**More Deflecting Privilege Data**

**Interview 9 - Resisting notion of an elite background via notion of the intellegentsia**

**On class background ‘ ‘my background was the intellegentsia’**

My background was the intelligentsia, which is definitely not upper class or public school or anything like that. But it's also not underprivileged. I mean, it was a really privileged background, really, you know, I mean, enough money, nice place to live, interested parents who are interested in my brother and me. So no, I think I've stayed squarely where I was. Nobody's ever asked me that before.

EW: Do you think upper middle class or middle class?

JH: Well, I just called it the intelligentsia, because I'm not keen on - I know many people have been to public school - but I'm not keen on the concept of what English called public school. But my children went to fee paying schools. So, in the end, when they were let down by the other sort, I mean really badly let down. So sad, but anyway, they did. I can't remember where my mind was going. […] I'm definitely not lower middle class, and if upper middle class means well enough off and connected to interesting people who've done interesting things, then I'm that. But I really rather despise royalty. I mean, even though I did accept an OBE from Prince Charles, I was really hoping for the Queen. I don't like the way our society has a pinnacle with a top to it and there is a whole class of public school girls and boys, there's a classy class of people who all know each other and who have these class connections, and I'm not in that group nor do I want to be.

EW: Do you think that there is still quite a lot of class distinction in Britain? Do you think it's like a useful term or an idea or not?

JH: I think there's huge class distinction in Britain. And more and more, more than there was. I mean the thing that's so striking is that we all wear the same clothes nowadays, so you can't tell a lower class, working class, whatever it is, person from another one by their clothes, the way you used to be able to, can you? I think that's great, I must say. I think that's a really great thing about modern life.

Interview 11

**On Class and privilege**

Interesting in the sense that both parents were doctors, father went to boarding school and she herself went to prestigious girls school but sees herself as the ‘poor relation’ because her parents backgrounds were unusual

EW - Do you think that's the first time that kind of class or your idea of privilege, kind of, you realised that do you think? Had you not kind of realised that at Oxford, was it this moment that kind of changed that?

JR - Well, in Oxford it was *easy* for *me* to think, you know, there all Oxford people, there all snobs, there all (?) academics, you know, I'm the kind of, you know, I'm the poor relation sort of thing. So, it was easy to feel-. And also, because my parents’ backgrounds were kind of quite unusual, I mean, you know, my mum had left school at 14 and (pause) it was some (long pause). Yeah, I definitely thought that Oxford people were sort of much more upper class if you like, … I don't think I use the term upper class in my own mind, I mean snooty maybe in a way is more how I thought of it, even though some of them became my best friends, you know, and their parents were *also* academics (laughter). And in the *end*, some of their parents who were also academics became very close friends as well. I mean, it's just my perceptions at that age, well that I was the outsider at school and then going to London, going to Stoke Newington and working in the children’s home, that was like *wow*, there's a different world out there.

Well, I think as I said when I was describing them, I found it very difficult to classify them, given that my mother was an allegedly uneducated farmer's daughter, and my father was the son of missionaries (laughter). I mean, I don't know how you put either of those into a class (laughter). But, you know, Oxford High School and Cambridge that puts me very fairly and squarely in the middle class, maybe upper middle class, I'm not sure. I mean income wise, (pause) I'm probably about the same level as my parents were, I guess. But what is very interesting, because I've got four siblings, is that three of my siblings, well (pause) two of the others are professors as well, and the other two, one's an artist and one's a filmmaker. And they've (pause). It's different in Australia I think class wise, but in terms of income I think they’ve moved into a different bracket probably, yeah.

EW - Yeah, I think class is such a … big thing in Britain compared to a lot of countries, it's such a finely graded system that perhaps it isn't so much in Australia. So, they've all stayed out there?

Interview 12 – very elite background but still resists notion of an elite background – upper middle class instead

EW: One thing I'd be interested in is, in terms of social class, do you think that because you've had this prestigious career that you're in a different social class to your parents when you were younger? Or do you think you kind of stayed at the same level?

ET: My grandfather was a Knight of the Realm and a Fellow of the Royal Society. I think I've stayed where I am. I went to the same school as my mother. My brother went to the same school as an uncle. So, no, I think… I think the answer is that, my maternal grandparents were academics, doctors, etc. My father was an accountant, so one of the professions. My mother and her sisters were of the sort of war years, so, that generation that you got married and had kids and gave up work. So I would say, pretty much where I am.

EW: Do you think that's upper middle class, do you think?

ET: Yeah. I plead guilty to that one. Something?? else you could define it as, but yeah, guilty as charged.

EW: And do you think that there is a layer above that kind of class that is an elite, or do you think that some people in those professions are the elite? Do you think there's a layer above that in society?

ET: I think so. I'm not quite sure who they are. There is a very much more social class, the aristocracy and the country gentry.

EW: Do you think that’s still relevant today, that kind of idea of aristocracy?

ET: Yes. No, I'm smiling because I'm just thinking about, I'm in London next weekend, the following weekend I'm going to stay with a friend who happens to be the deputy lieutenant of X and just passed  her family house over to the next generation, or her husband's family has to the next generation, and then the following weekend I'm going to be in another large country house and then normal life again, but I'm having two weekends in the county in the county set. And then I go back to normality again.

**Interview 13 - Emphasises father being w/c and calls herself a townie but father made violins and went to elite school and mother from a very posh background, went to boarding school etc**

L: My father would have been happy to send me to any old school because he left school himself at the age of 14. He was. He was a very much on the working class in Denmark. He was Danish. He wasn't really interested in our education, whereas our mother was very, she put a lot of emphasis on our education, particularly the academic side of our education. So we all went to grammar school. So three of us. Me and my sisters.

L: They were, they were. I mean, I came from an odd background, so no one could quite pigeonhole us 'cause we lived in a very small house in the village and my father was a carpenter and my mother was a librarian. It didn't sort of fit with, you know; a lot of them were professors’ daughters, and their mothers were stay at home mothers, and they lived in these great big fuck-off houses ???? places like that, you know. So they were very, very privileged, which doesn't mean to say they were happy 'cause a lot of them had very, you know, turbulent family situations. So I think the class thing was, you know, if you had, which I didn't, but if you had an Oxfordshire accent, if you were clearly what they called a townie, and some of my friends were, you were fine with the other girls, but you were not fine with some of the teachers 'cause they were snobs. They were roaring snobs. They favourised those who had famous parents, parents they could suck up to. At parent teacher meetings if your father was professor something then there was a little extra shine in their eyes when you they spoke to. You could see it.

EW: So it probably wasn't a coincidence that you were friends with the people who were townies in that way then, do you think? They were not from those professor daughters’ backgrounds.

L: I very much felt that loyalty to the town when I then went to the University. I identified as a townie. I did not identify as Oxford student. I was of the city. I worked in all the cafés, from when I was 15. I waited for these students, and I carried on doing it while I was a student.

Says ‘I would like to think I sit outside of class’

L: Well, you know, I'm split because my father was as working class as you can get, and my mum was the opposite. And we grew up middle class, we went to a middle class school, I have a middle class accent. I speak received pronunciation. So I I'm not gonna claim I'm not middle class. I am. But what do you do with that, I don't really know. I mean the British are obsessed with class and in Denmark they're not obsessed with class at all, but there's still a kind of, you do get a sense of families who've been around a long time, in academia and other places, there's a kind of unspoken aristocracy. But I like the fact that people mix much more, you know, and there's a lot more respect for people who work with their hands than there is in Britain. And so I don't really know, I’d like to say I stand outside class, but maybe nobody

Interview 14

I suppose in terms your child and your parents, do you see yourself as having had more social mobility from where they were? Or do you see yourself as quite a similar class to what your parents were?

KQ: It’s awkward?? on which side of my family. With my mother obviously I'm different, but with my father we were always the top educated classes in India.

**Interview 15**

how did you think about your trajectory in relation to your family?

NH - No, I'm in the same class as my parents. My parents were very wealthy.

Interview 16

MG - Yeah, well, there was certainly, we've never moved up to these sort of, you know, this sort of ‘the ruling classes set.’

EW - (laughter) Who do you think is the ruling classes? I mean, that sounds like a strange question, but in Britain now?

MG - I mean granted there really obvious that they're wealthy landowners, and they’re a little bit posh, and they're in with the Royals, and they're in with a few politicians, and then it, you know.

**Interviews 17 – emphasises parents social mobility –‘I’m standing on their shoulders**

o you think you've ended up in kind of a similar social class?

AS - I think I've ended up probably in the same social class. I think they were the ones who moved quite considerably in their generation, they were both from really struggling backgrounds but made inroads and I'm sort of standing on their shoulders.

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RES: I guess I'd describe it as middle class.

**INT:** **Middle class, okay.**

RES: But not necessarily for my parents.

**INT:** **Okay, interesting.  And your parents- And sort of, what about the sort of economics of the family?  What was it like growing up?  Were you sort of fairly comfortable or was it money was tight?  How would you describe that part?**

RES: Sort of fairly comfortable, I mean, my parents got promotions through, I guess, the '60s and '70s and benefited from the expansion in particular of higher education and the tertiary sector.  And so their incomes increased over that period, and so I guess the family prosperity increased over that period too.  So I'd never have thought that we are particularly poor, but we certainly became more prosperous over that period.  My parents were sort of welfare state children, in that sense.