

One & Other Project

My name is Verusca Calabria and today is the 10th of August 2010 and we're here at the Wellcome Trust here in Euston conducting a post-plinth oral history interview with Sarah Evans on behalf of the One & Other oral history collection for their website. So Sarah, thank you very much for agreeing to be interviewed.

Thank you, I'm happy to.

And you've got your daughter here with us.

I have, my daughter, 'Zanti' is sitting with her book and her iPhone trying not to listen to her mum being embarrassing.

So Sarah, just to bring you back about the time on the plinth. You went up there with your washing basket and some of the helpful books in your life, in your words to, 'help you deal with practical matters.' And you sort them all together to try and make a connection with the ground, what was it really like to be up there?

I suppose I felt exposed and embarrassed and pressured, I wondered whether the sewing didn't work, it was difficult to do it, so the practical matters were in the way and there were things happening in the square, early morning drunks and the sun coming up and some a small group of people, three or four people I knew were in the square ... but it was a good experience and I wonder now whether it the aspiration or the best way to have been on the plinth would have been to be like an Antony Gormley figure, because I may have ... I've been doing yoga for a year or two and when I was on the plinth I was really struck with the plinthers following One & Another taking a new breath and in yoga you have a pause between you try and control your breathing, have a pause between your breath. I don't know much about art or Antony Gormley, but I think he studied in Europe or the Far East and you get the feeling of meditation from his figures and I had this feeling of waves coming in and out and the breath coming in and out, as a plinther was on the plinth and then there was this breath and this pause as one plinther came down and the next plinther went up and in the day it was like a wave coming and a wave going and a breath coming and a breath going and I wish that there was a way that I could have been brave enough to maybe do my yoga on the plinth or just stood there like a figure in a yoga, like an Antony Gormley figure and just stood there and been, that you somehow can't do that, I think you have to do something, so I did something to represent motherhood and the busyness of life and the preoccupations. I tried to have baby clothes and medical things sewn into my dirty washing.

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What I'll do is I'll just give you this to put under this arm because of the bracelet picks up the noise against the table, so if you just put in there then you won't click. This insight about the possibility of doing something different, did it come to you after having been on the plinth or before?

I guess after. I mean I did think before what should I do and worried about what I should do, and I came up with this and I think I saw people a little bit, I spent a little bit of time looking at what people did on the plinth so I knew someone had already done their ironing on the plinth and I'd seen people making paper darts and I liked the idea of having a connection, that you know that seemed to be a really good idea running through, that you had a, trying to develop a connection with people, and I like the idea of being Rapunzel and being rescued from my tower of being stuck in the family, you sort of feel as a mother you lose your identity but I suppose in the end I thought, 'Well, I'll go there as a doctor and a mother.' And so, and those were the ideas I had.

Did you have any communication with people in the square during your hour?

Yes, David's son, my new husband, he was my fiancée then, his son very kindly turned up and my daughter travelled with me so I was, she was there when I got on the plinth, I was a little concerned because there were a few you know sixteen year olds alone in the Square, my older daughter, and so when I saw other people came I had my step-son and two friends came who were on the way to Southampton so I made sure they met each other to protect my daughter and then the friend said I was completely bonkers. They relayed that back up to me, apart from that I can't remember if strangers talked to me, I don't think so, I can't remember now, maybe some people tried to talk to me.

What other feelings do you remember experiencing when you were up there?

Yes, I suppose excitement and anxiety and I tried to enjoy being up there and enjoy the sunrise and the experience and there were practical things like I knew there were cameras in particular places, but I hadn't really, you know, taken that on board and been able to plan what I did so yes, I think yes, I don't think I felt sad or excited.

I watched the first few minutes of the video earlier and you seemed to be talking about your story as well as you were sewing.

Oh yes, I did. I did have the idea that I would talk and so and again because when I watched people on the plinth you could hear what they were saying and it added to the experience so yes I was trying to do a commentary on me and I'd thought of stories to put in and I tried to collect stories from friends to

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put in or sew and so I had this you know things prepared that was very difficult to access, I wondered if I, when I was on the plinth I was thinking maybe I should have practised and done something more cohesive but in the end it just had to be as it was kind of thing, so it's a small it's a small moment you hour, in relation to the whole thing, but then again it's a long time to fill with talking about yourself and who's going to listen so it's random yes, yes.

Do you remember what you felt like when you came off the plinth?

Oh relieved and pleased it was over and glad to get back to normal life and glad to have it behind me because it had taken up a lot of time thinking and worrying about it beforehand, it had been this sort of you know, from the time I got chosen in the lottery to have a place to the time I was on the plinth it was in my mind and I was thinking, 'What I should do?' and wondering if I could pull it off, people would say, 'You were brave.' and I would think, 'Well I just have to be there, I don't have to do anything.', so these mixed feelings and I was glad ah ha, that's done, don't have to think about it any more.

And how to remember the event, if at all, you know, do you look back and talk about it or think about it?

Yes, it's been on my Facebook picture until quite recently, and I thought, 'No, that's old news now.' So for a long time it was like I was quite proud that I'd been on the plinth and all through my wedding what was important that I had this Facebook picture of me on the plinth, and I just liked that and now it seems like old news, but I'm looking forward to the, I think there's a book and I keep thinking, 'I must make sure I get the book.' And I think about it with yoga, when I do yoga I think, 'Oh.' When I'm standing there I think, 'I wish I'd been an Antony Gormley man when I was on the plinth.' So sometimes I think about it.

So actually this really moves into the next part of the interview, I'm quite interested in exploring the use of social networking as part of going up on the plinth. To begin with, when you got a place, you would have been sent a booklet encouraging you contact the local newspapers and media and so on; did you do any of that?

No, I let all my friends know that I was going to be on the plinth and so I put it on my Facebook, and I thought, 'Oh.' And when we had in August I guess I had an engagement party and a sort of and so I tried to bring some material about the plinth to engage the people at the party, but nobody was interested, and I tried to collect stories from them but that didn't that that didn't take off, nobody picked up on it or, I mean I could have been more assertive and asked people but it was an idea I had to engage people but it didn't engage anybody. I did ask people on Facebook to send me their messages and I

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emailed my friends and asked them all to give me stories, so some of my friends did, so people wrote stories down and wrote comments down and gave me things to bring.

Did they get in touch with you via the telephone then?

I remember my, no email or my friend or friends saw me face to face.

Did you know there were two groups of people involved with the plinth community on Facebook and on Twitter, and if so, did you participate?

No, I kind of knew there was a Facebook link and I've never been involved with Twitter, but I didn't try and get involved, no.

So just going back to your profile now, which I have here somewhere, I should have, I was looking for it earlier, you wrote something about your time on the plinth, do you remember that?

No.

In fact I have to find it, um, it was really interesting actually, you explained about the reasons why you wanted to be seen both as a mother and as a doctor and then discussing those books that you found very useful.

Yes, self-help books.

Cooking, gardening and that sort of thing, do you remember that?

Yes, did I write it in the profile.

Yes, yes.

For the plinth, yes, I wanted to include ... that's right, I had this idea that I would bring things that represented my life and I had a book about being a good enough parent and a book about walking because I always enjoy, The Good Walk Guide where, before I children, when I lived in London I had this book called The Which Good Walk Guide and we would pick up, oh yes, we would pick up walks from the book and travel out of London, it was walks you could reach from London on the train and go for circle and get home and we tried to do that at weekends and we twice did walks in Tring and then we it encouraged us to end up living in Tring because we'd walked there from the good walks guide and because when you've got children you start off with your baby on your back doing walks and then you realise it's not actually very child friendly, so you have this sort of quarter century where you don't walk or you're not yourself because your being a mother and so I have still have my

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Good Walk Guide and one day you know quarter of a century later I'll be going back to doing walks and having my own life, yes, so that was one of the things, I I'm a great I like self-help books I think that they I think they help people, they have a bad name, but I think you can learn a lot from reading, how other people parent, how other people argue and it some of it you think is you know like the Gina, the debate about the Gina Ford book about mothering and whether you should routinise your baby and you have to read those books and some of it will be annoying because it will be critical of things you do but you'll always find one or two things that can help you solve a problem and you know move on, so hmm, I like self-help books, so those are the ... I can't remember the other ones I took.

You talked about a cooking book. Here it is, we've found the profile now, and well, basically I was interested in the way in which you said they help you tackle the major life task have been facing you as a single-mother.

Oh, that's right, I think yes and the Zucchini and Carrot Cookbook it ... I bought that book when I was in San Francisco so, again, it's something I did when I was young and my own person and you know my friends always used to know that I would cook them food from The Zucchini and Carrot Cookbook but it is something you have to do as a mother, you have to provide food for the family day in day out, bit like the waves, breakfast, lunch, tea, food on the table and I don't, yes, so that that's why I brought the book, that cookbook, to represent that aspect of one of my life tasks and again, you know, do men do that like my daughter ... since the plinth my daughter, my older daughter got me to watch a programme about women on the telly and I saw two of them, one of them showed me there were still feminists in London, kind of taking placards outside of lap-dancing clubs and having conferences to debate whether we need feminism which is good, because that all happened in the 70s and it kind of went away and there was another one where this woman went around interviewing couples to find out who does the washing, and she went to lots of couples and some of them had the woman as the main breadwinner and some of them had the man breadwinning, woman at home, man at home, both out at work, but whatever arrangement there was the woman was always in charge of the washing machine, if the man was at home and doing the washing she would tell him what to do and he wouldn't do it right and in the end it was always be the woman who was doing the washing I don't know why, just reminds you that in power in society however you much you think of the woman you're equal, I don't think you are, think the drudgy jobs always end up at your doorstep because you have less power somehow. Perhaps that's wrong.

You mentioned something about it in the first few minutes on the plinth, with regards to dating perhaps, something about the way in which a man needs to understand to please a woman is about, had they done something to help for

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example, you mentioned putting some candles on the table, or clearing the table.

Yes.

And I was really interested in you making that comment.

Yes, in relation to dating? Yes, yes, I mean I guess yes, I guess it's difficult as a woman to sort of know what you're looking for in a man when you go dating and looking for small kindnesses or people who will contribute or will know what do to in the kitchen to help you, makes you go, it goes a long way, is that the kind of thing you were thinking of?

Just another couple of questions on your profile and then we go into your life story, so you had some comments here from friends and family, what was it like to have people writing on your profile?

Oh yes, no that was nice, that's true it was, it was encouraging, people giving me support and encouragement and you feel like people, it's nice to know people know what you're doing, and want you to do well, so yes, no that was and it was exciting to think, to get comments from people that I wasn't expecting, that was good yes, and it did feel as if the plinth was reaching, people would know about what's happening on the plinth, because I thought it was very exciting and some people didn't even know about it so, it was good.

So what impact do you think the experience has had on you?

It was really nice to feel involved with something that I thought was a nice piece of a worthy piece of art, I mean it was it and I you know hope that the yes that it was representative, so it made me feel good about myself I suppose and yes.

Did you follow the project much?

Probably not as such as I would have liked to I did spend some time looking at other people on the plinth and you know just randomly just turning on the computer and looking at seeing who was on and then looking at the excerpts and the thing that the that were on the website, you know the things that that yes, that that the One & Other had put together clips of the last week or clips of particular kinds [?] and I was very disappointed I didn't have Sky anymore because I really, really wanted to watch the Sky Arts programme and I watched again, I think I watched a couple of them on the on the website but I it made me really think I should have Sky Arts but I never did get round to it.

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Okay, thank you, just to go back to what you mentioned a few minutes ago about the position of women in society and feminism and how some of the ideas of feminism is that women aren't equal to men when it comes to perhaps work in the home or perhaps even work outside the home, where do you think you developed a sense of these sort of inequalities going on?

Oh yes, university, in the 70s, yes, because I mean I went to university in 1979 and I was just on the tail of women's consciousness raising groups and that kind of thing, I mean at school and in '76/'77 we were aware you know [?] we were very aware that you shouldn't wear short skirts and, you know you shouldn't you should [?] at a girls' school. We all were taught science, we were all very aspirational, ambitious, and the school I was at expected you to work, expected you to be a woman that put her hand to the to the grindstone and you know earn money as much as anybody else and do what was needed for your family, provide for yourself, so I suppose that was all good but I and I suppose so I suppose I was just part and because we had Spare Rib, I was reading Spare Rib before I left school. Jonathan my first husband was at a local school, his sisters had been at my school and his sister wrote a poem that was in Spare Rib and we were all very proud. So I suppose it was just sort of absorbed in the '70s and when I got to college we had an Issues and Health group and I did stuff. I never went to Greenham Common, Greenham Common was going on but I went on women's weekends and met people who were at Greenham Common and I went to feminist conferences and I joined the Women Medicine Group as so there was all that, wore dungarees, I didn't have a pair of Doc Martens but that was just part of the fashion for the time really. Yes, and I went to San Francisco and I drove to a women's conference, at that time there was an amendment, an equal rights amendment, to the American constitution and American feminists were working very hard towards that in England abortion had been a big issue while I was [?] but there was a, whatever it was, an equal rights amendment conference at Los Angeles and this group of women were driving from San Francisco, I think my aunt was a nurse and was to put me in touch with this woman, this young woman who was very feminist very active in San Francisco organising women, and so they took me in their car to Los Angeles where they went to the conference and I was staying in a motel room with eleven women, paid for one room and eleven of us were sleeping in it and it was it was good it was a good experience, good to drive from San Francisco to Los Angeles so ... yes, that was being a young woman in the '70s I suppose.

Did you study medicine?

Yes, I did medicine. I went to Guys in London in 1978 and Guys had a ... policy of ... Guys had a policy of encouraging women, encouraging people from more diverse backgrounds to go to medical school so I got to medical

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school with a lot who'd who were very politically aware at the time of the Winter of Discontent and the two new doctors, there was a hospital strike you know so there were pickets set up in the hospital. We just had ... Maggie Thatcher had just come into power and we were very politicised group so that that was and I spent two years at medical school '78 / '79 and had a year off when I went to America and then in my next three years, my final three clinical years I had an elective in Belfast and an elective in the Philippines and the experience of going to the Philippines also made me much more aware of capitalism and imperialism and a bit more politically aware so I think it was, I think being in the health service makes you over to the left, brings you a little bit more Left-wing.

What did you do in the Philippines?

I had a really, really, really good experience. My friend who was at medical school, who was a year ahead of me, liked the look of Philippino men, so he organised himself to go to the Philippine Centre in London and get to know people in the Philippines and then organised an elective, you know, using them as contacts, which, and so I thought, so I followed him and the people he met in London I'd got to know, 'Manalet' and 'Ellory' while they were in London, they came and ate curry on my lentil curry on my floor of my house in Brixton which they remember with great, you know, 'What an adventure that was!' and then by the time I went to the Philippines they, because they were here doing a master's degree funded by the by the British Council, British Council funded the masters they were doing and they were back being community doctors in the Philippines and that time Marcus was there and so if you were a doctor who wanted to work in the rural areas you were almost certainly a communist and would get put in prison or shot so they had to disguise the fact they were working in rural areas so they so they were working as community doctors but in the big cities and they organised me, I stayed with a middle-class family in Manila where his father grew orchids and they were very intellectual, articulate family that completely opposed to Marcos discussing how they would make soap when the revolution came that was a lovely experience and then 'Manalet' and 'Ellory' were based in Davao down the south, they took me to their home and they sent me out with a midwife in rural areas and then I did a bit of travelling on my own independently back through the islands and met American Peace Corps volunteers and it was lovely, I spent some time in a hospital, but I was very glad I wasn't going out as a medical student half-trained to run a hospital, but I was in the community seeing how people worked there, and there was an American medical students who'd stayed in the Philippines who was prescribing drugs and organising epidemics and you felt it wasn't quite right, and I like I got the political ideas from my Pilipino mentors that you know white people shouldn't come and say, 'We're going to give you this stuff.' But you know should work, yes, so it so it was a good experience and I was very

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lucky, and 'Manalet' and 'Ellory' came to my wedding and he went on to be health minister in the Philippines during the time of the Aquino, Cory Aquino, when she was prime minister, and now he's working in Geneva and so he was able to come to my wedding, so I still, I'm still in touch with those people, that was a really good experience, it you know, you must be Spanish are you?

I'm Italian.

Italian, oh there you are, that's wrong.

It's okay.

Okay.

So what happened after this experience in the Philippines was this during university time?

That was yes, as it was an elective, it was a sort of three month ... we all get sent off to have different experiences and then came back, did the finals and then I went to work in Lancashire, in Rochdale and did my house jobs at the time of the miner's strike, I was living in Manchester and went to the Hacienda Club, I can hear, I was hearing how you know formative the Hacienda Club, well I used to go there and yes, and then I tried to get on a GP training scheme in Sheffield but I didn't I didn't go, they, and I got on, so I came back to London to do my GP training.

And how long did that take?

That took three years and then I got my job in a Brixton group practice in south London where I was very keen to be an urban doctor breaking new ground, giving medicine to these poor people who were deprived in London and then I made a relationship with Jonathan and he didn't like living in the city and my group practice had this really ambitious building project that was going to cost a million pounds and we earned tiny amounts of money and the practice nurse earned more money than us and I wanted to go half-time so I could have babies. I thought, 'Ah, I can't, I won't have enough money to be half-time, I won't be able to afford a nanny, I won't be able to afford to work less and we used to do on-call because we were good doctors we wanted to do our own on-call, not use these terrible on-call services and so I can't do that with a baby so I gave up my job and took a job in public health and they moved me to Hertfordshire and I spent 5 years studying public health and then went back to, had my babies and then went back to doing half-time general practice [?] because I missed seeing patients, so now I'm a suburban GP in leafy Birkenstead, being a GP to stockbrokers and council, you know normal town people.

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Is it in a hospital that you work?

No, no, I work in a surgery and we're self-employed so it's like my own business, me and I've got six partners, six of us, three half-time partners, three full-time partners.

And it's to private clients is it?

No, it's family medicine, it's NHS, just normal NHS you know general practice, we have two or three nurses, we do [?] I do two, I do four surgeries a week and we have to employ people, we have to do all the administration, make sure we meet all the government targets, and there's a lot of paperwork as well as letters and results for the patients and stuff.

What inspired you to do medicine?

When I was fourteen and fifteen people used to say, 'Are you going to be a teacher like your mum?' and I thought, 'Oh, I don't want to be a teacher like my mum, everyone wants me to be, everyone says I'm going to be teacher.' My mum would say, 'Oh being a teacher's a good job because you can plan it with family and you get school holidays.' 'Oh, I don't want to be a teacher.' And I read, I would go to the library, we had a little village library and I read all the books from the library and I read these lovely glamorous books about being a barrister and I thought, 'Oh, I like the thought of being a barrister but I'm not very good at writing essays and I'm not very good at persuasion.' So I thought, 'I won't be a barrister.' And then I read books by Faye Weldon about *Down Among the Women*, I can't remember another book where this woman had to follow her husband to all different towns because he had a job, I thought, 'No one's going to make me follow them, I'm going to have a job so that I can turn round and say, 'My job's important, I say where I want to go.' So I decided to be a doctor to get status, to have this financial security and independence and status so that I, no one could tell me what to do, and I went to medical school because I could do science, so I had that option so I worked hard in my chemistry and I thought I would maybe like to be a geneticist, I did my viva as a GP and I thought, 'I don't want to do that, I'll go to medical school and be a scientist.' But of course when I got to medical school I wasn't really clever enough to be one of those sort of researchy people and as soon as I got on the wards and started seeing patients I realised that you know I really liked primary care and talking to people and problem solving and relating to people and solving everyday problems and knowing a little bit about everything. It really suited me, so that that's what happened to me.

And why the decision to become a GP then, because you realised you wanted to work with people?

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Yes well, I did. I was a GP and I always wanted to be a GP and then there was this experience in London of having my partner say he wanted to move out of London and also there was the government had changed the new contract for general practice, so they changed the way we were working and we were very resentful and it was actually quite a good thing for inner city GPs and I remember going to a meeting with the health minister and saying, 'Oh, you know if you want to, you've got to remember that GPs in inner cities need this sort of encouragement.' And what I said got put into the health bill, I was really pleased that they were, you know, that they were, although it was a Tory government that they were responsive enough to do that but so but then yes ... and I didn't want, I didn't like the idea the idea of being a GP in a suburban area because I had this sort of vision and this fire that I thought I wanted to change the world and so I took the opportunity because they were recruiting into public health of doing this management training in public health where, and I found that really interesting and for five years I worked and I was funded on a full-time MSc at the Department of Public Health but again ... and when I had my first baby I was still doing this management role at health authorities. I worked at St. Mary's Medical School doing sort of research stuff but ... yes but you had to be there, it didn't fit with so much with family life and it didn't suit my skills because I don't have management skills, I don't have communication/persuading skills, I'm very good at surgery work and I missed seeing patients and I came out of public health and I got a local, I kind of made a decision to leave public health before I had 'Zanti' and I had a job in a hospice and I did locums in general practice and I was able to go abroad with Jonathan because he had a job contracting in America so I was able to give you know give up all my work and go and stay with him for three months and take my baby and then I came back, had my second baby and did a bit of general practice, a bit of public health work and then I got offered a job in this practice where I felt very happy, I get on well with the partners, so I've been there every since. I'm really happy with it, you know the longer I'm in general practice, the more I like the fact that I know my patients and they come back and I know their families and I can help push them along and solve sometimes solve their medical problems.

That's great.

It is I enjoy it.

Just to talk about Jonathan

Yes.

You mentioned you met at university?

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Yes, I knew him from school, he was always a good friend of my friends at school and so he lived locally and I met him through my university years. I would meet him at my friend's houses because he stayed friendly with my friends and he was a mining engineer based in Mansfield. He'd gone from ... his father retired, was an older man because of the war and stuff they got married late, so his parents were quite old, he was a sort of child when his parents were in their mid forties early forties. His parents struggled with his sister's university fee bills supporting so he wanted to be self-supporting at university and he liked engineering and he liked the idea of mining, so he went off to do ... and he was very unhappy at Nottingham University doing mining engineering and he took an overdose so he switched to doing not a degree but a lesser qualification and was doing it at Mansfield Polytechnic. So he was based at Mansfield but he visited when I was in Manchester, he was visiting our mutual friend in Bradford and then I met him and I thought, 'Oh, I really like Jonathan, I never realised he was such a good person to talk to.' He was going out with someone else, I was busy doing medicine, you can't really have a relationship when you work late night and weekends and then when, in my late-twenties I had a house when I was a GP, I was just finishing my GP training and I had a house in Brixton, Loughborough Junction, and he came and my friend lived nearby in Brixton, he came to stay. I met him at my friend's party, then my friend moved to my house because she split up with her boyfriend and he came to visit her and we started going out then and then he'd left by then, the mining strike had come and the mines had closed, he'd left mining engineering, he'd been on VSO, got malaria, and was at a loose end. He was staying in Bradford, he'd given up his house in Mansfield and was staying with the friends in Bradford, he came down to London and that night the terrible storm happened, and you weren't living here then, but there was a terrible storm in 1987.

I've been told about it.

You've been told about it? And we woke up and I was at that time doing a psychiatric job in London and the whole of London was quiet and my roof was being redone. I was glad lucky my roof was being redone because I was the first person to have my roof mended because everyone else had lost their roof, by roof got sorted and trees, were down the traffic lights were out, and I did this drive through London, but anyway he did go back to Bradford but he was short of a job and because we both come from Seven Oaks, Seven Oaks was devastated and he had a very good friend who died ... who lived at this funny community place, communal kind of living experimental 70s sort of place called St Julian's in Seven Oaks, and suddenly they needed help with their estate management and he was at a loose end and he'd just been to St. Julian's for the funeral of his friend and so he went back to St. Julian's, became estate manager there so we started our relationship, we started going out really. It's a long story, but yes so then he was sort of short of a job, he

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given up mining engineering and was doing this estate management and then he wanted to get into computers and I noticed a Manpower Service Commission job so he came to live with me to do a three month computer course in London. So we, by then we sort of, you know, early in on our relationship we started living together and then he bought, he got a mortgage, he got bought half the house off my dad so that we never got married but had this sort of ... we felt this mortgage was a bigger commitment than getting married and my brother was just getting a divorce and he hadn't enjoyed his cousin's wedding, so wedding wasn't ... he just didn't want to get married it didn't seem like a proper commitment and yes and then we left London and decided to have a child. When my daughter was two, my eldest daughter, I was really worried. I would worry about him coming home, he would be late home from work and I would think maybe he's jumped under a train and one night he left the house, I'd come home from a party and he'd just been sitting on the floor in the kitchen all day and one night he went out for a walk late at night and I was sure he was going to jump off the bridge, there's a train bridge, you go down out lane and you go over the canal and there's a train bridge, great big cutting, I thought he's going to jump and went and left my two year old baby in the house and shouted at him to get back in the car and he did and I went to the doctor's and said, 'Look, he's not going to, I'm going to make him come and see you and he won't tell you he's depressed but he's really depressed.' And I did that, I got him to go and see him and the doctor he went to see, he could see on the notes that I'd said he's really depressed, they put him on anti-depressants. He got better and then all the time that I'm ... early on when we used to go on these walks I knew he thought about suicide because I can remember we went to Beachy Head and he said, 'Suicide is always the only sensible option.' And I thought it was just sort of 70s punky hype, I didn't you know, sometimes I thought you know he's, I didn't really think it serious but I think there was a little bit of him that was constantly thinking suicide was a sensible end to your life and a we were getting on very badly when we had the second baby. We started going to counselling and we'd fight a lot and argue a lot and I didn't feel he supported me and our family was split, he was never a bad husband, he paid the bills, he sorted out the holidays, he looked after my daughter, but he had a closer relationship with my daughter than me, you know. It was a sort of dysfunctional family and we weren't very happy and we kept going to counselling and we went back to relate again and I had counselling and we just weren't making any headway so I sort of got to the stage where I thought we really need to, I want to split up and really while we were splitting up he ... you know we said to the children, I said to the children in the morning, 'Your dad' and we went to the counselling, and I said to the counsellor, 'I want a divorce' and he screamed, I said that he's [?] and we talked about it a bit and then I said to the children we're thinking about splitting up and he just went off and said I'm going for a walk and I thought he'd been going for a walk with his friend, because his friend that he goes for walks with, 'Vally,' had been

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contacting him and then texted me at 10 o'clock at night and we were coming back from a barbecue to say he'd jumped off Beachy Head. He was at Beachy Head, 'Goodbye, I love you but goodbye' and it was a terrible shock. I mean in retrospect I could see that he maybe thought ... that I knew that was in his mind but I had absolutely no idea that in retrospect I should have thought. That was a risk when I was thinking about divorcing because he'd had this history that maybe I should've predicted there was a risk that he would but it was out of my head, he had been getting on very badly and he wouldn't take anti-depressants, he would but St. John's Wort, he wouldn't go to the doctor, he took St. John's Wort through the winter but then he would see himself as having SAD Seasonal Affective Disorder so he would stop them in the summer and this particular time we were going through a bad time and I'd been coming increasingly to the decision that we needed to split up because when we spent time together we weren't, it didn't feel, he didn't really, I didn't really feel like he supported me and our relationship wasn't good and we'd all be scared when he came home and that was just kind of the way he was and we'd had a lot of counselling and I'd reached the decision I wanted to split up with him and when he died we had an interview at Relate, where I'd said to him I want to split up with him on the Wednesday and on the Saturday morning we I said to the children, 'Look, me and your dad might split up.' And he'd gone to buy Harry Potter, the new Harry Potter book, and he got his books out, he got a big file out and said, 'I'm going to go for a walk.' and he said, 'You'll have to do my tax.' I was thinking ... and I think and then he left and we got a text from him at 10 o'clock at night on the way back from a barbecue to say he'd jumped from Beachy Head and I think he thought that I wonder whether he maybe thought that I knew what was in his head, that he was hinting that because maybe to him it was clear that he was going to die and the whole of that, we'd already been sleeping in separate rooms and the whole of that week we'd ... he'd been waking himself up every night to check on some project at work and when he was, at the time before when Heather was two, I'd known he was very depressed but this time he hadn't seemed depressed, he seemed fine but some of the things he said were quite mad, like he was absolutely obsessed that he was going to lose his job if anyone found out that this computer programme had gone all wrong and he would ... the computer would wake him up every hour at night and every hour he would get up and go and check if this file was running and then he said to his friends at work on the Friday, 'Come out for a drink.' He said, 'I don't want to go out with you, you're all losers' and he'd been telling me that his colleague that he worked with was persecuting him in some way and in retrospect I can see it was just a delusional idea but I hadn't really clicked at the time that he was really quite badly depressed because he was cheerful and polite and carrying on the job as normal and doing things with goodwill. He wasn't behaving in a withdrawn ... so I think it was a sign that I wasn't so close to him really, that I hadn't picked up that he was depressed ... but afterwards when, after he'd died I felt guilty for a while and I cried a lot when I went to see his body and I

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occasionally would have an opportunity to [?] pull in the car to the side of the road in a quiet place so that I could cry and we had a lot of bereavement support and that helped though you kind of understand how I felt and what was happening to me and five years later I can see that I still am working through the grief really.

I still have very sad, I've had a very sad patch um after the new wedding and well going on holiday was painful for all of us because it always echoes back to holiday with dad, with Jonathan, and this year his anniversary even though it's five years later we all thought, all three of us, you know, have had a very sad week and I can see that I've had years where I haven't be able to be sad where I've just been angry, and I've had ... it was a big shock the first time when it first happened. I was really in shock for a long time and even when I met my husband now, David, I remember ... I've known him about two-and-a-half years and we had in the October the month we first started having dates I can remember I'd written something to The Guardian and it said I feel so guilty. So I can see that you know the guilt has been quite a bit and I still now think feel guilty and sad and in fact it's only really now that I can feel sad that I've lost him and try and remember some of the good things we had together. It's been very difficult and it just seems the saddest stupidest thing. Me and my daughters talked about setting up a suicide is wrong website and my younger daughter wants safety nets put all around the coast of England so we all have our different ways of dealing with it.

Did he leave you know any other notes?

No he just left a text, he just left a text which said, the children always ask me, 'Where is the text?' It said, 'I'm at Beachy Head.' No, he said, 'The car is at the car park at whatever it's called. I'm on .. the bag is at the top of ... it's not Beachy Head, but it's, he told me the name of the cliff next to Beachy Head where the car where the car keys were in his bag, his backpack, he said, 'You're right, it's irrational to be scared of heights but I'm going to make myself jump.' Because it was dusk and he'd been sitting there for awhile, he'd had a bottle of wine and a packet of Paracetamol and Ibuprofen in his packet in his bag with him and they have wardens that patrol Beachy Head and one of the wardens had approached him and said, 'What are you doing here?' And David had chatted nicely about the recent election and how he helped his friend and campaigning as a Liberal Democrat in Eastbourne and so the guy patrolling might have still been suspicious but Jonathan said, 'I'm booked in at the hotel, I've been to Eastbourne before' and put on this sort of polite, happy cheerful ... and he the guy said he was dancing about and Jonathan said I'm just trying to catch the midges but I think he was trying dance around to get himself over the edge of the cliff without thinking about it too ... yes, and he made a reference in his text to Captain 'Oats.' He said that I may be gone some time and he said, 'I love you, I love the girls and I love you and the

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password for the computer is 'N0rman' spelt with a zero which is a pun, meaning I'm a normal Norman kind of bloke, boring Norman, you've made me this sort of boring Norman family guy and now your rejecting me and the zero is a way, I'm worth nothing, every now I still have NormanG and I had my password as Normandy at that time because the counsellor I went to see which he rather resented ... lived at Normandy Drive so it was a reference. So now whenever I use my password Normandy it's sort of like a skewer through my heart, my friend said, 'Suicide is like skewering people.' Quite an aggressive act so yes, that that was what his text was.

Would you mind talking about what happened on the day you received the text, that evening?

Yes.

The events that followed.

When I got the text we were walking home from the barbecue and I tried to call him back and we got home and I tried to phone him and on the phone the text was repeated, he'd texted it to the landline so it had that horrible BT computer voice saying the same text so I can't stand it if I ever get one of those texts now, just can't stand it and we called the police and the police came round and the children didn't really understand what was going on, they sat and talked to the police and the police said, 'Was there any trouble in the family?' And I said that their dad had tried to commit suicide before, taken an overdose before which they didn't know and they described 'Samti' described in great detail a fight that she'd experienced between the two of us, where Jonathan had got ... because Jonathan locked me out of the house and would sometimes push me and he'd hit me. So sometimes when we'd have fights I would say, because I'm [?] in front of the children, I said, 'Don't touch me, don't touch me, don't touch me.' And I'd shout and I'd stand backwards and it would work and it would stop him getting physical with me but once or twice he turned his anger on himself so once when Heather was two he'd come into the bathroom with a bread knife and he, so that then he turned it towards himself and then he tried to jump onto the window, as if he was going to jump out of the window, very dramatic funny stuff, and one time Zanti had seen this other fight where Jonathan he'd I think he'd had me, he'd pushed me into the garage and locked the garage door and then he got hold of this laundry basket and he bashed himself on the head until his head went through it and it was very frightening to see that because she was a little girl and for a week or two he had scratches on his face where he'd hurt himself on the laundry basket and so she was describing this to the police so the police at first thought it was just, I mean the police clearly talked to me for a long time and then they said, 'Well we can't go to Beachy Head and we can't send a patrol car to Beachy Head but we'll ask these rangers.' but they, you know they

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spent ages talking to me to decide whether or not it was a serious sort of threat and then they talked to the rangers who went back to where they met Jonathan and found the bag and so I put the children to bed and spoke to the police and then I just tidied the house because the house was cluttered and untidy when the police came. I couldn't sleep, lay there thinking about, I sent Jonathan texts saying, 'I love you please come back.' You know hoping he was sitting in a ditch too scared to jump and the police came back at two in the morning, and they said, 'We know you're up because we're intercepting your texts.' We found the bag, we've found the car and so they knew it was serious then and they the sergeant that came was a dad of one of her friends because it was very, so we still have this awkward relationship with the dad, and they were very, you know, 'Do you want a PC to stay with you?' and I just didn't want a woman, I didn't want anyone in the house with me, but I felt as if they thought I was a hard nosed cow for saying I didn't want some ... I just needed to be on my own and I lay there and I think it was a lot of work I did, coming, adjusting to what he'd seemed to have done and I thought and thought and thought about it and realised I couldn't be on my own. So when six o'clock came I rang my mum and dad, and said, 'Mummy something's happened. Jonathan's disappeared, I've had a text.' So they came and then when the children were there and Jonathan still wasn't around and they kind of began to click then that this was serious and we were really waiting for the body to be found, and the police said when it got light they would send a helicopter and then ... so we were waiting at 8 o'clock, got light, get some news and then they said, 'Well, they won't send a helicopter out until this time.' For whatever reason so the police came back around twelve or one o'clock and said they've found the body and they told me with my dad and then I must have told my older daughter and then the little one 'Samti' came into the room to sort of find out what was going on and so my dad took her into the garden and told her and then we all got in my mum's car and went home and went to my mum and dad's house and they just looked after me for a week and I tried to get hold of his mum who was in France without her mobile phone with her, his sister, so Interpol ... we had to call Interpol to go and get them and then once they were home we, once she was back we could organise the date for the funeral.

We decided that he would have wanted to have a woodland burial and the funeral directors messed up a bit really and there was a delay in bringing him back to Tring so the children didn't get a chance to see him because they weren't ... because you don't get embalmed if you have a woodland burial and they said, 'Oh, he's too disgusting. The children won't, we can't show him to the children.' So that was another disappointment and then it was all drama really, then we had to meet the ... I'd never heard of this really but by chance my godmother is a humanist celebrant and so she'd sort of helped me find out about woodland burials and humanist celebrants and so we had this lovely guy and we didn't get on, 'She's the wrong kind of person for Jonathan' and

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so we found the local man who was lovely, straightforward, down to earth man, who organised the ceremony and my mother in law drove up, his mum drove up and had a nine hour delay on the M25 because a tanker had you know, drama when they arrived and they'd had this nine hour delay and the next day the humanist celebrant came and his sister's a particularly tricky people but we all sat round and organised the managed to get through this hour with this humanist celebrant and his sister, his older sister got on very well with him, she's still is very, very angry with me, but we sort of, you know, we just done our best to keep relationships going and for a little while it was, I used to hate [?] but they came all came to our wedding, all three of, both his sister's and his mother and we've seen the cousins, all the cousins since, we've been to stay with the mad sister in Switzerland. So it's all kind of okay, I think but it made me realise, it made me learn loads of stuff about bereavement which I didn't know before because I think it's very, very difficult not to fall out with your family when you're bereaved because your world contracts and if people aren't with you, they're against you, so you've got this sort of other person who's equally needy, you can't support each other and you can only fall out really, it's very difficult just to keep kind of normal relationships going so. That's kind of what happened.

Were they aware of his mental health issues?

Yes, they all know he was an awkward bastard and he used to shout at his mother and the sister in Scotland who's really a bit autistic spectrum everybody thinks. She's very bright and she's learnt all her social skills I think but she can be very inappropriate and her boyfriend's brain damaged and he can be very inap. He had a big coma in his twenties and they're fine when you talk to them, they're not quite, body language isn't quite ... anyway, whatever. I shouldn't, but yes she was very upset because she'd been to visit us within the month before he died and hadn't picked up these relationship difficulties so she feels silly, she feels bad that we didn't confide in her and that she let us down by not realising it for herself, because most people, if they were in the house with you, when you're about to split up, know, but she didn't and when you have to go and have the post-mortem the coroner in Eastbourne was a very lovely man. My mother in law, his mum, Jonathan's mum, didn't come and Maggie came down from Scotland and she stayed in this hotel place where Jonathan said he was going to stay with her boyfriend the guy who's had brain damage and my mum and dad took me and my mum and dad took me and my mum and Maggie had been nagging the coroner's assistant for two or three weeks before and she got the, she'd just been on and on at her, 'What's this information?' She was really angry with the people who patrolled Beachy Head, she was constantly haranguing them for information, and, 'Why didn't you do this?' And, 'Why wasn't this done?' And she was determined that the coroner was going to make a verdict of suicide, the coroner at Eastbourne, at Beachy Head hardly ever makes a verdict,

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because he often makes accidental death or unknown, and I wasn't at all sure that if it was a verdict of suicide whether I'd get my house insurance and all the rest of it. I didn't know how to find that stuff out so I was anxious, I mean I didn't want to, I was bereaved, I didn't want to, I wanted whatever was going to happen to happen but she made it absolutely sure that he made it a verdict of suicide, he couldn't do anything else, because of the way she'd been behaving and I was just angry with her about that, because I felt it was very thoughtless of her. She just was so angry with me she didn't want me to get any money basically, you know, that was just ... and she thought if Jonathan committed suicide he would of, it should be acknowledged that he committed suicide, you know. I mean, she just had that, obviously had a bee in her bonnet about it, they were so inappropriate, they just talked about staying on this hotel on the cliffs and what the waves were like and how big the cliffs were and when I got off the train with my mum and dad and then my mum actually walked out of the restaurant where we went after the thing she was chatting as nice as she could and my mum and dad were keeping me as separate as they could but my mum was trying to talk to this sister and she just had to leave the restaurant because she just found them too difficult, they're very difficult people, you know, my mum... anyway. That was the coroner's.

Thank you for sharing that with me. Well, we've got some happy things to talk about don't we? We've got your wedding?

Wedding, yes, oh, wedding was wonderful. You want me to tell you about the wedding?

You met David, you mentioned in the pre-plinth interview ,online.

I met him on match.com.

So I want to know all about that of course from your perspective about making the decision to date again and perhaps what it was like to date online, meeting people online.

Oh yes, meeting people online is a real emotional roller-coaster and I mean I I've always I suppose again back in the 70s in times of Time Out and Spare Rib and I can't remember but, we there was a you know I got used to the idea that you could meet people some of my friends met their friends through personal ads before the time of online dating um Lucy that moved in with me when Jonathan met me when she left her boyfriend Tim she'd met him at Cambridge, but he got he's a very quiet man and he had this lovely girlfriend that he's still with that he met through a Time Out, City Limits magazine that was around then, and I even had a date through City Limits I remember and two or three of my friend had done that sort of small ad dating and so it wasn't

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a big leap for me and I you know used to go places on my own, and go to films and plays on my own in London and meet people for dates that I hadn't known very well so it wasn't a big leap for me to do internet dating and to me it's nicer than meeting someone in a some of my friends go to singles nights in local pubs or something but I wouldn't want to meet someone that way it seems to me they're more likely to be married but when you meet people online it seems to me you know you've got a lot of information about them you have a chance to talk to them and you know it's you have to put out a lot of feelers and then you have to try and talk to the people on the phone and if you can stay in a phone conversation for more than half-an-hour then it might be worth meeting them you don't want to drag the process out too long because it becomes like a virtual relationship and you imaging them to be something so you need to chat online, if you think you like them talk to them on the phone, if you manage a long conversation then it's worth trying to meet and if you don't like them when you meet them forget it because you know there's you have to have you know within a couple of minutes of meeting someone, or 30 seconds of meeting someone whether you like them or not and so yes, so David and I went through that process and we were emailing each other August I think, three years ago maybe even July and we met ... in early October for the first time and had a second date just before I went away on holiday and then and then yes and then nearly stopped going out because the second date went very badly and then the first date went very well and then we stopped and we tried again. I don't know, probably late November and started going out properly in December, so we had quite a lot long kind of lead up time to going out with each other, lots of things about him were similar you know he'd been in um he worked in I worked for health service but he worked council's, he'd worked in south London the same time I'd been working in south London, he had the same kitchen tiles in his kitchen, he put photographs of his house online which was quite helpful because I went, one of dates, the third or fourth round to his house and he put pictures of his room, he likes taking photographs and that was actually quite helpful to make you know, I don't know but yes, so that was good and then it was difficult to date someone when you've got a family because you're very much stuck at home so he had to do a lot of the travelling and we made the decision to live together in July and he sold his house the next July so we sort of dated for a year, lived together for a year, then he sold his house in July and then we got married six months later, this March.

David's from Yorkshire right?

Yes, yes.

And that's where he was living when you met each other?

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No, he lived in Uxbridge in west London, so it was sort of half an hour journey on the M25 and he was commuting into ... he changed jobs and he commutes into London to Waterloo so that was quite easy for him to change to move and the reason we chose to get married in Yorkshire was because his dad is very ill and his dad was housebound and having carers in the house and he was likely to die and he did die. I think he died in June but we set the date, we decided to get married in February on Valentine's day we told my parent's we were going to get married and we set a date for August the 22nd and then couldn't decide where we were going to get married and couldn't get a date and decided to get married at this place in Yorkshire and the only date we could get was the next March so we had a sort of engagement party in Tring in the August and got married in the March and his yes dad sadly died, but his mother came and all these northerners went up Werkley Hall this lovely kind of country house venue but it, it's owned by the Co-op and has been used by trade unions since after the war, when it was requisitioned in the war, the trade unions bought it, trade union movement bought it so it's got lots of trade union pictures which we liked, that kind of twist on the country house feel.

What was it called? 'Wokley'?

Werkley Hall.

Werkley Hall from the pre-plinth interview, yes?

Yes, yes.

You mentioned during the pre-plinth interview that when you'd met each other you were perplexed whether to talk about what had happened.

Oh, yes.

To you know your previous relationship and then the fact that you did actually enable both of you to talk about very difficult experiences because also David's wife has passed away from cancer.

Yes, David's wife had died by cancer but also they'd had a very difficult marriage, that hadn't been easy going and he'd felt very bad and guilty about his ... his marriage partly because he'd had affairs because when things were going badly and there wasn't any physical side to the relationship and his wife was quite ... cold towards him and distant and hostile he succumbed to having affairs, which he wasn't proud of and he was very unhappy because he always loved his wife but their relationship had been so difficult and during the time of her illness he'd been, she'd been very angry at being ill and some of that anger had been pushed onto him and she'd been difficult to nurse she had a very long ... I've just read Dave Eggers' book A Heartbreaking Work of

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Staggering Genius about his mother dying of cancer and how he then had his little boy, it's got some lovely little stuff that seems very familiar and so David became estranged really from his daughter because his daughter stopped university to come and nurse her mother and he'd ... Jane and Sarah sort of managed to make David feel excluded or he excluded himself, however you want to read it, and so it had been a very difficult time and, as I say about bereavement, you can see why people fall out. But him and his daughter had fallen out really during this difficult time and one of the things I've been doing which I've been able to do is make a good relationship and friendship with my step-daughter, it's been a new ... I kind of I think that with step-families I don't think unless you've got very young children that it's ever really going to be any easy relationship I mean my children tolerate David but they don't really accept him and it's a question of building friendships because ... because he's only replacing their dad and he can never be their dad and he's taking my attention so they're too many barriers to make it easy to step-parent a child I think, and so that's been an interesting kind of experience to sort of negotiate and we've just been on holiday together as a four, I mean the wedding, Zanti said, 'Not going to come to Yorkshire, I'm not going to come to the wedding.' but they came to the wedding, his daughter didn't want to come to the wedding, she said, 'I'm not walking up the aisle I might cry.' he said, 'I don't mind if you cry, you can do what you like, if you don't want to do it at the last minute.' They were all bridesmaids and it yes it went it was a really lovely day and it went very well, and it was so touching to have so many people there and my dad and David's son gave fantastic little speeches about me so I liked being a bride, it was a good experience.

And it was the first time you got married?

Yes, the first time I got married so it was really special for me, yes, yes. I really liked it, and my sisters and brothers came and all my nieces and friends from school and friends from college and people from the Philippines, I mean people wanted to come because it was in Yorkshire, a lot of people from Tring came and yes, it was lovely to feel that all these people wanted to come and see us being married, David's friends came, yes, my cousins came before they emigrated. My cousins just emigrated to Panama, they came, so it was good.

What was it like having Jonathan's family there?

Yes, they were okay, we ... my mum and dad, you know, said, you know, 'We're not going to make any special arrangements, we're not going to give them lifts, they can sort themselves out.' And they did, they had a little family reunion, they had my nephew in Basil has a progressive neurological condition so he's in a wheelchair, he's pretty much the same age as Heather, he's nineteen but he came and he got on well with my niece who's eighteen

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and [?] and Margaret and they just treated it as an opportunity to have a weekend together. They flew in from Basil, they came on the train from Edinburgh and Seven Oaks and they people enjoyed chatting to them, and they were so yes, it did work well, mm.

Thank you. Just to talk about your daughters and you mentioned them, of course having, struggling with what happened of course to their father, what's it been like since we talked to you back in September last year when you were on the plinth?

Yes, yes, I guess I went to counselling with Heather this morning we kind of more or less we'd have we've had counselling on and off from this lovely [?] family therapist and Heather has put herself, she's got herself on anti-depressants, and has got herself a job and we have quite a hostile relationship because she you know I think probably because she's seventeen. I don't know how different it is from normal life but some of the issues are her ... she had this very close relationship with her dad who doted on her and he encouraged her and he thought ... she was encouraged to be excellent at ballet, encouraged her to be excellent on the piano and she misses that constant attention and constant direction. So she's having to learn to set her own goals and to work out what she wants to do and to accept my attention is less intense and you know she has to compete for my attention with Zanti and but she's yes she's doing all those things and she still doing very well at school and her friendships, she's just been to Nice, she went to Nice on Easyjet with two friends and every morning had to ring up to check they were still alive because they get drunk and talk to strangers.

How old is she?

Seventeen. She's eighteen next month, so it's scary, but they've done that, that's good and Zanti was very withdrawn really and I was always very worried about her because she quite a quiet girl but I've tried to make sure I've prioritised to things with her and she's her my dad is very clever and reminded her she used to like horse-riding because she'd given up all her activities and she's in really enjoying the piano and flute, she's doing very well on the piano, it's her new hobby, she's gone back to horse-riding and she's enjoying and you know as I say she's started to think, 'Oh, I want to be a bit thinner.' Because you go out with her friends and they go to festivals and she's [?] she's decided to be vegetarian which has had a big impact on her, so she's making decisions for herself and on holiday, because she's quite quiet and introverted and often though she wants to be included with her friends, she often can't be bothered to go out, so this year she's learning, 'If I want to be included I have to put work into maintaining my position with my friends, I have to be a fun Pez.' She's called ... like giving out little bits of sweets like a Pez and she, so she makes an effort with her friends and while

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we were on holiday she joined the children's club and made loads of friends and went dingy sailing and canoeing and all the rest of it so they all, they're all kind of getting there, it's just parenting, keeping all the balls in the air but yes, they're doing okay.

What does Heather want to do in terms of her schooling? She's at this age where she's choosing university?

That's it, we've been talking about doing open days and we went to Bristol, we went to Bristol on the train and she was sick and we had to spend the day lying on the sofa in Costa coffee because ... she wasn't was poorly, she really loved the idea of doing biology at Bristol and went to the open day and I wore my Bodum dress and my Birkenstocks and I blended in very well with all the other mums in Bodum dresses and Birkenstocks and it's quite difficult so she was thinking and now she thinks if she wants to go to Bristol she'll maybe need to do a bit more academic work, do some volunteering work, but actually she's got this job in the pharmacy which takes up twelve hours a week she thinks that's important, she wants to keep her job and maybe she'll just downsize and look for biology degree in a university which maybe doesn't have such high standards and is so difficult to get into and she wants to do her ballet exam and keep her job and maybe not do a biology EPQ project an extra-AS and maybe not go volunteering at Tring, you know, but she's looking now, and she enjoyed her time in Nice so much she's looking for a degree where she can maybe spend some time in France ... as well, so she's, so that's what her ambitions are, she wants to do biology she loved her biology field trip, she couldn't believe how much she enjoyed it so.

And Zanti's still much younger, thirteen.

Thirteen, yes, she's a long way off that stuff. She wants to do English at Norwich at UEA and become a writer.

Very good. She can't hear even though she's here.

Zanti: Yes I can.

She said she heard us. Very good. So just to bring you back to yourself, you mentioned at the very beginning of the interview about you know life, what life was like for you before ... you know you had your family and children and the commitment and the time that it takes up and that to go on the plinth was a way of cutting out a bit of time for you.

Yes.

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And say, 'Well actually I do want to celebrate who I am with all these different identities.' Right?

Yes, yes, that's true

So how are you finding that then being a mother and what it was like before being on your own, how has life changed for you?

Oh yes, now that's right, so I was a single parent for a bit and for a lot after David moved in I would still see myself as a single parent and it's true actually now, we've just had a holiday with the four and I do feel like I'm supported and I have someone else, we had an argument on holiday, he's been paying half the bills for a little while when he still had his house. He still maybe paid less of my bill but I said, 'Well you know we're getting married, half and half.' And going on holiday he kind of made it clear I should pay three-quarters of the holiday and then when we got ... I had a big tantrum and said, 'No, we're paying half and half for the holiday.' And I do and he's very good about ... I've been very stressed at work and having, you know, getting behind with my paperwork and struggling to get the cooking and Zanti wants to be vegetarian so I've had to do more home cooking ... and he does really muck in, he picks up if you say, 'You've got to do this.' He won't do it, but if you if you make it clear that he does, he does come up to the mark and he's really helped with the housework and the ...

That's great.

He even does the washing sometimes, hangs up the washing.

And you mentioned again just to go back to the same topic about how in life has change since you've had a family. What are the things you hope for in the future when your children will grow up?

Well, we just went on this holiday with sailing and I'd really like to get competent to sail a yacht okay, so I don't think Zanti wants to do that with me but maybe that's something I'll be able to do more as she gets older and I want to go back to walking and I'm going to work three-quarter time from July. I'm going to do a dermatology diploma this year, this September to July and then hopefully I've just realised I've haven't had confirmation of my place and then and then work three-quarter time and hopefully be able to do a bit of this commissioning stuff you know Andrew Lansley's is going to make GPs manage the health service and I wouldn't mind getting involved with that locally there a good group of doctors that I trust and so that will be an opportunity so yes put myself into my work and maybe sailing I was thinking maybe do a yoga teaching course but maybe I just carry on doing my yoga and we've got a flat in Dawlish I bought before we got married with sort of the

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and with my pension really and so I would like to spend more time there, walking on Dartmoor or walking on the coast ...

I was going to ask you a question about your views on these changes that the government has put forward because you'd mentioned being very political as a young women at university getting involved you know you mentioned Thatcher coming into power

Yes.

And all these protests that were going on so, it would be interesting to know you opinion of these changes to the health service, particularly as you worked as a freelance GP.

Yes. So, [?] I've got a very political cousin who sees me as being very middle of the road and I mean he wrote a song about a stop the war march I didn't go on the stop the war march so I'm not as political as I was and the thing that would make me go on a march now is I'm very worried about the constitutional changes that this government propose that would kind of enable them to stay in power for five years and to make a fixed term and to change the way the voting areas, that really bothers me that a government shouldn't be able to change the constitution so that they have to stay in power for five years so that would get me going to Westminster with a banner saying, 'That's wrong.' um and I've already sent an email to Simon Hughes to tell him he's not to let that happen he's a Lib Dem but the GPs changes I think are wrong I think that these Conservative ministers are arrogant and foolish, they're stupid men who think they know everything and they've got no experience and the idea that Andrew Lansley can just make cuts in the health service and get rid of a whole load of a whole tier of management and just hand that to GPs and just have us do it is clearly foolish and I'm sure we'll do it, and we'll do it reasonably well but at the cost of some of the more vulnerable people and the vulnerable services because GPs will always look to the person in front of them and they haven't got a population view ... I think it's going to be awkward to be a GP with a budget so that you have your patient who wants a hip replacement and you have the money as well, so you should be your patient's advocate and if you've also got the budget and you know that's good for you patient but you have to make the decision someone else is more important or something else is more important that's a difficult tension so politically, so that's a little ethically it's a little bit suspect and then how they incentivise it is wrong, but they are getting rid of management and quangos and important functions that once they've got rid of it they'll realise it's needed and then we'll have to put money, the government will have to put money into reinventing it again, you know my friend works for an ecology group and they're going to have to cut the function of coordinating between the different ecology groups and so in two or three years time, they'll have to train

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somebody and put the money in to reinvent it again and it it's just stupid they think they know they just think they know it alls and they don't understand what how things work, you can't just, you can just ... and you go back to having to tiny little units managing NHS' very expensive because it's so bureaucratic and it you know they've just got to a nice stability with big units and they're going back to small units stupid. So you just kind of have to make the best of it, do the best job you can.

And why would you like to get this diploma in dermatology?

Yes, I've got I've got. Dermatology diploma I've got because I can see that as a doctor I'm always getting rashes, me and my partner, in the practice we're obviously not very good at skin and I keep seeing the patients being from doctor to doctor and it's the simple skin rash and I kind of think we could do that better and I send people off and I know I really could do it myself, so and I've got a place at St. Mary's university in east London and it's a it's sort of seven days, it's distance learning, you have a module every week on the computer and seven days you attend and I'm looking forward to doing that.

That's fantastic, thank you, I hope you've enjoyed being interviewed today.

Yes, no, it's been lovely talking about myself, thank you for your attention.
Okay.

I'm glad.

Okay, thank you.