just sideways until, of course, I realised how much I didn't know. I knew a lot of stuff that nobody else was interested in, Richard the seconds and receipts, they didn't seem to be relevant, bizarre to me, but there you go, but I knew a lot of other names and stuff. So I was really paddling like mad trying to catch up on the very interesting stuff. We forget that his all took place – the Centre was within the English department.

Ros Brunt: Absolutely. Which was quite hostile to it, in many aspects of it.

Trevor Millum: It was handy though because when I went to get a job, when I got my first head of English job, I was able to put down that I got an English PhD. They didn't cotton on for some time.

Chris Pawling: I bet Professor Spencer didn't look at it.

Trevor Millum: But it was true.

Ros Brunt; He was a Shakespearean...

Male; Yeah, very straight.

Trevor Millum: Very handy.

Kieran Connell: How about you? You mentioned that also the intellectual work that was...?

Ros Brunt: Yes, I didn't say it was political, I really was a bit vague. I remember just – we didn't even have interviews in those days. I remember just writing to Richard. They'd taken an interest in me going – I was in touch with Richard Hoggart and people like David Lodge and Michael Green who had been my undergraduate people, so they were interested in this new course at Essex and I think I wrote letters to them, or to Michael Green who then would have got it to everybody else. And then it just came up to the end of the year and I remember there were various options open and I did apply to go to Edinburgh to do sociology because I still would have had this two year grant. And I just remember – and then it occurred to me that it would be quite interesting – I was interested in doing television programmes, didn't even have the – in those days, not everybody had a television even, I don't think while I was doing the MA at Essex I had a television, actually, but discussion programmes and current affairs programmes, it was as general as that, and whether they were a democratic forum. And wrote something to Richard about that and I think he sent a postcard back saying, 'Yes, come!' And that was it, end of. And obviously they knew me. But they complained later, Richard Hoggart, about the admissions process we did have, it was ruled very political and all the rest of it. This was patronage, basically, which is really – and very much how Richard himself had got jobs and how people did things in those days. So I wouldn't say it was political, although I came with all this new, 'I'm political now,' I wasn't thinking of the Centre particularly in that way, it was more this would be an opportunity to look at something like this.

Trevor Millum: And it was bound to be congenial, in a way, I think that's the word. You would feel at home in a very general sort of way with your views and that's...

Ros Brunt: Yes.

[0:38:44]

Chris Pawling: When I went for an interview – see, Ros interviewed me along with Stuart Lang and....

Ros Brunt: By then we'd got very democratic.

Trevor Millum: I remember doing interviews with Richard.

Chris Pawling: Because I'd been in Germany I was able to talk about the fact that school and psych-analysis and all that sort of stuff, authority in the family, and that fitted in with what they were doing at the Centre, so there was a way – by the time I went, there was not a vetting of you but there was a way in which those who were interviewed were looked at how your work might fit in with Centre seminars, or what...

Ros Brunt: But also develop it. You were offering something different.

Chris Pawling: Yeah, so it wasn't just you choosing to go to the Centre, it was also what you could offer to the Centre as well as a kind of collective project. So it was an interesting to-ing and fro-ing, I think, in that interviewing process.

Kieran Connell: Do you remember the interview?

Ros Brunt: Yes. But the thing is it's also in Richard Hoggart's autobiography in this very nasty way its written up, there was this awful post-graduate me, an awful woman, who only wanted people who were the same as her, and if she'd had her way in the early days we wouldn't have had a certain brilliant student, and a certain brilliant student was Richard Dire who wouldn't – he got very involved, as he would have told you, in gay politics when he came but he wasn't political in that sort of Lefty sense at all. But that was a total misreading of what I wrote. In fact, we had discussed endlessly admissions process. It was much more democratic, as I say, than Richard's postcards or patronage. We didn't want people who were exactly the same, it wasn't like a clone thing, we did acknowledge that it would be silly to have someone who – we might not have taken Richard Dire, that's possibly true, in those later days but it was a much more sophisticated thing, and we did want people who had got things we knew were interesting but didn't necessarily know about. So it wasn't this – he talks about it as if there was some party discipline or something that people could only cross the threshold and that was part of how he was projecting back onto the Centre that Stuart was doing that he didn't understand, that worried him etc. etc.

Chris Pawling: Michael was involved that but Stuart wasn't.

Ros Brunt: Yes.

Chris Pawling: Michael wasn't a party figure, in that sense.

Ros Brunt: No.

Chris Pawling: He wasn't even a Marxist, in that sense, so you weren't getting a Left...

Trevor Millum: I remember doing interviews with Stuart and Richard Dire one year, must have been my last year there, and we were – the person's politics didn't come into it. How interesting were they? I remember that was the word. It became a bit of a joke in the end. I didn't like his tie but he was very interesting. Richard made a lot out of that, it was great, we had good fun as well. We were serious but I thought it was a very good experience. We were just looking at how committed are they or is it just a choice they might like, what have they done already, and just... yeah, it was this word, what are they going to bring, have they got something interesting about them, and I suppose you pick up a bit about their general attitudes and so on. That was definitely...

Ros Brunt: You would also be thinking about them working in a Centre capacity in a way that might not have been the case. You see, I don't know why, in a way, although it's called the Centre under Hoggart, in what sense was it a Centre? But certainly we did have a notion that they would be doing more than their own work.

[0:42:38]

Trevor Millum: That's right. We would be looking for team players.

Ros Brunt: So even if you weren't looking for political line, you would want to be saying would they fit into the Centre in the sense that they would be prepared to get engaged in all the extra stuff we did, that it wasn't just about – even then, it was much more about would they be part of the group as well. That wasn't-

Chris Pawling: It seemed like the whole thing about, in a sense, them being willing to participate and not being individualistic, not being part of the-

Trevor Millum: A lot of sharing in all sorts of ways.

Chris Pawling: In some ways coming out with a different attitude, yeah.

Kieran Connell: What are your reflections of the democratisation of the place? Richard leaving, Stuart becoming acting director, and then the moment missed. What are your reflections? How would it take place and how would it affect the working practises of the Centre, and how did it affect the everyday life that took place there?

Ros Brunt: Can I just ask you if you remember, while Hoggart was still there and it would have been after the sit-in, I think you, me and Richard Dire and... who was the fourth one? Chas. Formed the little four. Do you remember being the little four? And it was, sort of, jokey. You don't remember being the little four?

Trevor Millum: Keep going.

Ros Brunt: So Richard Dire was quite new and everything but we started to think why is this syllabus – that the big four who were Alan Shuttleworth, Stuart Hall, Richard Hoggart, and I think Andy Bearb if he was there then, that they were researchers, so research fellows; two directors and two research fellows. They did the syllabus for the following year and we didn't question it. But that term we did, and so we had a sense of the big four who were the salaried people, and so it was the first democratic – as I say, I'm sure it was you, me, Chas and Richard Dire. But we did it in a sort of jokey way but there was then a sense that, yes, possibly the post-graduates could be involved in the syllabus. And then, of course – so this was the after math of the sit-in.

Trevor Millum: Syllabus, what do you mean?

Ros Brunt: What we did, what we read on the Mondays. The theory stuff.

Trevor Millum: So, programme.

Ros Brunt: The programme. The programme, which was not done by us. We arrived in the autumn and it was there week by week. And, admittedly, people would take turns. Someone would offer to introduce something and that had happened the year I had came, so it was good, fine, but we felt why can't we have some input? And it was as simple as that. It was just this big four versus the little four and it was sort of a jokey thing. Is it coming back to you? And that was the after math of the sit-in but as far as it went, really. It was only really after Hoggart went, although there had been, as I say, the boo-ing and there had been this sense that Richard Hoggart had played this very strange, well, to many people, middle position which – whereas most of the Centre had not been in the place Richard Hoggart – so there was still that business carrying on while we were studying the sit-in as well. And then this first move to democracy, and then Richard suddenly has this job in UNESCO, very suddenly, very suddenly goes. And we are put in a whole different position. Much more undefended

as well because Hoggart has gone, he played a very useful role in keeping the Vice Chancellor happy etc. and Stuart wasn't in that same place at all and didn't like the committee work that Richard Hoggart had done. Richard Hoggart had mixed with the great and the good and all these committees outside the university and things, and then had suddenly gone, and so it was a whole different ball game. And part of the democratisation was sheer resources, that we couldn't leave everything for Stuart to do. It was obviously far too much.

[0:46:57]

Kieran Connell: Michael was still only part-time.

Ros Brunt: Michael came in and had a difficult relationship, because of the indiscretions and things – indiscretion is the wrong word, because he was indiscreet, and so we were a bit uncertain about Michael's role.

Chris Pawling: He was also still in the English department.

Ros Brunt: He was still in the English department, so he was only coming over for a bit.

Trevor Millum: I wasn't quite sure what he was doing. I was always a bit bemused and didn't like to ask. Who is he? Why is he here?

Ros Brunt: Those who'd had English with him would have known him as an undergraduate and a very good teacher, excellent teacher. But it was unclear what he was doing. And Stuart and he didn't really work as a team particularly, I think because Michael was, in many ways, quite undermining of Stuart. Stuart was very reserved, whereas Michael was a blabber mouth, basically, although very enthusiastic, very keen, but it was difficult to see – it was a shock to us all that suddenly Hoggart had gone and what do we do now? So, inevitably, that was what led up to the sub-groups and all the rest of it, and much more aware that we had to put a public face which eventually led to the working papers and the Centre becoming more we had to produce.

Chris Pawling: Also, weren't we losing the Alan Lane money.

Ros Brunt: Yes.

Chris Pawling: I remember Stuart talking about that because that supported the Secretary, didn't it, and there was a whole question about what was going to happen when that money ran out, wasn't there?

Ros Brunt: We did still have a Secretary-

Chris Pawling: We still had the Secretary but-

Ros Brunt: Yes, but how that had been done, yes.

Chris Pawling: And she went part-time...

Kieran Connell: Joan Good, was it?

Chris Pawling: Joan, yeah, and there was a whole-

Trevor Millum: Joan was there twice.

Ros Brunt: That's right, yes.

Trevor Millum: She was there at the beginning and then after I left, and then we had a whole series of really quite dreadful secretaries who were completely incompetent, apart from Ann Patchett.

Ros Brunt: Oh yes.

Trevor Millum: But she was often ill. Secretarial support was quite difficult.

[0:48:57]

Chris Pawling: That's right. But there was that whole thing about the-

Kieran Connell: Money running out.

Chris Pawling: And about, as you say, Michael had come in but where was it going to go? And I remember discussions about resources and what was going to happen to the Centre, would it still be able to survive, so it was interesting.

Ros Brunt: And there was clearly hostility in terms of the subject, like sociology had never – the sociology degree, they just saw the Centre as interlopers, and to do with English. Within the English department, there were a lot of traditionalists who weren't at all supportive of it.

Trevor Millum: It was an odd position for it to be in. It was there historical inertia, wasn't it?

Ros Brunt: And through Richard Hoggart making the deal, I'm coming as a Professor and I want to set up this Centre, and that was in his inaugural speech as well, that this was the deal. So when he'd gone, it was quite vulnerable in many ways. And Stuart talks about that period in the interview with Hudson Vincent about you had to rely on – would Raymond Williams or EP Thompson come in and support you from outside. There were threats going on all the time, and especially because the Centre had been very visible over the sit-in.

Trevor Millum: And its support for Richard Atkinson.

Ros Brunt: That's right. Dick Atkinson, yes.

Trevor Millum: And the ACA committee.

Chris Pawling: ACA, yeah, Academic... was it?

Ros Brunt: Yes, that was around this time. Was that after the sit-in?

Trevor Millum: It started with the sit-in because the Vice Chancellor said to – I remember Dick Atkinson quoted it, said to one of the students, 'What you are doing on my campus?' or something, 'What are you doing here?' And Atkinson said how can he say this is my university, it's our university. I remember Dick Atkinson pushing that line.

Ros Brunt: Was he in sociology?

Trevor Millum: Yeah, he was in sociology, and I think he was also on the committee for the sit-in or he did address us a lot. He was an important figure.

Ros Brunt: And lost his job, basically.

Trevor Millum: Yeah, lost his job.

Chris Pawling: Some sort of protests about that.

Kieran Connell: When did red base theory come into it and did it come into it? This is something that comes out of the moment missed debate, 1971, references made in these debates about this notion of creating a red bate.

Ros Brunt: I don't know if Richard Dire mentioned it as well?

Kieran Connell: No.

Ros Brunt: We both swear that this was definitely Stuart, he did use the phrase and I'm sure it's-

Kieran Connell: He uses it in the paper.

[0:51:35]

Ros Brunt: And he uses it in the paper. I've seen him pass over that or almost as good as deny he did it, but he definitely – but it was very much in the air at that period. I remember Paul Willis who in some ways you could say certainly wasn't political in the Stuart sense talking about the cultural revolution, and we all ought to pay attention to what was going on in the cultural revolution. Later we learnt how appalling it was, but it was very much – it seemed very current, the red base, along with things that I think Dick Atkinson was also involved in in this previous period. Even on our quite ordinary provincial campus, two members of staff had come back from the States interested in anti-university and set up an anti-university. And, in fact, that was where I first heard the words women's liberation in early '69, and I was involved in the anti-university where certainly things like red bases, women's liberation, and I went to introductory Marxism in the chaplaincy. I don't know if you know St Francis-

Chris Pawling: He was quite a progressive figure.

Ros Brunt: The chaplain was very progressive. What did you think his name was?

Trevor Millum: David Hart?

Ros Brunt: Yes, that's right, David Hart.

Chris Pawling: David Hart was a very nice guy.

Ros Brunt: There was a basement where jazz used to happen but also where introduction to Marxism from the anti-university in 1970, run by someone called Steve Butters who used to attend seminars, because there were also all these floating people who weren't actually registered, weren't for degrees, weren't fellows, who drifted in.

Trevor Millum: The duty seminars where we used to have outside speakers.

Ros Brunt: That's right, they particularly came.

Trevor Millum: People were welcome to come, yes. We had some very high powered people both as speakers and as attendees.

Ros Brunt: Yes, we did.

Kieran Connell: Like, for example?

Trevor Millum: Who came from... a bit like Stan Cats, do you remember him?

Ros Brunt; Yes.

Trevor Millum: Julian Argle.

Chris Pawling: Who is the one I was trying to think of who was a pupil of Lucatch's, wasn't he, and he was over in – was it in politics or in sociology, and that's the one I was trying to tell you about, Ros, the other day.

Ros Brunt: Oh right, I didn't know he was actually at Birmingham.

Chris Pawling: I think Julian Argle had been – was he at Birmingham? He was at Birmingham, wasn't he? Hadn't he been in Hungary I think with Lucatch? Anyway, I remember because...

Trevor Millum: Some people's names I remember but... There was sometimes a bit of a hushed...

Kieran Connell: I know Germaine Greer was one who came probably later on.

[0:54:26]

Chris Pawling: Yeah, Juliette Mitchell.

Ros Brunt: Yes, Germaine Greer must have been later, yes.

Trevor Millum: I met her at the same time. You remind me of her in some ways.

Ros Brunt: EP Thompson?

Trevor Millum: No, Germaine-

Ros Brunt: Germaine Greer, right, right. Why don't you say about that conference you were talking about in that summer which was the first thing?

Trevor Millum: Well, whichever summer it was, we can pin it down because there was the year of the first moon landing...

Ros Brunt: I think it was the summer of '69.

Trevor Millum: We had this idea, I don't know where it came from, we had this idea that we would host a cultural studies conference. And so there was a little group of us, I was involved and Stuart and a few others, who basically set it up and invited all sorts of people. I remember the guy who wrote *The Other Victorians*, was it, Stephen Marcus, there was... I can't remember.

Ros Brunt: And there would be quite a few Americans as well anyway because...

Trevor Millum: I won't embarrass anybody by releasing a particular anecdote, we'll do that over lunch.

Ros Brunt: Mark it down.

Trevor Millum: Who else came? Lesley Feidler.

Ros Brunt: Yes!

Trevor Millum: Do you remember him? Big American. He was very good.

Ros Brunt: A lot of these were Richard Hoggart's contacts.

Trevor Millum: They were good value. And a French structuralist, a woman, wasn't Juliette Chrisdaver, she's not French, is she? Anyway... who had to be translated.

Ros Brunt: Oh, I'd forgotten that.

Trevor Millum: Again, that was quite embarrassing. My job as a lowly student was to operate the tape recorder, the reel to reel tape recorder, the idea being that this would all then be transcribed and we would publish it which would turn out to be a no no because the Secretary of the time, Ann Patchett, was given the job of transcribing these tapes, can you imagine? I mean, transcribing is hard enough at the best of times. And there was just masses of material. And, also, if you are not part of the actual conference-

Ros Brunt: It's very hard.

Trevor Millum: You don't know what people are talking about. What's that word? I don't know that word. And, of course, they were all using bloody great multi-syllabic words from Hungary, translating via the French. A lot of us hadn't a clue what they were talking about anyway, couldn't help her out, so that project unfortunately was abandoned. Some wonderful stuff, I wonder where those tapes are.

Ros Brunt: Yes, indeed!

[0:57:12]

Kieran Connell: And Thompson came to that as well then?

Ros Brunt: I think Thompson did come to that.

Trevor Millum: I think he might have done, actually.

Ros Brunt: And was very unpleasant. I think it was one of the times he attacked Raymond Williams, and I don't know if Raymond Williams was there on that occasion.

Trevor Millum: I don't remember.

Ros Brunt: I remember him being very aggressive.

Trevor Millum: Thompson could be, couldn't he?

Kieran Connell: Given what happened later on with the politic theory, of course, all those debates...

Ros Brunt: Absolutely.

Trevor Millum: It was a very interesting and very high powered conference but there were no proceedings.

Ros Brunt: Yes, that is funny, isn't it?

Trevor Millum: Unless you can put your hands on those tapes...

Kieran Connell: Gold dust.

Trevor Millum: I think there were some very informative philosophers but you couldn't even take notes because things would move on too fast.

Male; Too fast, yes.

Trevor Millum: People made connections, and one of the most useful things about most conferences with each other, with people from other universities, other areas, and it was a three day conference.

Ros Brunt: And it was at the Shakespeare Institute, I'm sure.

Trevor Millum: Where did we hold it? I couldn't remember where we held it.

Ros Brunt: I couldn't think how that was ever allowed.

Chris Pawling: One of the only times.

Ros Brunt: It must have been, yes. It must have been Hoggart doing some deal with Spencer, yes.

Trevor Millum: It was a success. Lots of people attended. It must have paid for itself and put ourselves in somebody's good books.

Ros Brunt: Yes.

Trevor Millum: I don't know what we charged but because we were all there free, of course... There were heaps of people we would never have met. It would be interesting to see almost putting out a general call, who was at the cultural studies conference, 1969, Shakespearean Institute, because there might be some who might remember other things.

Kieran Connell: Definitely. Worth looking into, I think.

[0:59:05]

Chris Pawling: Yeah.

Ros Brunt: Summer of '69, yes.

Trevor Millum: I also remember another conference, an away weekend we had-

Ros Brunt: Yes, we had away weekends.

Trevor Millum: In Wales somewhere, drove for...

Ros Brunt: Some youth hostel type place.

Trevor Millum: It took us ages to get there and ages to find it, if I remember rightly. We had this-

Ros Brunt: Did our own cooking.

Trevor Millum: And it was one of these what's the Centre all about conferences, wasn't it, which... By the end of the weekend you did wonder what it was all about, and I'm not sure we're any further on.

Kieran Connell: Talking about-

Chris Pawling: Bonding.

Trevor Millum: We bonded well, yes.

Kieran Connell: What was useful in this whole move towards democratising the Centre, and also in terms of what the Centre was, that age old debate?

Trevor Millum: It depends what you mean by democratising the Centre.

Kieran Connell: Did Stuart encourage the students to take more – like the little four, or was that something the little four took upon themselves, or...?

Ros Brunt: When Hoggart was there, it was very much Hoggart's show and Stuart wasn't exactly in the background but he wouldn't – apart from at the sit-in, he didn't really come out and champion us against Hoggart or anything. They would have seemed very much a team, and we would have treated them – that's why we saw them as the big four. We didn't separate off Stuart as on our side or anything in those days.

Kieran Connell: But when Hoggart left, Stuart became acting director, do you think things really accelerated then?

Ros Brunt: Yes, very much, and partly, as I say, out of necessity I think.

Trevor Millum: It didn't seem, to me, looking back after all these years, it didn't seem to be like revolutionary or whatever, it just became more collegiate. Unlike being invited to sit in on admissions interviews, it was, I felt it evolved because it could in that environment, evolved rather gently according to needs and circumstances. Whereas if we'd been in a different department, it would have been revolutionary, that amount of say in what we can do.

Ros Brunt: But it was also in the air because of all that thing about student representation, so it wasn't – you're right, I think it perhaps...

Chris Pawling: What about the attack later on on the paternalism so-called of Stuart? That's really more, I suppose, the growth of feminism and the impact of feminism on the Centre which came, I suppose, when I was

there and just after. But there was a moment where Stuart, I think, felt perhaps in a difficult position, in some ways not unlike Hoggart's position, where he was on the one hand director of the Centre, on the other hand wanting to open up democracy, but at the same time that movement was gathering so much pace that perhaps he felt the critique that was developing was an unfair critique, that Stuart equals paternalism so let's get at Stuart. There was a moment where Stuart sat in the seminars, bringing books in and underlining the reading that he was doing, and didn't feel like, I don't think, that he could participate or didn't want to participate because he felt perhaps that the critique that was coming through was an unfair critique, and that he was being singled out as the representative of paternalism, that discourse. I think it would be after your time, but I remember Stuart sitting in the seminar and you saying to Stuart, asking him questions, and Stuart not really wanting to answer and sitting there with his books just underlining his books.

[1:03:24]

Ros Brunt: It was. From this period of the moment missed, which I re-read his version which is really that summer of '71, when you were still – we had already started on the working papers, hadn't we, and there were already the stencilled papers around I think even under Hoggart's time-

Trevor Millum: Oh yes, there were.

Ros Brunt: So we'd already done that. but then it was – there was all this – in the political context of (inaudible 1:03:52), of alternative theory and all the rest of it, the Centre was in this as well, and Stuart I think felt you're getting at me but you lot – and it's quite a savage attack on ourselves, actually, 'You have missed the moment,' basically. And I felt some resentment that, well, if you were the only one, Stuart, who saw the moment, why didn't you tell us? It's a bit unfair, but also that he was just allowing himself to be affected by just one or two people who did start saying the thing about – who he accused, quite rightly in my view, of bad faith and double bind, that he had this whole thing about the politics of intellectual work which, of all the phrases, is the one that has really stuck with me, by which he said, 'if you come in this room, you work in this room and we do something, you don't say we should be down there at Houndsworth. If you want to be in Houndsworth, that's your political choice, but don't come here saying we're wasting our time. Don't come here and tell us.' It was the activist thing versus the theory thing, and it was very destructive. And then projected onto him as, 'This is what you are saying, Stuart, really, that we should sit here in this room when all this important stuff is happening outside.' Whereas his point was, 'If we make the commitment to sit in this room, we have to say something about the outside.' He was trying to argue against this crude dichotomy.

Kieran Connell: Also bringing the outside in.

Ros Brunt: Yes.

Chris Pawling: One is an intellectual or what is the Left intellectual was very much a part of that. The instant we talked about Gramsci and the intellectual function, what is the function of an intellectual, is it to be out on the picket lines or is it to be working at particular issues, to deconstruct an ideological critique, an ideology, developing popular education, all that kind of thing, almost, in a sense, alongside the struggle.

Ros Brunt: So you weren't not to make that choice necessarily, you could also be-

Chris Pawling: You don't substitute one for the other. And I think that debate gathered pace when I came.

Ros Brunt: But it wasn't saying you shouldn't be on the picket line-

Chris Pawling: No, no, but it was saying that you shouldn't substitute one for the other.

Ros Brunt: Absolutely.

Chris Pawling: On the other hand, that I think perhaps retrospectively he cast that that that was all that was happening; there was one being substituted for the other and that there was a tendency, he said, for those who were activists to just want to be just gorillas or political revolutionaries and to just purely

and simply substitute one for the other when, in actual fact, the Gramsci position was more, if you like, intellectually more complex than that, and that that was the position he was trying to develop. But I would argue against it and say those who came on the Left weren't necessarily trying to just (inaudible 1:06:56) that kind of Gramsci position for a (inaudible 1:07:00), that it was more complex than that. But those are the sort of debates. And I think I also moved too far forward with the feminist stuff because that came later on. I think you were right, Ros, that what first caused Stuart to withdraw in a way was that earlier debate around the moment missed which I just came in on the end of really.

[1:07:25]

Ros Brunt: It was carrying on in to that '72. Yes, what is this moment bit?

Trevor Millum: What moment did I miss?

Chris Pawling: I hadn't seen this position. I came in the autumn of '71 and you obviously had this debate or started this debate. What the hell was all this about the moment missed?

Ros Brunt: I think we were carrying on with position papers.

Chris Pawling: But why is it so important? I could see the other stuff happening outside. So I suppose that was one of the problems, the on-going nature of the Centre, but it was interesting. I did get a sense of Stuart then being, in some ways, feeling a little bit on the edge there, not on the edge, but not wanting to participate fully because he felt that he had been...

Trevor Millum: I can remember the very early days where Stuart would sit in seminars reading books and then suddenly making...

Chris Pawling: He would do that, but doing it a lot.

Ros Brunt: Hoggart was the cover then. And Stuart has talked about feeling, like, over the Tiger Tiger thing, that Stuart has since said, 'I felt I had a lot to say about Tiger Tiger but I couldn't do it in...' He felt he couldn't say it in that forum, that it was Richard's show, very much Richard's show. And then he got invited on to do a television programme about Tiger Tiger and Stuart said, 'That was my revenge! I got on to talk about Blake. I got chosen to talk about it.'

Kieran Connell: Also Stuart, in the papers, if he talks too much and makes his last intervention, is accused of – certainly in debates. But then when he doesn't – when he's not talking, he is accused of – why is he being so quiet? So it's almost like the frustration of that position he felt like...

Trevor Millum: Yeah, I can't do right for doing wrong.

Kieran Connell: Exactly.

Ros Brunt: He did feel that, but I tried to say in my paper there's a lot of goodwill towards you, Stuart, that you are just seeing the people who mouth off about that, 'We shouldn't be here, we should be out with the workers etc. etc. or black people, whatever interestingly in terms of him,' so there was always something, and the language of priorities and things. So I was trying to say there were a lot of people who want you to exert intellectual leadership but there has got to be some way of doing it that isn't either being silent and then bursting into song at the end of it. It was awful trying to speak – I can see the whole dilemma was collect a genuine – no one believed in collectivity more than Stuart, really, absolutely committed to collectivity, and you see that all his stuff – most of his publications are written with some that are co-authored, that's how he likes to work. He is very congenial, bouncing ideas off people etc. etc. So absolutely committed to collectivism. But how do you square that with he is the brightest guy in the room and he knows the most? I tried to say we would respect intellectual leadership, we want that from you, Stuart, you can teach us. I think he didn't quite get it right. He didn't perhaps trust those people who would have gone with him. I was trying to say in my paper, look, Paul Willis said how much I've learnt from you, Trevor Fisher is saying he's got a great deal out of being in the Centre, you are not listening to the quieter people who aren't coming in and

tub thumping, and guilt tripping. Because that was the other thing; bad faiths, Stuart always said, get on guilt tripping and you're putting me in the double bind of either I speak or I'm silent, both ways are wrong. And both ways were wrong because it was terrible to sit there in a room with Stuart sulking behind all these books, marking these books, and we were discussing whoever the theorist was at the time in this feeble way where he was listening and could say much better about it. and then he would, he'd be so provoked by our feebleness, he would come in at the end and then do this amazing summary which, of course, was far better than anything... And then you just feel a bit deflated.

[1:11:16]

Chris Pawling: I think it was a mixture. I think the thing was you didn't always feel deflated. I remember that moment when he, for example, in one of the literature and society seminars, where he just went to the board and did a map of Lucatch's – no, Goldman's hidden God, and took us right to the hidden God, and I think it's in one of those...

Ros Brunt: Stencil papers.

Chris Pawling: Yeah, just a handwritten version of one of the stencil papers, brilliant. And at that moment you thought, god, I've really got an insight into what the hell is going on in Goldman. And he did that. Now, that is something-

Ros Brunt: No, it wasn't all the time. It wasn't all the time.

Chris Pawling: I think it was just so problematic. I think it was a very difficult issue to work through.

Ros Brunt: Absolutely.

Chris Pawling: The whole question of leadership. Education EduCo leads now, for God's sake, what does that mean? What is that leading out of...? You are trying to build on what people have got, as you said, he knows more than... But he's trying to manage those two people who then feel that they can move forward themselves and feel motivated and all the rest of it. It's a very difficult one, I think, very difficult to manage. Whereas Hoggart did it much more as a, kind of-

Ros Brunt: Much more in a standard way, yes.

Trevor Millum: Classic dilemma.

Chris Pawling: Yeah, he is a classic dilemma.

Trevor Millum: If you take Richard Hoggart's position then you may approve or not approve of it but you know what it is exactly, 'This is the way we do things,' like a teacher standing in front of class, same kind of thing. As soon as you want to democratise classroom practice it becomes very difficult, actually. You cannot let things just open up and any old thing works. So at some point you have to exert authority because that's what you are there for, otherwise why are you in this room? You're getting paid, why are you here? So when and how to do that I think...

Chris Pawling: Sorry to interrupt, but Ros' thing about intellectual leadership, us wanting to...

Ros Brunt: You see, I think Hoggart and Stuart were different. What Hoggart offered was a virtuoso performance. I remember sitting there and thinking you do this brilliantly, Richard. The Tiger Tiger or whatever the example was, the first paragraph, reading for tone was his thing, the close analysis. He could say this represents the relationship between a man and a woman, you can see the context, the class thing which he was particularly keen on...

Chris Pawling: The voices of the text.

Ros Brunt: Absolutely, and he'd say – his mantra was, 'Feel it, smell it...' All the sense. That's what he would say. But you couldn't – in that case, you couldn't contribute because he would always, through his

life experience, be better. But what he didn't do – so you were just admiring and, yes, you knew you had to pay close attention to the text yourself but you didn't see how it went apart from having life experience.

[1:14:43]

Chris Pawling: The Germans would have said what are the theoretical pre-suppositions.

Ros Brunt: Who said that?

Chris Pawling: The Germans would have said what are the theoretical pre-suppositions of...

Ros Brunt: Exactly, whereas Stuart's *spieling* did, on the best days – I mean, what I'm talking about is some of the worst moments when you could see he is despairing, he is actually saying things like, 'I'm older than you, I think perhaps I ought to get another job,' he was actually really letting us have it, and we were quite shocked by that. We had no idea at that stage how much that had affected him all this stuff that he called bad faith and guilt tripping and things. As I say, it was happening within eighteen months of Hoggart going, it was really quite bad, but obviously we came out of it etc. But what Stuart did so brilliantly is exactly what you said, you could see the method in it. You could see – and he did stencil papers he worked so hard on. I used his Vaber stuff for ages. Really obscure essays by Vaber. He had systematically worked through it and you could follow. Whereas Hoggart was doing this virtuoso performance that no one could equal at all; it was brilliant, it was more like a novelist and based on life experience, intuition etc. so you could just admire it. You couldn't contribute. In that sense, it wasn't a Centre when Hoggart was in charge. Stuart was saying you can follow this through, and on the board – he loved doing the diagrams on the board. And he said, my God, the clarity, the clarity. So we were learning something that we could actually, in our feeble way, apply. So that was a different sort of thing than just, 'I'm this amazing virtuoso, this one man band,' which is really what Hoggart – Hoggart was a one-off, really, in many ways. Whereas Stuart was a one-off in that he was brilliantly clever and very charismatic but it was offering something – and I was trying to (inaudible 1:16:39) but offering, to keep offering it, don't shut up, join in, because otherwise we were still directing everything to Stuart who was sitting there not saying anything. And don't be, in a way, so defensive about these one or two people because the goodwill is for you. And that was the shame that he didn't feel he had got enough allies, and he was always saying to me, 'You are too optimistic, Ros, it's really dire here. I'm despairing. I want to be pessimistic.'

Trevor Millum: I'm very happy to say all this took place after I left.

Ros Brunt: Well, it wasn't entirely when you left. Maybe you were busy working on the journal or something, but it had started. You were there until '71, weren't you?

Trevor Millum: Yeah.

Ros Brunt: Those papers are summer '71.

Trevor Millum: So it must have been in the air but, you see, those papers didn't come out until the summer and I left at Easter.

Ros Brunt: Maybe you just got out in the nick of time.

Kieran Connell: Just in time.

Ros Brunt: Trevor and I, I have to say, played a very congenial – Trevor was the first person I spoke to when I came in the hut on my first day, although I had been at Birmingham before, and it was so nice to have – because it was even in those days, even though I felt I'd got all this from Essex, it was very overawing. And Trevor was so normal and nice and friendly it was just great. Thank goodness. The Centre did have a reputation-

Kieran Connell: Was it quite intimidating?

[1:18:10]

Ros Brunt: Very intimidating even in those days, even when it wasn't a Lefty sort of place. You were walking and all these – and someone like Alan Shuttleworth was a God! I'd seen him as an undergraduate, a really hard line Lefty, and he turned out to be as sweet as anything. You should try and interview him.

Trevor Millum: Real softy.

Ros Brunt: Real softy, and became more so as he fell in love. We saw a total transformation when he fell in love. But also this awful thing about his sister and he did change and became much more relaxed and all the rest of it. Lovely guy; really lovely guy. But you walked in and, 'God, I'm going into a seminar with Alan Shuttleworth, this big Lefty!' So even though I had been politicised the summer before... So there was lovely Trevor and it was... And also-

Trevor Millum: What a shame we're not being videoed.

Ros Brunt: And lovely Paul. Paul Willis was another one.

Trevor Millum: Jack would have been there as well. So sort of normality.

Ros Brunt: There was a lot of normality. But we were – well, I was certainly in awe of – that's why the sense of the big four. I really did feel that. Obviously later you didn't, but there really was the sense, although it was jokey the thing about the big four...

Trevor Millum: Well, I did feel in awe because, as I said, I didn't have the same background, and as long as I didn't feel like I could contribute certainly in practical seminars then I felt I could, because I often used to ask the questions historians asked, how do you know this, what evidence have you got, where is it taking us and so on and so forth. But when it came to other areas where your knowledge of Marcuse and Lucatch was seen to be like what everybody was reading at breakfast instead of Dick Francis. You think bloody hell, I'm out of my depth here.

Ros Brunt: But you never seemed like that.

Trevor Millum: God, I put on a good act.

Ros Brunt: You obviously did. We were all putting on normal acts.

Trevor Millum: I'm quite relieved to hear that, actually, in a way because-

Kieran Connell: It's one of the things at all the interviews I've done, one of the main running themes is that everyone always thinks that they are the one person in the room who doesn't understand it. Everyone else gets it, they don't get it. Dick (inaudible 1:20:30) says that to Richard Dire, everyone says...

Trevor Millum: That's extraordinary.

Kieran Connell: I guess it shows the energy and the level that people were working at.

Trevor Millum: In some of those seminars, I bet in one window and out the other, we all went home thinking I bet somebody got something out of that, and actually everyone went, 'Let's watch Coronation Street,' because it's work.

Ros Brunt: We could always say that.

Kieran Connell: You've kind of alluded to this already but I was going to ask because time is ticking on towards lunchtime I guess, but I was going to ask – you talked about it a little bit already, but at what point did identity politics – this might have been after your time, I guess, but at what point did identity politics enter the Centre, whether it was in terms of gender, later on it was... might be after everyone's time here, but race came in later on in the late...

[1:21:19]

Ros Brunt: Can I just say something about feminism before Chris answers because it was – I was in the women's liberation movement and did things with your wife, Christine, in '71, '72. Catherine Hall was very involved and set up – she had been at the famous Ruskin thing in '69 which started women's liberation in Britain. I had come from a different route, as I said, through this anti-university thing which was happening on the Birmingham campus, but at that time there was Rachel Powell who had this ambivalent attitude to women's liberation to say the least, but I was running consciousness raising groups which involved-

[1:21:58]

Kieran Connell: In Birmingham?

Ros Brunt: In Birmingham, which was mainly non – people associated with the university but not actually in the Centre, because there was only me, Rachel Powell and then someone called Judith Scott.

Trevor Millum: Who I met.

Ros Brunt: Oh, really?

Trevor Millum: A couple of years ago.

Ros Brunt: Right. I must ask you about her. And Angela Lloyd who stayed one year and had a relationship with Michael Green at some stage. So, in the-

Kieran Connell: Sorry to interrupt, but these consciousness raising groups, what were they about?

Ros Brunt: Oh, consciousness raising was again probably an American idea where you just, basically, talked about your life and the part men have played in it to your detriment. It was probably along those lines. And I just remember-

Chris Pawling: And then the collective would sort of make something out of that.

Ros Brunt: The whole point of it – yes, thank you for reminding it. The point was, yes, very much like from Betty Friedan, the idea of the problem with no name, that you might have thought you had an individual problem as a woman, not even as a woman, as a person, and then by meeting with these others and people said, 'Oh, and that happened to me,' and, 'That happened to me,' you got a collective sense that it wasn't you, it was, as we called it, sexism then and then later patriarchy and so on. And, in fact, we had a very funny system to start with; Catherine mainly had a group around her which was women who recently had had children and felt very cut off because they had been academics, they couldn't get back into – well, they were stuck with children and they felt very much trapped. And then I discussed with Catherine setting up a single woman's group. And some of the people who felt that when they went to Catherine's group they had been swamped by – they couldn't contribute because it was all about babies and they felt they had got different oppressions, so they came to the single women's group. But it was rather – it was then rather dominated by – it came to an end because this person, Rachel Powell, who was about ten years older than us just had to have the worst problems of all, and so we ended up listening to her problems. People didn't know her were saying who is this woman and things, and it sort of ground to a halt. And then we realised that, in fact, it didn't become such a good idea to have just women with children and so on. This was all happening outside the Centre. And then, at one point, I think it must have been about '72, because we used to have our self-generated choose a topic that we would do in the Centre, somebody said well why don't Judith and Ros talk about women's liberation. And this was, as I say, about '72, '71, and we were absolutely terrified of doing this. We prepared it, and then Judith and I discovered we didn't agree; Judith was more into letting men off the hook than I was. There was a bit of a conflict. We wrote something. Anyway, so very nervously we did this seminar which Richard Dire remembers very well because he was also starting up with gay liberation at the same time. And we were absolutely slaughtered and mainly by a certain (inaudible 1:25:25) who – middle class feminists, the

whole thing, middle class feminists, and also why do you need women's liberation when women in the working class were more powerful than me etc. And the person who came to our rescue was Stuart, and Stuart saved the day. We felt awful about this afterwards, Judith and I, that we had put up such a bad show in front of – most people didn't speak, and Chas took the floor and rubbished us, and then we had to rely on Stuart to get us out of this mess. But that was the only occasion I remember-

[1:26:08]

Kieran Connell: That was '71/'72.

Ros Brunt: That was '71/'72.

Trevor Millum: That was after...

Ros Brunt: Yes, probably '72.

Trevor Millum: Although maybe I heard about it or was I there? One of those things. Not quite sure. That does ring a bell.

Ros Brunt: It might have been it was earlier than '71.

Trevor Millum: I was interested in all that. it was a shame, in a way, or maybe a relief because maybe when some rather more odd line feminists came on board, the fact that I was studying women's magazines felt that I wouldn't be allowed to.

Ros Brunt: At that stage, there was no critique of what the men – when like Angela McRobby came in and was doing things like Jackie, critiquing Paul Willis' work because he'd only looked at working class, there was no critique partly because there was so few of us and then Janice was also – Janice Winship also came in but very quiet. So there wasn't a feminist in that – although we were all active, all the women in the Centre, even the few of us that there were, were very active right from the early days of women's liberation, it didn't translate into the Centre at that period at all until very much later.

Kieran Connell: The women's studies group would have been, what, '75?

Ros Brunt: Yes, '75/'76.

Trevor Millum: I was very fortunate. I know that it was very helpful for my research. There was all the individual perception stuff which Richard Rogers, do you remember him-?

Ros Brunt: Yes.

Trevor Millum: From America. By sheer chance at a party put me on to various people including Gumbrick and so on, people that nobody in the Centre was studying or knew about, all to do with how you see pictures and how you interpret them, then all into film studies and stuff, that came from him and was just a liberating moment for me. I could see how to actually analyse these non-written texts. And the other side was I was introduced to Doris (inaudible 1:28:01), Betty Freedman and Simone DeBeavoir, and I read them before Chris did; I had read these seminal feminist texts. And so I-

Ros Brunt: When you say introduced, by whom?

Trevor Millum: I don't know. Somebody like you or...

Ros Brunt: It might be someone like Rachel.

Trevor Millum: Somebody at the Centre said, 'You should read these.' So I read them and that gave me the other, sort of, focus, if you like; so I've got the pictures, I've got that theory there, I've got this theory here, I can triangulate. It was an absolute rush of...

[1:28:39]

Kieran Connell: Adrenalin.

Trevor Millum: I could do the research then, I felt, I had the tools to do it and I had the practical tools. The theory had given me the practical tools, and so I went off and got on with it. So really that feminist critique was absolutely crucial at that point.

Ros Brunt: Well, you were probably the only person – I wasn't doing anything feminist in my work.

Kieran Connell: At that point then, were you very much still outside the Centre, you were very active in feminist groups, but inside it was...

Ros Brunt: Nothing at all. It was amazing.

Kieran Connell: Why do you think it was that it took a few more years for it to come...?

Chris Pawling: I don't know. It's interesting.

Ros Brunt: It was starting to emerge the feminist-

Chris Pawling: Right at the end when I – I mean, I left in about '75, '74/'75, think I was just starting to come to it then; Sian and one or two other people had come, and it was starting to come through.

Ros Brunt: But Sian would have been in the media group when she came in, it wouldn't have been a woman's-

Chris Pawling: See, I had come across it in Germany. When I was in Germany, in Frankfurt, there was a whole critique of the absence of women from history and the whole thing about do women have a history. I remember all those... We didn't talk about it in the Centre. And the other thing we didn't talk about particularly was ethnicity. When I was there, we didn't talk about Black politics. I'd been involved with a group-

Kieran Connell: The Caribbean Self-help Organisation.

Chris Pawling: We went to do – some of us went to help with a Sunday class of helping some of the Black kids with their English, and this was my final year, about '70/'71, and I did that through – I was involved briefly with IMG so I did that through IMG, and we were involved with Afro-Caribbeans. We helped out. But I didn't come across that at the Centre. When I went to the Centre, we didn't have discussion.

Ros Brunt: No, we didn't, it's extraordinary.

Chris Pawling: There were discussions of American Black politics, that came in through – I think people talk about Cleaver, Angela...

Ros Brunt: Yes, very much, Angela Davis, had a huge picture of her, yes.

Chris Pawling: But there wasn't a discussion of English Black politics. And, you see, Paul Gilroy came after me-

Ros Brunt: Yes, long after.

Chris Pawling: And that's I think when it really started to-

Kieran Connell: So in a sense then that early period broadly characterised the Chas Critcher line, the broader struggle, the class struggle, that was all dominant.

Ros Brunt: We didn't necessarily agree with it because, in fact, I thought that was very crude. You could be generally – it wouldn't be the... people were more interested in things like the red base, alternatives... There weren't a great load of people talking about class politics. It was just that it was used by Chas in that way.

[1:31:47]

Chris Pawling: Hang on though, through the history, I think the – when you hear Trevor talking about history you think about EP Thompson, all that, see quite a strong strand was social political history and in the dominant element of that strand were class politics. That suited me, of course, because I was coming from that background and I was interested in that, but I think that was quite a crucial vein of thought.

Ros Brunt: Yes, you are right, and of course there were all those strikes and things. There was an awful lot of industrial unrest in '71/'72.

Chris Pawling: That's right, all the politics of that time, you think about miner's strike, you think about the Saltley Gate-

Ros Brunt: Yes, there was, which we were involved in, that's right.

Chris Pawling: I think also in terms of what we were discussing in the Centre seminar, social political history, was quite important, making English (inaudible 1:32:34) all those kind of texts. So, in a way, did we discuss Black politics? I don't remember discussing Black politics in the Centre seminar, for example. Angela David or Cleaver or...

Ros Brunt: No, we did discuss – I remember when we discussed Marcuse it was very much about Marcuse saying the working classes not functioning etc. and we did talk about both Black politics then, particularly in the States, but it was in the States and it was around Angela Davies, and then how working class politics is – just at the moment Marcuse is saying it's dying, it's actually out on the streets there with all the demonstrations and the Saltley Gate.

Trevor Millum: One of these discussions, listening to what you are saying, would seem to me to be imposed upon and not arise out of the work that people were doing. So in the case of my research, you had to discuss the position of work, that was maybe – I must have given a seminar on my findings.

Ros Brunt: Yes, maybe you were more feminist than the three women were.

Trevor Millum: By the time I got to the end of his statement, bleeding obvious, at least I analysed it, it wasn't just anecdote. But any discussion of ethnicity or whatever should have been coming out of and didn't, in my research. I didn't say, 'Look, all the women in these adverts are White.' Which is something I'm now conscious of, how I'd done a bit of research on how it compares, I would still largely but not entirely, obviously... So that would now inform more work and any discussion, indeed, class did come into how I looked at the adverts because it was quite clear that most of the visual representations were middle class; again, not rocket science. People who were working in particular areas should have been the ones who were bringing it into the discussion from their research, it seems to me, rather than having top-down discussions on something that may not have actually connected with what they were doing. Was Chas Chritchard talking about Black football players or lack of them in...? Do you know what I mean? That would have been where it had most (inaudible 1:35:11). What about Paul Willis and his stuff on working class boys.

Kieran Connell: So, in a sense, it took the later feminist group who came who would then be interested in researching-

Ros Brunt: And their research actually became – yes, exactly.

Chris Pawling: Gilroy round that. He brought that. It was individuals, in a sense, bringing their own – not just their own individual concerns but individuals who had that kind of commitment to that kind of area, bringing it in, and then it-

Trevor Millum: That's right, then it comes in through the roots.

[1:35:48]

Ros Brunt: You see, the thing I disagree with what you have just said is about this idea of coming from the top, because, yes, we were doing – that's what I found most interesting was not my own research but all this other stuff like the reading Vaber or whatever. That wasn't just about – that was also part of the project because the project was what is cultural studies? We are defining, and that was what was so exciting, I thought more exciting than my own watching television programmes, was what is cultural studies. There was always what are we here for, that also became very personal about what's the Centre doing and all the rest of it, but we did feel very much at the forefront of – we are taken these texts, we are taken Vaber, yes it doesn't translate, didn't any of it translate into my own research at all, it was absolutely... it felt incredibly important because we are saying – we are laying the foundations for cultural studies and we are taking it from all these places. That was part of – and it may have been not so much – you may have been, sort of, moving away from – that your thing was completing your research although you were doing all these other things for the Centre, but there was also coming in much more and that was really the Stuart legacy, in a way, that we are here to – also our project is to define cultural studies, to explore all those things. What's Durkheim's suicide got to do with anybody's research? But he is saying really interesting things about the relationship between – about ideology. So that's why we are doing him. And very indirectly it will relate to your research. But then you are right in suggesting that in some ways that could make it very unconcrete, that because we weren't feeding-

Trevor Millum: It needed to be computised.

Ros Brunt: Except we were doing that through the sub-groups.

Trevor Millum: We were.

Chris Pawling: The theory group was doing...

Ros Brunt: That should have fed in more perhaps but we were all separate in our separate groups, but that would be where you did research more directly related to your actual area.

Chris Pawling: Yes, that's right. But I think that did in the series seminar. I think people did bring in stuff from their different areas. I think that worked well and so, in that sense, you were forward in that project of what is cultural studies, is there a methodology or are there methodologies. Stuart in one of his interviews talks about - one of the reasons why the sociology department hated cultural studies is they saw it as primarily interpretative and not quantitative enough, and so there were those debates about if we're going to have sociology, what kind of sociology. If it's about (inaudible 1:38:41) or whatever, all the rest of it, cultural studies, what is cultural studies about and what kind of methods does it draw. Those were the interesting debates, I think.

Ros Brunt: And although we were very focussed on Birmingham, those things were happening in the Open University, the whole interpretative – to go back to the founding fathers of sociology for the Open University; all their text books were very much interpretative sociology. So it was in the air as well that people were asking those questions about meaning and interpretation, whereas somewhere like mass communication at Leicester was much more in the quantitative line and they used to say to us – they were very dismissive of us in many ways, 'You are doing all this touchy feely stuff, we are doing the hard stuff in mass communication.'

Chris Pawling: That's right. And there were quite interesting differences between us and, say, Southampton, or even us and the Glasgow media.

Ros Brunt: Indeed.

Trevor Millum: I felt that my research was halfway between those two because I was interested in quantitative because I didn't see how you could say anything meaningful without some kind of quantitative evidence. A lot of research in terms of advertising would take a couple of adverts, like Roland Bar, and say, okay, from this I deduce that... It wasn't generalised, so, again, so what? My point was if this particular set of relationships occurs in 50% of advertising, that is significant; that has a significance. Then you interpret that, and that's open to other people's interpretation as well. If you

haven't got that then you are just being an impresario and not... a virtuoso again, saying, look, I can interpret this picture, look how clever I am at it. But that's not the point.

[1:40:44]

Chris Pawling: That was the whole thing about also – which we did talk about the difference between empiricism, if you like, and suspicion of the miracle, do you what I mean, in some of the (inaudible 1:40:53) that we shouldn't be suspicious of the empirical which is what you were saying there. But that didn't mean you took on an empiricist approach. Those questions were important.

Ros Brunt: Wasn't it also true of the press thing that they also did both quantitative and qualitative?

Trevor Millum: Yeah.

Ros Brunt: So it wasn't like we were just intermeaning by any means.

Trevor Millum: And that was quite a powerful piece of research.

Ros Brunt: Paper voices.

Trevor Millum: That's right.

Kieran Connell: And that's the tradition as well that actually runs right through the Centre – what you might call the Centre's classic period from '64 to '79. There's always a – even when the evermore increasingly high theory gets imported in, there's still that tradition of Dorothy Hobson and go out and do the field work, do the ethnographic stuff, and it's always a – and although in the archive you see tensions between that, there's still that empirical work which is still very much a part of that tradition, I think, right up until '79 and beyond, I think. Anyway, I was going to ask a final question really. It's one of those questions that is so impossibly broad that you could probably spend another twelve hours talking about it, but I was going to ask, to use a term popular, the conjuncture, what do you think it was about the historical conjuncture of that time that made the Centre able to operate in the way it did? What do you think were the historical conditions that allowed it to operate in the kind of ways that we've spent the last hour and a half talking about?

Trevor Millum: I think you would need a historian to look back another fifty years, really, a proper historian.

Ros Brunt: Go on! Take your chance, Trevor.

Trevor Millum: I don't know but I have a feeling that, yes, it was in the right place at the right time. I felt that then and looking back now I think even more so.

Ros Brunt: Absolutely.

Trevor Millum: It could have worked but it would have worked differently at another period. I don't think it could have happened thirty years/fifty years beforehand, it would have been a different thing, it would have been a cultural anarchy kind of Centre, wouldn't it? And now obviously it's still going on but in a different kind of way. That coming together of historical events, political, but more than that cultural, and the events that were leading towards the feminist movement and so on and Black politics and so on, even though they weren't instrumental at that very moment, they seemed to me to be a moment unmissed.

Kieran Connell: Precisely.

Trevor Millum: By the formation of the Centre and how that then developed.

Ros Brunt: I think there's also something about the university. Okay, we were rebelling against what was incredibly – the fact that we'd had a tradition of when we said 'Dear Sir' was amazing. But even that is-

Trevor Millum: It was ironic, of course.

[1:44:00]

Ros Brunt: I know it was ironic but I always remember being quite surprised by it, that it still saw him in his position. So it was a very paternalistic university. There was a huge amount, as we've said, of hostility but there was a space in a way that – they could also ignore us and I think we benefited-

Chris Pawling: Utopian enclave.

Ros Brunt: The Utopian enclave which, again, I think Stuart has disowned but that was a Stuart phrase with red base was Utopian enclave, that we have a chance here, and that was why he was so insistent on if you are here, you are here to be serious and responsible and we are privileged, in a way, to have this space. We use it for something that does relate to outside. We're not quite sure what that is yet but that is our commitment. There is some point to being here. And to have those discussions... When I first came to what was then the Poly, I was just amazed at you had to produce a syllabus in a week or something. I thought, god, we spent a year saying what is cultural societies, these endless debates. But that was so valuable that we had the time somehow. And, also, you didn't have to be – even those who had finished their PhD's, it wasn't a rigorous – now the PhD's are so you do the literature review, do the this, do a bit of... they are so formulaic. And also there's very definite registration of things. Now, that might have helped some of us get off and do more – get more PhD's done but there was also not 'who are you?' in this room. People did wander in, we didn't know who they were, yet you felt they were part of the project. So it wasn't, 'Are you registered? Have you paid your fees?' which it would now be. You couldn't just come in on something. People would start asking questions about insurance or god knows what. So it was before - we weren't hit by the managerialism or the idea of university branding-

Trevor Millum: Audit culture.

Ros Brunt: All that stuff, yes. That was also, paternalistic as it was, there was a moment at Birmingham that we could – and also, as you said, space and also the politics that was going on outside was conducive to it.

Chris Pawling: Can I just say, also I think the politics wasn't just Orthodox politics, it's something we haven't really talked about, but there's a whole question of the counter culture, and there's a question about the relationship between what traditional notions of culture and change in notions of culture, counter cultures, thing about Oz, IT, all those kinds of movements in the counter culture to create different media. I think that played back into what we were doing, in a way. And, also, if you look at, for example, IT, they were organising parties (inaudible 1:47:05) basis. Readers became writers, writers became readers. We were trying to-

Ros Brunt: Collective was a word, yes.

Chris Pawling: And also transforming relations of productions, transforming (inaudible 1:47:18) worked together and all that. now that wasn't just happening on an intellectual level in universities but it was actually happening outside in the development of alternative notions that cultural politics, as well as the orthodox politics of miner's strike and all the class politics that was happening, or Vietnam and all the rest of it, there was actually a widening, I think, in politics at that time, particularly among (inaudible 1:47:46).

Ros Brunt: But even with the miner's, gay liberation, although miners were very surprised when Saltley Gates in Birmingham in '72, who are these gay liberation...? There was a big slogan, 'Heath is a fairy' that the NUM had and the gay liberation went on and said we don't – you can't say Heath is a fairy. And so already, even with the traditional trade union politics, there were those alternative-

Chris Pawling: Those were impacted on from gay lib or the... do you know what I mean? So, in a sense, those strains then impacted back on "straight" class politics, trade union politics, which had to then change. That was very interesting, I thought. But if you think about – I always think about '68, you think of that, you talk about the conjuncture, what is the conjuncture, conjuncture in some ways is that

conjuncture of the latest sixties and it's partly '68, partly Vietnam, partly gay lib and all the rest of it. But it is quite a crucial conjuncture, I think, that historical conjuncture.

[1:48:53]

Kieran Connell: And it all feeds into the-

Chris Pawling: I think it feeds into the Centre's project, if you like.

Ros Brunt: And it was all new then, you see. Although feminism doesn't actually hit the Centre until much later, this was all – what was so exciting about it was this was all hitting us from all directions, and we were in at the start of things.

Chris Pawling: And the energy involved. And the great thing was Stuart was willing to – not willing, but interested in entertaining all those different strands in a way that they fed in. If you think about ethnicity, funny enough that didn't feed in-

Ros Brunt: No, until much later again. Very much later.

Chris Pawling: But you were still talking about, say, what was happening in the States or something.

Trevor Millum: There was an openness which maybe under Richard Hoggart, he would have liked it to have been open, but Stuart was open, if you see what I mean.

Male; Yes, he was.

Trevor Millum: There's that subtle difference. It was in his nature to embrace. And so nobody felt they couldn't raise a particular strand of interest, research, theory, whatever it was. You could at least try it out.

Ros Brunt: Yes, indeed.

Male; He was interested, exactly, in engaging with those.

Trevor Millum: He was also interested in you, in people, is interested in people.

Chris Pawling: He is.

Trevor Millum: That's part of it. You forget the person in all this. We are talking a lot about politics and historical trends and so on. These were all personalities with characters and histories and so on who had to interact with each other. While I was there at least, by and large, everybody actually got on very well with each other from all these different backgrounds and so on. There was, obviously, always a group like that who is going to be a little bit somebody or whatever but it was very – we've all been in lots of groups, I'm sure, organisations and committees and so on, very little in my experience, maybe I'm just not in the gossip circles, but by and large it did feel, from that point of view, I didn't feel an outsider or not knowing what was going on. I felt that I was – friendship grew and I could ask people things.

Ros Brunt: But also we said that we were over-awed but, also, it is contradictory because Hoggart himself was very friendly. He wasn't professorial as was the thing in those days, so he was quite – and he almost made a thing of being an ordinary bloke. So although I was also in awe of him intellectually, his virtuoso performance, and you had to be careful because he could be very thin skinned, and he could take questions as being under attack in a way that Stuart didn't apart from the things I've described, but Hoggart could also be very friendly. So there was a generally friendly atmosphere which wasn't – if you compare it, say, with the Shakespeare Institute which had masses of money and all the rest of it; it was a completely different relationship between the post-graduates and the very obviously professorial people running it.

[1:52:17]

Chris Pawling: And Hoggart's relation to undergrads. I had a girlfriend who went carol singing one Christmas and they knocked on Professor Spencer's door and just closed the blinds and that was it. Hoggart invited them in and they were undergrads but he invited them in, really friendly.

Trevor Millum: That was his personality.

Chris Pawling: That was his personality and that continued obviously with Stuart and all the rest of it. They were very open to undergraduates.

Trevor Millum: It's very different to being an undergraduate in the history department with one or two exceptions. It was a bit like going into the sixth form, if you like. It didn't feel strange because you did feel you were going into a different place, but if we'd been going to do research at the Shakespeare Institute we probably would have carried on feeling, oh, I'm still... I did work in the Centre for West African Studies as well, my other interest which took me off to Africa, and (inaudible 1:53:24) was also very friendly, very, very approachable. And again, like you were saying, it wasn't really a Centre, well we just called these places Centres because what else did you call it? That was just a nice old building that you went into to get a bit of peace and quiet most of the time.

Ros Brunt: Yes, I'd forgotten that Centre, yes.

Trevor Millum: It wasn't an intellectual hub kind of thing.

Chris Pawling: I always think about informality. I think that was also to do with a changing set of relations between the generations as well. Again, I think that counter culture politics and that old-

Trevor Millum: To some extent, Stuart felt part of our generation.

Chris Pawling: Yeah, he did.

Trevor Millum: And he was married to Cath who was.

Chris Pawling: That's right.

Ros Brunt: But as an undergraduate, he was Mr Hall, so it was very... and Richard Hoggart was Professor Hoggart. And then suddenly these were Richard and Stuart.

Chris Pawling: Stu Baby!

Ros Brunt: Stu Baby! We did call him that.

Chris Pawling: That late sixties things, I think until the mid-sixties, universities were very traditional, and then it did change, '67/'78. In my final year, I wanted to do a dissertation and I had to go and see Spencer about it, head of department, because it involved some change – it might change the regulations, and my tutor had to book me in a week in advance, and then he had to take me in and introduce me to Professor Spencer. 'Professor, this is Pawling, he is in the final...'

Ros Brunt: You were Pawling! You weren't even Mr Pawling! At least we were Miss.

Chris Pawling: He wants to talk to you about this dissertation. And Spencer was alright. But the point was it was this kind of formality. This was still continuing on in '70. But it was the end of all that kind of stuff. And I do think that that's part of the conjuncture as well, the changing set of revolutions between the generations and all the rest of it. And also the undermining of those old class relationships. Spencer was part of a public school kind of hierarchy, still dominates in the universities, even in red bricks, and that was starting to be challenged partly by new universities but just generally. And I think that's part of the conjuncture as much as the intellectual content, about changing class relations as well in a way.

[1:56:03]

Trevor Millum: What do you think about the conjuncture between knives, forks, plates and...?

Kieran Connell: Thank you very much. Thanks.

[End of Transcript]