

Interview with respondent 0703

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Location: UCL

Interviewer: Emma Pett

Interviewer: So Melvyn will be using the recording as well to kind of read through, so it's quite helpful if we begin just by you saying a little bit about where you lived in the 60s, how old you were roughly across the decade.

Respondent: Right, I was born in 1948, July 1948, I lived in Leeds throughout the period apart from going to Sheffield University which was 66 to 69 when I watched precious little cinema and lived rather meanly on my grants, mostly on beer and cheap food, not much on the cinema. I lived in the Headingley area which gave me access to three local cinemas relatively easily, which was mainly what I used since we're speaking about the days when you didn't really get films on television.

Interviewer: They came a lot later

Respondent: In the 60s as I remember it, if you saw anything on television it was like likely to be black and white from the 50s, so it was a bit irrelevant. Certainly nothing like the turnaround you could expect now.

Interviewer: No, I think there was usually a 10 to 15 years window between the cinematic...

Respondent: So my 60s cinema-going is obviously to the cinema otherwise I wouldn't have seen it.

Interviewer: So you were mainly in Leeds but there was a brief period when you were in Sheffield?

Respondent: Yes, and only part time because I came back to Leeds more than I probably should have done. Leeds and Sheffield aren't far apart and I had a girlfriend in Leeds so I was back home most weekends.

Interviewer: So your life kind of stayed rooted in Leeds then? So can you remember which...you mentioned a little bit about the cinemas, the art deco buildings, but can you remember which cinemas you went to regularly and which you kind of...

Respondent: The main cinema was called The Lounge in Headingley, North Lane Headingley, a small and rather nice cinema, we occasionally went to something really good on there. Cottage Road, which is further up in Headingley, near where Alan Bennett lived, was brought up, was almost bang next to it; and there was another cinema not far away from us which we used very rarely, The Lyceum, which was in the Burley area of Leeds which was a possibility. We didn't, I didn't, go anywhere else really. Occasionally my grandmother would take me in the 50s to see things on first release.

Interviewer: So they were mainly second-run local things.

Respondent: They were second-run local things, I couldn't afford to go to the big cinema and didn't.

Interviewer: Cinema was, compared to a lot of other leisure activities and compared to today, was reasonably affordable, particularly those second-run cinemas.

Respondent: Yes

Interviewer: Can you remember how often you used to go?

Respondent: It varied over the period because, during the 50s and into the early 60s was during the period when we would regularly go to Saturday matinees to see something if it was on and if it was a U. We didn't go and see kids' programmes, some cinemas did kids things.

Interviewer: On a Saturday morning, yeah.

Respondent: We didn't do that, we went on a Saturday afternoon if there was something we could go and see, and that was, I think that was either nine pence originally maybe it went up to about 1 and thruppence at the end of the period so you have to translate that back into current money. But that was comparatively cheap. I was quite ... the money I had available to me, my pocket money, probably came to about 3 shillings a week so it was big in my terms but affordable. Going into the middle of Leeds, apart from the bus fares you required to do it, would be three times that amount and probably more.

Interviewer: In the big first run cinemas?

Respondent: Yeah. So I was regarded as unaffordable by us as kids. So Saturday would be reasonably regular, once a fortnight something like that. Any X films or As meant we couldn't go, but by the time I was a couple of years into the 60s, 13 really, I stopped wanting to trek off to the cinema on a Saturday and started knocking around with friends hoping we'd find girls somewhere, I went to an all boys school so it weren't easy to find girls, and that changed cinema-going so it wasn't a regular thing. It tended then to

be...you eventually started going to cinemas when you found a girl you wanted to go with because dates in the cinema were what people did.

Interviewer: Yeah, I've obviously got a few people who've talked to me about this, there weren't really many places you could take a date.

Respondent: It was seen as a sort of acceptable thing to do and it was...you could go there and maybe even see the film as well because you could go and see some good films like that. And then I sort of settled down and went with my, what became my wife. We went to see things that we wanted to see and they were slightly more sophisticated...

Interviewer: And that was kind of at the end of the decade?

Respondent: That's sort of 17, 18 so end of the decade. So if I look at what I did, I would go and see Carry On films and "Doctor in the House" and "Doctor in Love" and that series of films, war films which were sort of ten a penny at the time, that would be the early part of the 60s, that's the sort of end of being a child. Then followed by going to see things which we wanted to see, seeing the things that were then seen as quite trendy like "Blow-Up" which I remember very well, "Morgan" "Morgan: A Suitable Case for Treatment" which is one I remember particularly well...

Interviewer: You've mentioned, yeah

Respondent: And they were things that actually stuck in my mind because they were particularly good films, they weren't wallpaper.

Interviewer: They were films that made you think about...

Respondent: I went see “Zulu” and “Moll Flanders” and things that were comparatively good, check that and make sure I have got that right.

Interviewer: There’s quite a few literary adaptations in the movie mix, “Far From the Madding Crowd” a lot of people talk about. Tom Jones ...

Respondent: Tom Jones was what I’m thinking about, it’s Tom Jones that I went to see.

Interviewer: Before we go on to talk about the films, just to go back to cinemas, otherwise I’ll get distracted by talking about the films, can you remember..  
.so you mentioned them being red velvet seats and kind of like the sense of luxury you had in some of the older cinemas – were they, your local cinemas now, were they in reasonably good repair? We see a lot close towards the end of the 60s

Respondent: The period that I’m referring to, that was mainly the early bit of the 60s.  
The Lounge was a good art deco style cinema in a nice area near the Headingley cricket ground, sort of seen as an OK area, that was before it was crowded up I assume now it’s full of students, and nobody empties the bins and things. But, no, it was nicely maintained and a pleasant place to be. Can’t say I sat at the time thinking “this is art deco and wonderful” but it felt like an alright place. Cottage Road on Bennett’s Street was smaller and slightly more intimate really, lots of nice brown wood in it and velvet seats, not art deco, but very nicely done and nicely maintained and thought to be a good place to go. So they were both good. The Lyceum was a bit more seedy, but not very seedy...

Interviewer: I was just asking because some of those, some of the local cinemas by the 60 were sort of flea-pit style cinemas...

Respondent: No we didn't go to flea-pits. They were seen as not flea-pits, there were flea-pits...

Interviewer: These were kind of a step above that? They were kind of well maintained and....

Respondent: Which is one of the reasons... Haddon Hall was another one that was in range of us and that was a flea-pit so we didn't go there.

Interviewer: And the programmes, the way that those cinemas operated was still on the system where you bought a ticket for the seat and it rolled or were you buying tickets for films?

Respondent: No you bought a ticket for entry and it rolled so it was continuous very often. And we did do daft things like arrive halfway through and then wait until you'd caught up with yourself occasionally, although I tried not to do that. Obviously you go for a matinee, you were there for the matinee because that was the beginning of the thing so you expected to see the beginning of the film and go through Pearl and Dean adverts and all the rest of it. But I've been to things where you went and it was continuous and you plonked yourself in and worked out where you were

Interviewer: And waited. The first time someone told me that I was really surprised because that's so...that's one of the things that's gone now from cinemas. I mean we do it with television, so if it's what you're used to I suppose it didn't seem that odd at the time.

Respondent: There were no designated seats so you went and found a seat and tried to get one you could see from, because at this time, bear in mind, when

you're young in a cinema which doesn't have a big rake you could end up with somebody sitting in front of you and barely see over them

Interviewer: With a hat or something...

Respondent: So trying to go somewhere where you could tip the seat up and sit on the back of the seat on the back row, which in a matinee wasn't full of courting couples, meant if you got in at the front of the queue for it you could tip the seat up and then you could see over somebody tall.

Interviewer: That was quite significant when you're young?

Respondent: It was, otherwise you just saw their head

Interviewer: Were the...can you remember...

Respondent: you were always in the Stalls because you paid more to go in the...

Interviewer: In the nice seats. Were there queues? You mentioned queuing and I always find that interesting, were there queues...do you remember them throughout the decade or just at the beginning?

Respondent: I couldn't date it to be honest. I mean cinema's associated in my mind with queuing to go in so I sort of vaguely expected it would work that way.

Interviewer: And those local cinemas stayed open throughout the 60s did they...

Respondent: Yes, they didn't close until after I'd left Leeds. It was... they were running down because we were all watching, as I did you see, I went less often to the cinema. So I went at the beginning of the decade, less at the end of the decade. I can think of the things I saw at the end of the decade..."Blow-Up"

and “Morgan” and that was probably the sort of highlights but I wasn’t seeing a lot at that point. So I was part of the decline.

Interviewer: As most people were, that was the general pattern.

Respondent: We were watching TV, and in my case beginning to settle down and get married, and stuff like that, which meant you had no spare money actually

Interviewer: To go out

Respondent: Because money was relatively tight throughout this period, it only made sense at the cinema when it was cheap.

Interviewer: Yeah, it’s interesting how you see those patterns develop over the decade and sometimes it is linked to personal changes, but often it is when people got their TV. I mean do you remember what year you got the TV?

Respondent: Yeah, we got a TV probably in ‘62, we were latecomers to television, but, TV wasn’t in any case...I watched television in friend’s houses so not that I didn’t see television we didn’t have it at home. Parents were always waiting for colour to arrive or some other reason why they never bought one, some really dramatic thing was going to happen. My father trying to make sure he didn’t spend the money on a television really. Eventually in the very early 60s, and of course by the time I actually created a house of my own I did have a television. It was actually our first television, handed down to me, that’s what I got. Proof they bought well and it lasted.

Interviewer: Yeah, they did then. OK, that’s quite interesting as well that you were sort of going to the same cinemas throughout the 60s because a lot of people move around more, or move kind of like from the north to the south....

Respondent: I think that I probably stopped using, I mean I moved away from that bit of Leeds in the late 60s, '69 was when we actually moved, so...By 1969 I wasn't going to the cinema very much, I just got married, I was doing a new job and we went rarely. And probably at that stage we were in Doncaster we have to the main cinemas in Doncaster, not quite the metropolis that Leeds thought it was. But we'd go, I went once or twice in '69 and that would be the height of it.

Interviewer: Did you read, when you were deciding what to see at the cinema, how did you make that decision? Did you read reviews? I mean you said that suggestions of friends and relatives were important to you, did you kind of discuss it with who you were going with and say "oh let's go and see this" sort of thing?

Respondent: You read the newspaper, local newspaper, to see what was on because the choice was very limited because we were only looking at three cinemas, that's the only practical cinemas that you can go and see. You've got three films you could possibly go and see. Yes, I did read reviews. I mean I read a sort of proper newspaper from...I mean we read the Evening Post – that's a little Leeds evening paper – they were big on evening papers in Leeds everybody read the Evening Post or the Evening News, and they would carry reviews of films and also tell you what's on at your local cinema. That was the source of information after all the internet or advertising particularly. But by the mid-60s – '63 probably onwards – I was, as part of "hey I'm trying to educate myself" I got my half price Times as a student, so I read reviews in what must have been in those days quite a good paper.

Interviewer: And then that would inform your choice to a certain extent?

Respondent: And people were saying “hey I’ve been to see it and it’s very good” and there was quite a bit, thinking about it, quite a bit of discussion about films in the way we probably now talk about television series.

Interviewer: What you’ve seen and....

Respondent: Yeah, so Tom Jones came out and everybody knew it was different and, there’s Albert Finney in it if I remember it, and so there would be a discussion about it as people had been to see it, as you would discuss now “The Killing” or something like that.

Interviewer: A drama yeah on television. It’s interesting how, that a lot of those TV series and serials have taken that place as the thing, as a common point of the discussion.

Respondent: We probably still talk about...there’ll be a series of films each year would have that sort of discussion, “The King’s Speech” was one I remember as producing that sort of effect. Everybody went to see it and thought “well that’s pretty good”. So there’s a small number of things that make it, there’s a lot of stuff that never gets to that stage.

Interviewer: So yeah, so moving on to talk about the films, you mentioned “Morgan: A Suitable Case for Treatment” as being a film...I was really interested in the way that you talked about, you know, certain films, not all of them, being...offering different ways of looking at the world or making you think differently about the world around you and, I mean, this has been a sort of theme that’s come up in quite a few of the interviews, that there were less ways in which people got information in those days and so films quite often

offered something to people that perhaps they don't look for from films now. Could you just talk a little bit more about when you saw that film ...

Respondent: Yes I will. I'm trying to think when I did see it, I'd see it probably about, it must have been a year or so into its release so work out when it's released, I can't remember, '67 or something like that or '66. I remember seeing it...by which stage I was at university, I must have been at university. I saw it with my girlfriend, who I later married so I'm working out where I am in the world, so probably '67, something like that. I can't remember what cinema we saw it in so I can't claim I remember that, but I do remember coming out and thinking "hey, that was different" and I've never forgotten it. So if you ask me what I saw in that period that's one of the things I remember, whereas when I check through Wikipedia to see what was released in the 60s, I realise I went to see lots of stuff, actually it doesn't really stick in my mind and I couldn't tell you what happened in it, but "Morgan" with an exploration of mental illness really, was interesting. It was David Warner played the part and it was that sort of rather understated natural style of acting that was....

Interviewer: Yes Karel Reisz directed it and he did a lot of kind of realism, he did "Saturday Night and Sunday Morning"....

Respondent: It was really...it made you think differently. Another sort of thing had a similar effect and left you with a sort of...an enigmatic 60s film was "Blow-Up" which was, you know, you're not quite sure what you were seeing and in the end you weren't quite sure what you were seeing really had happened.

Interviewer: Can you remember talking about these films afterwards or did you just go away and sort of think about it?

Respondent: Because at that stage I was going with somebody, so I certainly told the person I was with and we would talk to people about it. I don't remember endless discussion about it, but they were quite big events that made me think about something in a way you hadn't before which was why they stuck in my mind. And that's probably so of some of the earlier stuff I saw. "Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner"

Interviewer: So a lot of the kind of things that...

Respondent: Yeah kitchen sink stuff was a good, "Taste of Honey" I remember seeing. "Saturday Night and Sunday Morning", not sure when that was released but there was....

Interviewer: '60? '61? It's in the beginning of the 60s...

Respondent: But I remember going to see those and those being again things that made...

Interviewer: You'd have been quite young when those came out?

Respondent: Yes, but I was probably seeing them a year or two after...probably a year or two on to it.

Interviewer: How did it feel for you seeing... I mean I know there were kind of documentary style films before them, but those films were different, introduced a kind of realism and the representation of the working classes into British cinema quite, quite forcefully. I mean it was a movement that was intended to do that. Can you remember how, what your response was

at the time? I know it's difficult to disentangle that from how you look back on it but can you remember, did it seem really refreshing seeing that or...?

Respondent: Refreshing is the wrong word to use maybe because it was happening at about the time that I was becoming interested in these things so it was there as I was there. So refreshing...I wasn't comparing it with much before, I was only comparing it with new films I'd seen as a kid. As somebody who defined himself, I saw myself as working class, I probably wasn't I was middle class actually, but I didn't define myself as working class my family were very much working class. My grandmother had to bring up the family with no money, except what she earned from working as a part-time barmaid at The Empire after her husband was badly injured in an accident and couldn't work. My father had had to leave school at 14 and get a job even though he was very bright, and should really have stayed on at school, and had sort of worked his way up on the strength of lots of hard work really. So although by that stage we were not badly off, my father had climbed up his hierarchy as a public health inspector it was a sort of respectable job, I didn't see myself as a member of the middle classes. So I defined myself as a member of the Northern working class, proper Yorkshireman, so I quite liked this, this seemed proper to me and I recognised the people ..

Interviewer: In the film

Respondent: In the films because it was also quite Northern actually.

Interviewer: Yeah a lot of them were...

Respondent: So I recognised it and they made me think. I like things that make me think so that was pretty good. Without doing...I didn't sort of sit at the end of the film saying "well that made me think", I wasn't that intellectual about it. But when I look back on it, I like the things that made me think.

Interviewer: Were they, I mean, some of the films addressed social issues at the time, things like back-street abortions and unwanted pregnancies and that kind of thing. Did that register at all with you as being...you know....do you remember that?

Respondent: I remember it happening, I can't claim I knew anybody who did it, we all lived in fear in pre-pill days of producing kids before our time. Because people did it, there were more shotgun marriages than you care to think about. Contraception was not much spoken about, not easily available and as a consequence of that we all worried about it. It was a big worry I can tell you.

Interviewer: I've lost track now of how many female interviewees I've had that have said that when they got married they were pregnant with their first child, because that's what you did.

Respondent: I remember it, my friends got married because there was a child on the way rather than that's what they meant to do. So, those are all very real things. The idea of having backstreet abortions didn't seem like a very good idea, but those were real issues and worries for us. The pill didn't arrive until the mid-60s and wasn't sort of readily available for even the articulate middle classes until probably '67 or so.

Interviewer: It didn't really have an impact straight away, yeah. So, it's really interesting hearing you talking about those films because like you say you grew up with them, so you weren't really comparing them to what came before. Did they seem different to American films, Hollywood films?

Respondent: The truth is now I didn't go to see many American films, because I didn't sort of, I was checking my...what did I see...because I'm trying to jog my memory by looking at stuff and apart from...I remember seeing "The Graduate" that was a, you know...

Interviewer: A big film

Respondent: A big film and one that everybody talked about and one we still do talk about, Mrs Robinson, one we talk about to this day sort of thing, at least people of my age.

Interviewer: Did you feel with "The Graduate" that it spoke to your generation or reflected your generation?

Respondent: No because I was always a bit inclined to look at things...because that wasn't my world, you know, swimming in pools and elderly ladies seducing you. That's not a thing I remotely experienced I can tell you. So it wasn't my world, that's probably one of the reasons why I didn't particularly like American films. It was not...I didn't much go for that, you weren't looking at your world. I did historical stuff so I remember seeing "Lawrence of Arabia" and thinking that was wonderful and that did make you think and it was wonderful. It's beautifully shot, it's got lots of nuances in it. "Dr Zhivago" a bit sort of slushy I suppose but I didn't think that at the time. Again I thought that looked wonderful and was again interesting. So those

sort of things. Towards the end of the period I remember seeing “Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid” and “Midnight Cowboy” and they didn’t sort of speak to me, they were good and they were interesting but they weren’t of my world. So I felt that about the American films, there aren’t lots of American films that I went to see.

Interviewer: So you gravitated towards British cinema without...

Respondent: Yes, without sort of, I mean I wasn’t sort of think “oh it must be made in England” or I could see a sort of national front...

Interviewer: What about the kind of films that were more about London, the swinging London films that started coming out towards the end of the decade?

Respondent: Give us an example?

Interviewer: Well, you know, “Blow-Up” you already mentioned, “Darling”, “Alfie”...

Respondent: “Alfie” I saw. I couldn’t tell you much about “Alfie”, I could about “Blow-Up”. It was alright I think but it didn’t sort of impact on me. “Blow-Up” did, “Blow-Up” was different and interesting and made me think and that was about Swinging Sixties London.

Interviewer: It was, yeah. So that didn’t seem too... people have got different memories of the late 60s in terms of how their world related to the world of what was happening in London and some people say “oh it wasn’t really that different in Newcastle or Manchester” and some people say “well it wasn’t anything like that” because of course everybody has their own world that they inhabit...

Respondent: By the late 60s, we'd got friends in London and occasionally came down to see people in the area, it's not that I never visited London, so by the late 60s it was something that we knew about, I didn't feel I was part of it, but I spent quite a lot of my career trying to avoid ever being sent to London. I was quite happy staying in the North as long as I could I think, soon you run out of jobs you could do that. So I didn't feel that this was an alien place...

Interviewer: You could relate to it even if it wasn't where you lived?

Respondent: I'm thinking about genres of things that I can remember seeing. There was a clump of war films "Heroes of Telemark" and "Where Eagles Dare" and stuff and they were escapism really more than anything else. The war was a long way away from us by that stage. We'd been through endless war films in the 50s in black and white, "Dambusters" and so the war was part of our history and our parents had been involved in it and spoke about it, but it wasn't particularly gritty from...

Interviewer: Kind of like adventure films really...

Respondent: Yes, they were adventure films, so they were just escapism. They were nice to go and see from that point of view and not much more than that. There were a whole succession of comedies, "School for Scoundrels" I can remember and "League of Gentlemen", some Carry On films that I can't remember. Actually I stopped going to Carry On films, I didn't see them all but I did start with "Carry on Sergeant" which was back in the 50s I think and some of the earlier ones were still in that period when I was regularly going to the cinema.

Interviewer: A lot of children went to see the Carry On films, people went to see them as children, they were funny and I think a lot of the sexual innuendo went over people's heads. It's interesting what audience they attracted, a lot of people talk about stopping going to see them when they got a bit older, I suppose they were a bit formulaic...

Respondent: They'd become a bit formulaic. The first ones were less... "Carry On Sergeant" I think was the first one was a 50s film which is not really very relevant to what you're doing, but that wasn't as full of sexual innuendo. That was more a comedy based on the life of conscripts. Which is what we all thought would happen to us actually because we didn't get rid of national service until well into my life, I thought I was going to have to go, everybody else went and joined up, so as a child I thought that was what was going to happen to me. I didn't fancy it very much I can tell you, I was very delighted to find they could manage without it before I got called into it. But it wasn't as full of sexual innuendo as the later stuff got.

Interviewer: No.

Respondent: and by that stage I got bored with it, and there are the sort of Northern films really, which are things I can sort of tend to remember better, without at the time knowing why so...there was "This Sporting Life" about a Rugby League player if I remember rightly. "Kind of Loving" that's another one of that genre. And then there were, let me see if there's anything else I picked up. There were the sort of big...there were things like "Zulu" and "Charge of the Light Brigade", the historical stuff.

Interviewer: Did you go and see "Zulu" when it came out?

Respondent: Oh yeah, it was a blinking good film actually. But they were a form of, ok it was like war films, they were adventure films, but slightly more to them but not a lot. "Isadora" that's another historical one, "Man for All Seasons" which I think is in this period as well; that was very clever. I thought that was remarkable, that was something I came away thinking "that was really good". I liked that sort of...the character of Moore played so understated really, the play on...careful use of words and things I really liked it.

Interviewer: Do you think, how would you, in terms of your other cultural interests, do you think for you at that point ... because a lot of these films that you're talking about that had an impact on you were kind of late 60s, was cinema one of your more important cultural...

Respondent: I think a lot of culture....

Interviewer: No it's just, it's interesting because a lot of people look back at that period and say there were great films made then, and it's always difficult to disentangle that from the age you are because I think when you're a teenager films often do have quite a big impact...

Respondent: At that point I wasn't going to theatre so, theatre was what richer and posher people than me did. There was theatre...it was in decline, but there was theatre in the area. But I wasn't a regular attender, I sort of began to go a bit in the 70s, but barely at all in the 60s. I didn't go to concerts, I began to discover classical music by way of a music lending library from which I was borrowing guitar music and then found classical guitar music thought "oh this is good" and then realised it was even better when it wasn't played on a guitar. So by the late 60s I had sort of discovered...but

only by way of records. I did go and see a Julian Bream concert at the end of the 60s but that's probably the most cultural thing I did on the music front. Dance...I've never been able to make any sense of dance. It doesn't do much for me so, I can't claim I'm particularly sort of culturally inclined.

Interviewer: So cinema was one of your main...

Respondent: Cinema and what was on television. And there was, towards the end of this period some really quite good stuff turning up, "Cathy Come Home" and things like that. There was actually some good stuff but it would be TV rather than...I did watch those sort of things and thought they were, again, pretty good. It was almost like cinema in your home, which was what wanted really.

Interviewer: What about ... this is all fantastic so thanks very much for sharing this.

Respondent: Fantastic may be overdoing it a bit ..

Interviewer: No, no it's great because everybody...it's funny how you expect everyone to say the same things and they don't. So you've mentioned "Blow-Up" which was Antonioni so I was going to ask you about European cinema, and also how aware you were of who directed the film?

Respondent: Er... I can remember some of the names, they didn't mean anything to me...

Interviewer: I mean most people would say, yeah they knew David Lean, there was a few directors that people knew about...

Respondent: I didn't know, so I didn't go thinking "oh David Lean's directed this" and I didn't know what a director did actually. What's the difference between a

director and a producer? I didn't understand either actually. I didn't know about making films, so I wasn't going sort of analysing how they'd done it and how they'd panned the shots and things like that. I wasn't particularly interested...

Interviewer: Interested in the mechanics of it, you wanted to go because you'd heard it was a good film.

Respondent: Later on I learned a lot more about David Lean and what he did and I now know much more about what a good director, what difference they make and what their role is, but at the time I couldn't have told you. I would have known more about the stars and they would have been big names we'd see because we thought they were pretty good. Tom Courtenay in particular I always sort of

Interviewer: I remember Tom Courtenay, Albert Finney were in a lot of those films. They were kind of the key actors that were cast in them. So did you ever go and see subtitled films?

Respondent: No.

Interviewer: No, just steered clear of them

Respondent: Yeah.

Interviewer: No it's fair enough I was just...

Respondent: Far too sort of arty for me. I only recently discovered I can cope with subtitles through things like "The Killing" and that sort of thing. So no, Italian films and things like that, not at all. It's very plebeian.

Interviewer: No it's not, see I think those films that you particularly liked were quite thought provoking cinema, but I think that at the time the culture was that the European cinema tended to be in continental cinemas and maybe university cinema clubs, but they were in particular kinds of places.

Respondent: Yes, you wouldn't have found them in the cinemas that I was using. You would have to put yourself out. And you would probably have been part of "a different set", bear in mind that in this period I was knocking around with friends from the area originally, and then as I ended school I went to work just holiday jobs. I worked, between leaving school and going to university, I left school half way through...I think it was something like February I left, and I work on a parks department in Leeds with ground up ordinary blokes who were ordinary and swore all the time and treated me like a grown up so that was very nice. I tended to be with people who wouldn't have seen themselves as intellectuals and were perfectly comfortable with that...

Interviewer: But yeah a lot of people went to see those films and it was a kind of aspirational thing in a way.

Respondent: Yes, you'd been with a group that were interested in that sort of thing. A much more London thing I suspect.

Interviewer: There were more continental cinemas in London, but they were...most of the big cities had them.

Respondent: Yes well, not around our area.

Interviewer: No, no I just wanted to check. Is there anything else...have you got any sort of final thoughts or anything we haven't discussed about any aspect of

cinema-going? What about things like the national anthem being played at the end? Can you remember people standing up for that?

Respondent: Oh yeah, that was normal throughout the period, people became less respectful towards the end of the 60s.

Interviewer: People would sneak out before it came on?

Respondent: For most people this was a period when most of the adults had fought in a war and felt...

Interviewer: So your parents' generation had a particular influence.

Respondent: It wasn't just my parents' generation, those that had gone away and done their national service had been fighting in Malaya, Malaya insurgency campaign, we were in the middle of a Cyprus campaign, I remember reading about that and thinking that the terrorism interested us more now than it did before that period. And because it was a conscript army lots of people had been through that, so the idea of being sort of keen on Queen and country was not a great shock to us. So it seemed alright, it was what you did and if you could sneak out early I was a generation that thought that was probably alright, but you didn't sort of ostentatiously rush out I can tell you. That would just be rude and we'd been taught not to be rude.

Interviewer: What about, do you have any memories about seeing the news reels, anything about...

Respondent: Yes, news reels, I don't remember any particular news reels. As you know there was Pearl and Dean adverts, there was always a B film, so you would expect to get a B film which might be OK, it might not. None of them

particularly stick in my mind as being wonderful but there was one, and/or a news reel. News reels were...

Interviewer: Part of it

Respondent: There was a cock crowing on them...I can't remember who made them now. They were Pathé

Interviewer: Pathé news reel yeah, a lot of them were yeah. There were some other little documentaries that were made by people like the Coal Board and they were kind of...sort of factual films that...

Respondent: I don't remember seeing those, at our place you would have got Pathé news and it would be full of sort of anodyne stuff when you look back on it.

Interviewer: A lot of them were like the Royal Family opening stuff...

Respondent: Yes, the Royal Family going on tours so you could see the Queen in Australia, in colour, because there was no way you saw things in colour unless you went to the cinema of course. Colour TV didn't arrive until the early 70s so...

Interviewer: What about things like travelogues and things? Can you remember those?

Respondent: No, not really. I'd see stuff, it was 50s stuff, so I went to see, not really travelogue stuff, but remember the Jacques Cousteau film "Silent Sea" or something it was, which was...I went to see for me birthday and that was pretty special and wonderful. So not that we didn't see stuff like that but that wasn't what you went to the cinema for and that I particularly remember.

Interviewer: No, they were just sort of in the programme...

Respondent: So looking back it's a mixture of comedies, like Tony Hancock in "The Rebel" which is another one I remember now and thought was pretty good and can even remember the odd line from. It wasn't a great success, but I can remember it.

Interviewer: My Dad used to remember that as well.

Respondent: And sort of gritty Northern stuff and some really quite sophisticated stuff like "Man for All Seasons" that made you think differently.

Interviewer: There was some very good drama and good adaptations in that period, you mentioned "Tom Jones" that's one that people often discuss.

Respondent: I mean it was a pretty...

Interviewer: They stand up

Respondent: I mean it's interesting the things that I remembered as opposed to when I went back and checked and thought "oh yeah I did go and see that", tend to be the ones that are good. Which is confirmation for me that actually the things that I thought were good have withstood the test of time and are still regarded as good. There you go.

Interviewer: Thank you very much.

End of Interview

