

**Constructing a Professional
Identity**
**the Effects of Severe Hearing Loss on the
Career Experience of a Manager in Post-
16 Learning**

Ruth Gould

Dissertation submitted in part fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (education)

Contents

Abstract	2
Introduction	3
Why this Research?	3
The Research Ideas	5
Literature Review	8
Literature on Methodology and Method	9
Literature on Ethics in Research	10
Literature on Disability	11
Quantitative Research on Disability	16
Research and Methodology	17
Methodological Issues	17
The Research Plan	19
Carrying Out the Research	20
The Analytical Framework	21
Analysis of Research	24
Pen Portrait of D	26
Shaping the Interview	28
Keeping to the Agenda	29
Communication and Control	31
Coherence and Consistency	34
The Politics of Disability	37
Imagery, Metaphor and Emotion	40
Conclusion	46
How Far Were D and I Successful?	46
D's Experience of Deafness	48
Individual and Collective Stories about Disability	50
Raising Awareness	51
Bibliography	55
Appendix 1: Transcript of Interview 1	61
Appendix 2: Summary of Interview 2	83

Abstract

This research is a single extended narrative analysis exploring my partner D's experience of deafness. It describes deafness in a particularly vivid and concrete way, provides theoretical links that illuminate general issues around disability and provides insights to enhance our professional understanding. It illustrates, through D's experience:

- Our assumptions that an "able-bodied" status quo is normal, despite the fact that one in five people of working age has a long-term disability
- The inherent dualism in our thought patterns that constructs oppositions, such as disability/ability, individual/society or assimilation/diversity
- The need for new ways of thinking that overcome these
- How deafness can exclude and isolate, and be experienced as a "stigma"
- The lack of deaf awareness even among well-meaning people
- How education, employment and careers guidance systematically ignore the special needs of deaf people
- The pressure on deaf people to be "model deaf employees" who overcome all odds without complaint or special help
- The hostility encountered by deaf people who take back control in communication by acting assertively and against the norm
- That a good job is a "many-splendoured thing". Diversity brings benefits through creative ways of working and through access to the pool of different abilities developed by disabled people.

Introduction

Why this research?

I originally became interested in this area of research because my partner, D, has a severe hereditary hearing loss. D has worked in education for over 25 years as a teacher, a manager and now as a regional development officer for adult learning. I also have worked in post-16 learning for over 20 years. Both of us have been involved in raising quality in adult learning, and in particular, have worked hard to establish an inclusive approach to learning for adult learners. It seemed ironic to us that although the sector claims to embrace equality and diversity, the overwhelming focus of inspection regimes on the needs of the learner has shifted attention away from the needs of staff. Despite the Disability Discrimination Act, we could see no evidence that things were changing, or that equal opportunities and active promotion of diversity for staff were moving to the top of the agenda, and this fired our interest in the research. As will be seen shortly, I opted for a qualitative piece of research - a single in-depth extended narrative analysis exploring D's experience of disability. In addition to this, D is currently working on a proposal for a more quantitative research project into diversity amongst post 16 educational managers. If accepted, this would provide an independent but potentially complementary quantitative perspective.

Before I met D, I considered disability issues to be a minority interest for those who were either disabled or involved in their care. I have now come to see them as fundamental. Today's world is increasingly subject to polarisations - us and them, good and evil, terrorism and counter-terrorism - and we badly need new inclusive ways of thinking and speaking. Much has been written on the dualistic concepts inherent in Enlightenment thought. Goffman, for example, is particularly relevant on the construction of difference between those seen as normal and as abnormal (Goffman, 1963). Labelling theory and the sociology of deviance explore these ideas in other contexts. More

recently, Lennard Davis, taking a more Foucauldian stance, shows how "the advent of industrialisation and science brought with them discourses and practices which give a particular status to the "normal" body as opposed to the "abnormal" which is also defined as "inferior"." (Davis, 1995). Similarly, Mairean Corker shows how empirical positivism rests on a "world-view based on the metaphor of linear progress, absolute truth and rational planning." (Corker, 1998). Quoting Featherstone (1990) and Reason (1995), she identifies a set of underpinning core beliefs that logically generate their own "either/or" oppositions, such as "do we have free will *or* are we determined?", and "do we act through reason *or* emotion?". Such binary oppositions, she suggests, give "disability..... an inherent, essential nature which can be discovered and which is therefore given the status of 'the truth'." (Corker, *ibid.*). "Disability" is constructed *in opposition* to able-bodied, which is also defined as normal.

Thinking in "either/or" terms therefore appears to be embedded in our socio-psychological world, and perhaps not just in Western societies. I am inclined to think that this is one of the crucial debates for modern times. We draw comfort when we define ourselves as normal in opposition to "the Other". We deal with our fear by projecting onto "the Other" all undesirable traits. In doing so, we fail to challenge our own human frailties. This has the effect of restricting rather than broadening our understanding, and leads in the end to restrictive and potentially violent outcomes between warring factions. The challenge is to develop new ways of thinking and new categories of thought that empower us all.

The Research Ideas

I have already mentioned some of the broader debates in the world at large. I decided that I wanted to shed some light on these by focusing on something much smaller-scale. I was attracted to an in-depth case study approach. This was partly based on my professional experience in guidance.

Guidance is, after all, a series of in-depth case studies, albeit with a particular purpose. In addition, when raising awareness amongst my colleagues about issues affecting clients, I often found that a well-analysed example brought things home to them more effectively than anything else.

According to Ernesto Spinelli, a case study can have several aims. Firstly, as in my experience above, it may be a "unique means of presenting often abstract theoretical analyses in a vivid and concrete fashion which can more readily be grasped and understood" (Spinelli, 1997). Secondly, it may be "a sort of 'morality tale' through which are revealed any number of 'life dilemmas' that many human beings are likely to encounter." Thirdly, it may be an attempt to highlight practitioner insights that may "alter [the practitioner's] way of understanding, or style of practice." (Spinelli, *ibid.*).

Case studies, if properly conducted, produce a large amount of in-depth data. It follows therefore that any case study is going to be an "edited version" of this data - in other words, a highly selective "fiction". Because a case study involves a "close encounter" between researcher and subject, it is very much a joint production - indeed, it is the researcher's own personality, attitudes, and his or her ability to empathise and gain insights that are critical factors in the research. The researcher is embedded in the research, as is the subject. It was this approach that seemed to lend itself to my research with D. However, there is also a need for some detachment and objectivity in research. We found that this raised some difficulties, and these are explored later.

There were three main aims to the research, which correspond roughly with Spinelli's descriptions above:

1. To collaborate with D in producing his story, exploring feelings and issues around his deafness, and focusing on the context of education and work.
2. To explore any links between D's unique individual story and the broader cultural narratives he might use to make sense of his deafness.
3. To look at whether it might be possible to make general statements about inclusion and diversity on the basis of D's story, with a view to raising professional awareness.

These are set out in more detail below.

Producing D's story

Originally, I set out to use a form of narrative analysis similar to that used by Susan Bell (Bell, 1999). In a study of two "DES daughters" (women who had developed cancer as a result of their mothers taking the drug DES during pregnancy) she focuses how the women tell their stories, and she uses her analysis to show how their individual narratives dip into wider cultural narratives - for example, medical and feminist discourses - in order to make sense of their experiences. Bell is also concerned to explore her own role in the construction of the narratives - "narratives are not just the stories of tellers.....(they) are jointly produced by tellers who are 'social actors'..." (Bell, *ibid.*, p.351). From this perspective, narrative are fluid - they may change with each telling, or with a change of audience. This seemed to be particularly relevant to the aims of my research, with its focus on a joint collaboration between D and myself. I was also attracted to the holistic approach of Hollway and Jefferson (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000). Based on the principle of gestalt, i.e. that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, they aim to move away from the fragmentation consequent upon coding of data at an early stage of analysis (Hollway and Jefferson, *ibid.*).

Intriguingly, they also suggest that gestalt refers to the "internal capacity for holdingthe whole in the mind" (Hollway and Jefferson, *ibid.*, p.69) - something which also forms part of the therapeutic method, or for that matter, guidance interviewing. Although I had some reservations about Hollway and Jefferson's approach on ethical grounds (see *The Analytical Framework*, p. 21), the holistic method again seemed particularly fit for my purpose, partly because I already carry a "whole" of D within me by virtue of our personal relationship, and partly because of the links with guidance methods.

Making links between individual and collective stories

In the context of the research, I was interested in how D might relate to different models of disability. For example, there is an identifiable medical or deficit model that locates the source of disability in the individual. Against this may be set the social model, where society constructs physical or mental impairments as disabilities. The social model locates the source of disability in society. All these models are in effect collective "stories" told to make sense of the experience of disability and provide meaning. The social model, for example, developed through the discipline of disability studies as a radical response to the deficit models - in a sense, it was constructed in opposition to them, as we shall see. I wanted to find out which collective stories D formed part to D's "narrative repertoire" when he explained his own particular situation. How far did he find them meaningful, and how might he reconstruct them in his own story?

Shedding light on the inclusion and diversity debates

I mentioned earlier that D and I were specifically interested in the experiences of disabled education managers. We want this research to raise the awareness of education and guidance professionals around issues of inclusion and diversity. We also hope to extend claims to understanding a little further. A single case study cannot make claims to typicality in the usual

way, but as a result of carrying out the research, I feel that we are in a position to make some "fuzzy generalisations" of the type described by Bassey (Bassey, 2003). These are "general statements with built-in uncertainty" (Bassey, *ibid.*, page 52) which illuminate while accepting that there are likely to be exceptions to the statement. Bassey contrasts these with scientific generalisations, which should be able to identify what is typical, and will need reformulating if exceptions are found. The term "fuzzy" is borrowed from computing, where "fuzzy logic" makes "finer than usual interpretative distinctions" rather than the coarser binary ones (The Chambers Dictionary, 1998). It is an acknowledgment that there are many more variables involved than can be grasped by predictive black and white models, and that often the best we can do is say "in this situation, this appears to be the case" or "this may happen, but not necessarily". In themselves, such generalisations might not be enough, but Bassey sees them as part of an ongoing dialogue with other researchers, subjects and practitioners to build up cumulative insights. We hope that this research can form a useful part of that dialogue.

Literature Review

The literature relevant to this research falls into three main categories:

1. Literature relating to the type of research being carried out, especially choice of methodology, method and research tools and techniques
2. Literature relating to the ethics of the research being carried out
3. Literature about disability and the various approaches to the study of disability.

I also decided to look at quantitative research studies for background about the broad social context of the impact of disability on educational and employment opportunities.

Literature on methodology and method

Any research method has philosophical underpinnings. Whether we explicitly acknowledge it or not, doing research engages us in first order debates about the nature of reality and the validity of our knowledge about it. It raises (amongst others) questions about validity and typicality in research, about whether value freedom and objectivity are possible or desirable in the social sciences, and about the relationship between knowledge and power.

Related issues are those dealing with choice of method. For example, most research will either be quantitative, relying on large scale studies and the (arguably) impartial and objective collection and analysis of representative data, or it will be qualitative, relying on small-scale, in-depth studies of a small group or an individual instance to discover subjective data such as attitudes and meanings. The choice of method will be based partly on its appropriateness for the research question in hand, but is likely to be highly influenced by the underlying methodological perspective of the researcher. In practice, it is often difficult to separate methodological issues from issues about the choice of method. For example, I chose to carry out a single, in-depth case study. This is linked into a whole school of research based on narrative method, which has particular philosophical underpinnings - it would, as we have seen, reject the view that the researcher can ever be completely objective and unbiased.

I have already touched on some of the relevant literature in the Introduction - in particular, the work of Spinelli (1977), Bassey (2003), Bell (1999) and Hollway and Jefferson (2000). To these I would also add Stake (1995), Gilham (2000), Travers (2001) and Ezzy (2002) on case study method, and West (2001), Rustin (2001), Byrne (2002) and Reid, West and Law (2003) on the "biographical turn" and narrative method. These are explored again in Research and Methodology, p.17.

Once the overall method has been chosen, decisions have to be made about which techniques will be used to collect and analyse data. I was particularly interested in Bell's use of narrative analysis (Bell, 1999), Ezzy (2002) and Bassey (1999) on case study analysis, and I also looked at Hollway and Jefferson (2000) on holistic analysis. These are explored later in more depth.

Literature on the ethics of research

Qualitative research is in-depth and often intimate, involving privileged access to others. There is therefore an ethical focus on issues such as confidentiality, gaining the "informed consent" of those being researched and on "avoidance of harm" to the subjects, especially in terms of public uses of personal information. There is an acknowledgment of the potential conflicts of interest between the person carrying out the research and the subject of the research. Bassey, for example, typically identifies ethical concerns in terms of respect - respect for democracy (the freedom to carry out research), respect for truth (trustworthiness on the part of the researcher, and respect for persons (issues of ownership of data, dignity and privacy of the research subjects) (Bassey, 2003).

Informed consent may form the basis of a signed contract between researcher and subject. This is generally governed by the British Educational Research Association guidelines (BERA, 1992).

The BERA guidelines, and the approach described by Bassey, rest largely on liberal democratic notions of a personal ethical contract between rational equals (researcher and subject). However, the actual act of researching is often embedded in unequal power relations. Disabled people don't usually research the able-bodied, for example, to identify what *that* particular experience is like.

The question of inequality becomes more critical in some circumstances. For example, in Hollway and Jefferson's view, we are all in some way "defended subjects" - we all have unconscious motivations and invest in particular positions of which we may be largely unaware. It is the researcher's legitimate business to identify these in order to gain a perspective on the gestalt whole

(Hollway and Jefferson, 2000.) In order to bypass the conscious mind, they suggest the use of "free association" techniques. This begins to sound more akin to therapy, albeit with different aims in mind. The question is whether the classical "contract" idea is a sufficient ethical framework in such circumstances. The more deeply the subconscious is engaged, the more difficult it is to determine how to avoid harm. In previous research carried out during the MA programme, I had interviewed someone who expressed long-term dissatisfaction with her marriage. The marriage subsequently folded. I do not know whether my research had an impact on this, but I suspect it may have brought issues previously buried to the surface. I was therefore naturally concerned to enable D to reflect and debrief during this research. There was also the issue of how the research process might affect me - or, more bluntly, our relationship. These issues are explored later.

Lastly, there is also a political argument that research into disability has in the past played a role in oppressing disabled people (e.g. Oliver, 1996). I have already mentioned that the disabled person is generally cast as the passive subject of research, reflecting prevailing norms that construct disability as problematic. Linked with this are questions about who does the research, in whose interest it is carried out and how it is used. If it is not to reinforce an unequal status quo, ethical disability research needs a social justice agenda. Finkelstein, for example, states that "...research guided by the social model of disability.....must of necessity explore and identify appropriate avenues for change in addition to giving consideration to the processes involved in carrying out the investigation." (Finkelstein, 1999). This is a view with which I broadly agree.

Literature on disability

In the Introduction, I mentioned that I was interested in the links between our individual stories and the collective ones. I wanted to find out how D's story relates to collective narratives about disability, and needed to explore the debates around models of disability.

Research and theory that grapples directly with disability issues is still quite limited. It is still seen as a minority problem area divorced from the mainstream of theory and research, rather in the way that race and gender issues are often seen as mainly relevant to the groups in question. It is therefore not surprising to find that most of the work that takes a more questioning stance derives from disability studies and disability theory. Like gender and race studies, it is also firmly linked to a sociological perspective.

Disability Theory

There has been a great deal written, much of it available on the Leeds University Disability Studies archive. In the Introduction I touched on the deficit and medical models of disability and how these locate the source of disability in the individual. The end-result is to make disability an individual problem, marginalising those who are disabled and placing the onus on them to adjust or come to terms with their difficulties. This view prevailed in the 19th and for most of the 20th centuries and was the inspiration for much social policy and "charitable" intervention. More radical models such as the social model expounded by Finkelstein, Barnes, Oliver et al developed from the 1970s onwards. These locate the source of disability in society, and suggest that the adjustment problem is one for society rather than the individual (Oliver, 1996). Both deficit and social models are therefore in a sense expressions of the "either/or" oppositions identified by Corker (Corker, 1998).

More recently, Shakespeare and Watson argue for a reappraisal of models of disability, including the social model (Shakespeare and Watson, 2002). There is a need for a model that takes into account the daily struggle faced by people with impairments rather than dismissing these as wholly socially constructed, that seeks to identify a continuum of impairment rather than drive a wedge between the able-bodied and the disabled and that grapples with the issues of psychological and

social identity. The social model cannot really help with, for example, the individual experience of distress and pain. Big social theories are often at a loss where the individual is concerned. In this context, we may wish to reappraise the work of Goffman (Goffman, 1963) and his examination of the interface between the individual and society. Identifying the ways in which individuals (and groups) may be stigmatised because of their perceived abnormality, he examines ideas about normality and abnormality and about how these are internalised differently by both the "normal" and the "abnormal". What is, in fact, a continuum of human sameness/difference is in some circumstances turned into an experience of polarisation, prejudice and discrimination.

Guidance and Counselling Theory

There is a dearth of literature from within guidance and counselling theory about disability, although there is a great deal of research in Special Needs Education, much of it determinedly pragmatic and based on "how to do it" rather than providing a critique. There are signs that this is changing - writing in 1997, Clark, Dyson and Millward propose that it is time to reconnect Special Education with wider theoretical debates - but most of the critical theory on disability has derived from sociology and from disability studies.

Counselling theory has likewise still really to grapple with the issues. A recent article in the *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling* states that "a search through the counselling literature reveals few, if any, moves to address the social model of disability. Individual models, including the tragedy model and the medical model, predominate." (Swain, Griffiths and Heyman, 2003) There is, however, a "second wave" of counselling approaches that addresses some of the issues of power (McLeod, 1998). These approaches cover class, gender, race and sometimes age, but rarely disability. One of the difficulties seems to be that models of disability deriving from sociology do not sit comfortably with approaches that address the level of the individual and individual

psychology. It links back to the point made earlier that "big" social models tend to leave out individual, and *vice versa*. The social model requires the radical reshaping of society to fully enable those who are different: guidance and counselling are working at the level of the individual, perhaps to enable individuals to develop their own strategies to cope with their difficulties, only some of which are socially-determined, such as exclusion. From the social model perspective, they may be accused of neglecting the social and the political, with the end-result that they are reinforcing the status quo. Certainly, there are ways in which both guidance and counselling can become agents of social control. Irving and Marris point out that "there is a danger that individualistic constructions about the nature and cause of disadvantage.....may become a perverse form of tyranny by 'failing to acknowledge and accommodate the social dimensions which exist within a culturally diverse society'." (Irving and Marris, 2002). However, Irving and Marris agree that there is a positive role for guidance and counselling interventions, as Swain et al also demonstrate. Swain et al reach very tentative conclusions in their work, confirming that counselling is important for disabled people, but that counsellors need to become much more aware of disability as socially constructed. There is perhaps some room here for a *rapprochement* with the interest expressed by Shakespeare and Watson (ibid.) in theoretically addressing the everyday issues of the experience of disability.

Theories about Career

Within career theory itself, there is work that can be applied in some sense to disability, but disability is not yet in itself well-researched. For example, the work of Roberts et al examines opportunity structures and barriers to learning and work. But much of Roberts's work still focuses on class as a major determinant of opportunity (Roberts, 2002). It has only been more recently that gender and race have become more widely researched, often within a social justice discourse. This seeks a radical shift from an equal opportunities agenda (with all its attendant focus "levelling the

opportunities playing field" within an intrinsically unequal society) to one of social justice, which "...has a part to play in deciding how a market is constructed, and not simply with the end result." (Commission for Social Justice, 1998). Within this broader conception of fairness and justice, the concept of diversity has implications for all disadvantaged groups: "Far from treating everyone the same, there is an argument for recognising the particular experiences of disadvantaged groups, along with the value of difference and diversity." (Reid, 1999, quoted in Irving, 2002). This would clearly apply to the disabled, although they are rarely explicitly mentioned. There is also a body of literature that relates particularly to ethnicity, and as with the discourses on social justice, the basic concepts can be applied to disability. For example "...seeking to ensure that the career guidance needs of Muslim girls are met is more than just a symbolic action: it signifies a belief in the value of change and the importance of responding positively within a diverse world..." (Irving et al, 2000) could be adapted to the needs of those with disabilities. However, until the needs of disabled people are explicitly as well as implicitly taken into account, the imbalance remains.

Having said all this, it is clear that most recent development in careers theory, using narrative approaches, do offer greater possibilities for us to listen to and to understand the unique voices of others on their own terms. The least powerful have found it difficult to speak at all, and when they do speak, to be heard. Narrative approaches can therefore inform a social justice agenda. Narrative approaches can also offer a perspective on bridging the gap between social and psychological models of disability. In formulating my own research, I was surprised by the extent and scope of narrative approaches, drawing from a range of perspectives, including psychotherapy, oral history and sociology (for example). Not all of it was relevant for my purposes, but the work of Booth (1996), Spinelli (1997), Bell (1999), Hollway and Jefferson (2000) and Reid, West and Law (2003) offered an essential theoretical background to my own research.

Quantitative Studies

There are two recent large-scale official surveys and reports on the market situation of disabled and of deaf people. These provided me with a background to D's circumstances. Labour Market Experiences of People with Disabilities (Labour Market Trends, 2002) reviews and analyses the employment situation of disabled people of working age, and finds that on average, nearly one in five people in private households have a current long-term disability. The number rises to one in three of those aged 50-65. The disabled population is also more likely to be unemployed than those who have no disability. These figures indicate that disability is hardly a minority issue, and that large numbers of us can expect to spend some part of our working lives with a disability.

The Employment Situation of Deaf and Hard of Hearing People (Bradshaw/RNID, 2002) looks at the experiences of over 1000 deaf and hard of hearing people. It finds that deaf people experience very high rates of unemployment - four times the national average. They are often more highly qualified than the general population, but if they are in work, they are less likely to have a job commensurate with their qualifications and are much less well-paid. Deaf people experience barriers to getting jobs and barriers in the workplace - 70% believe that they were prevented from getting a job due to their deafness, while 74% feel that they have fewer opportunities for promotion than hearing colleagues. They also experience barriers in accessing education and training.

At the time we carried out the interviews, D had not looked at these reports. However, as we shall see later, D's experience independently echoes these findings. In particular, he feels that he has experienced barriers to promotion.

Research and Methodology

Methodology

I have already mentioned in the Introduction that I chose to do a qualitative piece of work, and gave my reasons for choosing this. I also mentioned that underlying any choice of method will be the "big" methodological issues that are really first order debates about reality itself and what and how we can reliably learn about it. My own position on this is summarised below.

Firstly, I would describe my position as essentially post-modern but with reservations. By this, I mean that I believe that human beings, individually and collectively, construct the social world we live in and also create meanings and stories about it. How far there is an underlying reality is open to debate, but it is unlikely that we can know what it is: we do not encounter anything "in the raw", and everything is inevitably processed through our own individual and cultural frames of reference. However, I do not believe that post-modernism is the last word on human knowledge. While sceptical of metanarratives (Butler, 2002), I feel that post-modernism might still actually be one. While interested in individual narratives, I am not a complete relativist and feel that some stories are "better" than others (Dominice, 1999, West, 2001) - a point which is discussed later.

Secondly, I adopt an auto/biographical position. Since we are all embedded in the world, we can never stand apart from it and study it in a totally objective sense. Any research will be a creative enterprise between researcher and researched (arguably even in the natural sciences). In this I draw on narrative approaches in the social science, notably the work of Bell (1999), Hollway and Jefferson (2000), Reid, West, and Law (2003), as well as on perspectives from psychotherapy (Spinelli, 1997). I appreciate that there are specific ethical as well as methodological issues

associated with this approach, notably to do with boundaries between researcher and researched, truthfulness and avoidance of harm, and I address these later.

However, although research is a creative enterprise, it is not the case that "anything goes", and research has to be soundly thought through and refined through the application of critique, scrutiny and intellectual rigour. Phillips' concept of the "essential regulative ideal" may be of value here (Phillips, 1993). Concepts such as objectivity and bias are not necessarily outmoded - they have a value in reminding us of our own ability for self-delusion and intellectual comfort. D and I also found that a disciplined cognitive approach helped us to deal productively with emotional issues raised in the research, creating a space in which we could reflect more objectively.

Thirdly, I am informed by ideas about social justice. I have already said that I am not a post-modernist in the sense that I believe all perspectives are equally valid. I embrace a humanist perspective, humanism having a long philosophical pedigree and being central to guidance practice (Rogers, Egan, et al.). Before he died, Edward Said described humanism as being "the only, and I would go so far as to say, the final resistance we have against the inhuman practices and injustices that disfigure human history." (Said, 2003). With its emphasis on the equal worth of all human beings, it is therefore integral to any struggle for social justice and human fulfilment. At the very least, I would like to think that the research added to my own and to D's reflective practice. I feel that it has also been possible to identify some of those "fuzzy cause-and-effect relationships" (Bassegy, 2003) that may inform the practice of others.

D particularly shares my concern for rational scrutiny and for social justice, although he is less interested in the debates about the nature of reality, being an avowed materialist of many years standing.

The Research Plan

My original plan, outlined in the research proposal, was to:

- Carry out three interviews - an initial interview to establish ethical guidelines for the research based on the British Educational Research Association guidelines (BERA ,1992), a long main interview (Interview 1) and a final follow up interview (Interview 2).
- Transcribe Interview 1 in full, including what Bell calls "non-lexical utterances" (hesitations, ums and ers, etc.) as these might provide insights into D's story (Bell, 1999).
- Summarise Interview 2
- Ensure that D could feed back at every stage of the process by giving him transcripts and engaging in discussion with him
- Ensure that a "critical friend" (my supervisor) had time to feed back on the research
- Keep field notes to jot down my own insights and anything that D wanted to add or subtract
- Code the interview data using the method identified by Susan Bell
- Write up the research.

Bell's method is here extracted from Ezzy, 2002:

1. Identify narrative segments in the interview transcript
2. Examine word choice, phrasing, imagery and structure of clauses
3. Focus on the telling of the story: how do people explain what they did, or what happened?
4. Look for connections between the personal account and broader cultural and political processes
5. Locate yourself, as the researcher, in the analysis and construction of the stories.

Carrying out the Research

At first, all went to plan. D and I met for the initial interview in September. However, almost immediately, a number of events intervened to affect the work. In early October, D got a job in the East Midlands. This proved initially emotionally disturbing, especially during the three months in which D worked his notice. It also meant that practical arrangements had to take priority. I felt personally unable to interview until a few weeks had passed and the changes had been absorbed. Interview 1 therefore took place during a weekend at the end of November, and the follow up interview (Interview 2) not until March. For some time after this, I felt a kind of block about analysing the data, and was not at all clear how I would do this. Other events also came along to interrupt the flow - my own job became less secure, and I applied for and was offered a job nearer to D.

As a result of all the changes, I felt very unsettled. My field notes record that I was quite worried about how the research would be affected by emotions that were for a while running quite high. I was anxious about whether we would maintain the planned schedule, and whether the changes would weaken our relationship, possibly even ending the research. The boundaries between our personal lives and the research were at times quite difficult to maintain. However, the cognitive process of carrying out the research together ultimately helped by giving us an "in the here-and-now" focus during this time. It helped that we were both committed to the work - that it had a rationale for raising awareness over and above simple interest. As will become clear, we are also both committed to rational techniques for exploring potentially emotive subject matter - whether in our personal lives or when making a critique in and of the public domain. We value intellectual rigour as a "regulative ideal" (Phillips, *ibid.*) and are rarely prepared to take things at face value without first subjecting them to scrutiny and examination. We do have a "moral commitment to truth seeking" while being aware that truth itself is a problematic concept (West, 2001). As a

result, D and I did manage to keep to the schedule, despite time lapses. By the end of March, I had a large amount of data that needed analysis, and was looking for inspiration about the best way to do this.

The Analytical Framework

I immediately felt challenged over how to learn from my emotional closeness to D while exercising detachment and objectivity, and discovered issues about how to remain true to D in the statements and propositions I was making.

I began by intending to use a similar analysis to Bell's (Bell, 1999). However, I have already explained that because of my close relationship with D, I was drawn to the gestalt holistic analysis suggested by Hollway and Jefferson. In their terms, gestalt is "...a whole which is more than the sum of its parts, an order or 'hidden agenda' informing each person's life, which it is the job of biographers to elicit intact and not destroy through following their own concerns." (Hollway and Jefferson, 2003, p.34) The agenda is not immediately accessible because we are all in some way "defended subjects". We all have motivations and mental or emotional investments that we seek unconsciously to defend. The researcher's job is to "delve behind appearances", picking up on contradiction, avoidance and omission in narratives and allowing the gestalt whole to emerge. Hollway and Jefferson pioneered the use of free association as a way of bypassing the usual conventions in order to do this more effectively.

In the process of exploring the subject in such an intimate way, both researcher and subject are "subject to projections and introjections of ideas and feelings coming from the other person." (Hollway and Jefferson, *ibid.*) - what Roper calls "the more subterranean aspects of the interview relationship" (Roper, 2003). As with any subterranean realm, there is the potential for delusion

and self-deception. Hollway and Jefferson are prepared for deception - they see it as part of the human condition - and warn against self-deception on the part of both interviewer and subject (ibid., p.97). In Hollway and Jefferson's view, "when subjects deceive themselves, they also deceive others if those others take at face value what they do or say...." (ibid., p.97).

Politically and intellectually, I have always felt a commitment to "delving behind appearances" in order to pursue greater understanding. As a sociologist, that is meat and drink, so I was taken by surprise to find that I had strong feelings of unease about Hollway and Jefferson's position. In the case of D, or any person with a disability, the problem is that society as a whole *does not* pay full attention to their experiences and to what they say. It *does not* hear or validate their self-expression. Not taking what they say at "face value" can be seen as another form of discounting their experience and unwittingly colluding with the status quo.

I am not sure how far this unease was coloured by my closeness to D. I feel anger at the ways in which both individuals and society exclude those whom they see as "other", and protective towards D as a consequence. I feel that I am "on his side" in the struggle for social justice. I already knew that he had particular themes about his disability that he wanted to explore. I wanted to let these speak for themselves without over-interpretation and allow them to enter the public domain on their own terms. I became very aware that there were no "right" answers here, only a testing against ideas and a commitment to further discourse. There may also be different answers for different sets of circumstances, or depending upon who is involved.

There were other ways in which the research may also have been inhibited by our closeness. My gut feeling is that D defends himself very strongly through both rationality and humour, using these to deal in a controlled way with the emergence of emotional or subconscious material. He prefers a

light touch - glancing at such things rather than making eye contact with them. His written comment on this section of the research states "I can't possibly see what *harm* any of this research could do me, even if I disagreed with any of it. I'd just reject it and carry on!" He described it as "fun", which in a sense discounts the significance of in-depth work. Perhaps I simply did not want to rock this particular boat by getting in too deep - too much is at stake when personal relationships are involved. There is also the issue of truthfulness. I just made a series of what Hollway and Jefferson (*ibid.*, 2003) describe as "psycho-social propositions" about D in this paragraph. They are personal insights based on knowing D in an intimate way. Nevertheless, I feel that they are potentially intrusive and I am not yet sure how far they shed light on the experience of disability. At the very least, I feel the need to reflect such propositions back to D for feedback. This process of truth testing with each other has become an important part of the research.

I have yet to discover what to do if I feed propositions back to D for comment and he categorically denies their validity. I am not sure whether I would leave them out, out of respect for D's position, or go with them because I felt they illuminated something about D's experience. In his narrative work with people with learning difficulties, Booth defends the use of techniques like dramaturgy as "a way of making real lives comprehensible." Explaining how composite stories can aid understanding, his view is that "the test is not whether [stories] are faithful to the facts (falsifiability) but whether they are true to the subject (verisimilitude)." (Booth, 1996). While accepting that these methods are likely to add to our knowledge and understanding in ways that would otherwise be inaccessible to us, there is still the question of what we may write about our subjects and still remain true to them. There are no clear answers to such issues, and again, we may have to take each case on its merits, asking "whose interest are really being served?", whether wittingly or unwittingly.

Perhaps fortunately for this research, D took the view that he trusted me, and that the research was mine. He rarely commented on the ethical dimensions, preferring to focus on the analysis of the interviews. He did, however, make evaluative comments so that I was in no doubt about how well my statements resonated with his experience of deafness.

Analysis of Research

There was a lot of very rich material in the transcripts, and it was clear that a great deal of editing would be needed for this particular version of D's story. D and I eventually agreed a set of priorities for analysing the interview data. I would:

- Write a short pen portrait of D
- Examine key themes relating to D's experience of disability as they emerged from the transcripts
- Look for connections between these and broader social and political debates about disability
- Identify suitable future action.

I would then look at *how* the narrative was constructed by examining

- How D shaped the interview and in what context
- How D used imagery, metaphor and emotional colour, and how these could be used to shed a different kind of light on his experiences.

In the end, this returned me to a method of analysis very similar to Bell's.

With the priorities agreed, I decided to read the transcripts several times to gain an overall "feel" for them, and then to read them in more depth, allowing common themes to emerge and be

identified under the broad headings. These were marked on the transcripts. I ended up with a number of linked "topics" or themes for further development:

1. D's perception of the purpose of the research:

- Keeping to the agenda
- Control and communication
- Coherence and incoherence, consistency and inconsistency
- Political messages.

2. Emergent key themes:

- Experiences of social exclusion - lack of awareness and understanding of deafness by others, being the token disabled person, professional exclusion.
- Coping strategies and responses - pleasing others, working harder than others, being perfect, reflexivity, not knowing whether one is "up to the mark" or even where the mark is, self-challenge, relationships, self-reliance, isolation, ambition, progression, mental fragility, assertiveness, "using" deafness as a Unique Selling Point.
- Contradictions, e.g. self-worth and self-value, feeling like a fraud.

3. Imagery, metaphor and emotional colour in the narrative:

- Fog, mists, unknowing, gaps
- Winging it
- Emotions - anger, sadness, frustration, resentment - and mood.

4. Broader issues

- Ways of promoting inclusion
- Equal opportunities
- Diversity
- The politics of disability.

5. Joint collaboration

- Joint shared responsibilities
- Mood of interviews
- Humour and respect.

I also referred to my journal to ensure that no earlier data had been missed.

I was initially worried about where to start looking in more depth. However, I found that in practice it didn't matter where I started - the same themes insisted on emerging again and again. I decided to focus on two "how" themes - firstly, D's shaping of the interviews, and secondly, imagery, metaphor and emotion. These might seem odd choices in the light of my earlier emphasis on letting D develop his themes - why not focus directly on key themes or politics of disability? But I have already said that it didn't seem to matter where I started, and I hope to be able to show that a focus on those two themes in-depth was able to yield insights into a broad range of other identified themes without any loss of insight.

Pen Portrait of D

D is in his early 50s and has just started a new development job with a national organisation that represents the interests of adult and community learning, having been with a similar organisation for the past 3 years. He and his two brothers have been severely deaf from birth, although his parents are hearing and there is no known deafness in the family. D is the middle brother, and he has recently become very aware that his hearing is gradually declining. All three brothers went to public school, but only D and his younger brother (J) gained scholarships. All gained degrees and are successful professionals - both his brothers are solicitors.

After a spell in social work, D qualified as a post-16 teacher in his 20s, and since then has also gained an MA and an MBA. From his mid 20s until 3 years ago, D worked in three different further education colleges, firstly teaching communications and social care subjects, and then training teachers himself. He was a middle manager in FE during the upheavals caused when colleges became financially independent in the early 90s, which was a particularly stressful period, the more particularly as his marriage also broke down at that time and D found himself living in a series of rented properties. D, along with many other middle managers, was also suffering the consequences of a harsh management regime, which he felt left him drained of energy, confidence and promise. Three years ago, he gained a job with another national organisation, working on the adult and community learning quality agenda. Since then he has felt a sense of renewal in his abilities, his confidence and his career (although D himself feels that I have "over-stated" this, and is careful to point out that these have never entirely returned to their original point).

D was married in his thirties, divorcing in his early forties and has one son, now 22, with whom he has always maintained regular contact. Since his divorce, he has had several long-term relationships. D and I began our relationship 3 years ago, just at the point when he was leaving teaching. I actually met him a year before that, and we worked at the same college for a year. I was therefore able to draw, in my research, on my experience of knowing him in different ways and in different contexts.

On meeting D, you might be struck by his young-looking appearance and by his engaging social skills. He is very articulate, and has an immense facility with the spoken and written word. He is generally modest and lives a frugal (but not severe) lifestyle. He has a marked sense of humour, which is noticeable for gentle irony and occasional self-mockery.

Further details about D's career are contained in the full transcript of Interview 1 at Appendix 1.

Shaping the interview

Due to the nature of our relationship, D and I had ample opportunity to discuss the research informally. Originally, it was intended to complement a more quantitative piece of research into disability amongst middle managers in education that D was considering carrying out. (This has not yet happened, although there are allusions to it in the interview.) D was very involved in shaping the research, although I am not sure how far he is aware of this. Part of this shaping lay in the way he resisted tentative challenges on my part. My immediate response was to withdraw - for example, when I proffered an insight about his "mental fragility" he simply said "Oh...I'm not sure we can go there!" and that was enough. Considering another comment of mine, he remarked "..that's just not an analogy that hits the spot" and again, that subject was dropped. It was D's way of consciously setting particular rational boundaries to the research, and I accepted those.

There was also a subtle influence resulting from my feelings for D. In my field notes for 24th October 2003, for example, I noted down that there might be competitive elements in our relationship that could result in struggles over the direction or ownership of the research. Interestingly, this has not happened, and I think that that is because our relationship is characterised above all by mutual respect, gentle humour and (in my view) a certain rational handling of our emotions. Nevertheless, I am aware that my relationship with D has sensitised me in certain ways - I said earlier that I feel very protective towards him. This is not because he needs me to be protective, but more because I know what has caused him - and continues to cause him - pain and frustration and sadness, and I have strong feelings about that. It also colours my political responses to inequality, although it is not responsible for them. Given that research demands empathy with one's subject, but also a degree of detachment and objectivity, this was difficult at times. However,

the collaborative approach we used, and the habit of rational sifting of emotions before responding, did engage our cognitive skills and grounded us in the professional discourses mentioned earlier, while still allowing us to deal with emotional material.

Keeping to the agenda

One of the ways that D shaped the interview consciously was by keeping to the agenda, and making me aware of when he was making a point of returning to it. At the start of the interview, he asks:

D: So I'm talking about education, work and disability, am I? (*the agenda*)

R: Well, you can focus on those things, but just as important really is to tell your story.....

D: Well, I never had any difficulty in terms of education, as I saw it.....

Once clear about the subject matter of the agenda, D proved adept at keeping us on track. For example, in the midst of explaining about how he makes friendships, he breaks off quite abruptly to do so:

D:I'm not like, say, my friend A, for example, who can go into a pub and make, you know, 20 new friends in an evening.....and I think that's partly because they can *hear*, I can't, I'm not.....I don't do *small* talk and all those things, but back to career, no....

In another other example, D is reflecting on his motivation for changing jobs, but consciously returns himself to his career path as if recollecting himself:

D: ...why, suddenly, I decided to go to the South East to...to...er...an obscure technical college...in, sort of, North East X (*Ruth: Mm*)...is...is - I think it was the first job that was offered, and.....why did I apply there? Anyway (*speaks faster*) I got that job... (*he moves on*).

Again, in the midst of a discussion about the Deaf Community and signing as a language, he breaks off to hope that I should have got something of value from the interview:

D: I mean I s'pose what I'm saying is there's a *lingua franca*, but...I just...I hope you've got the themes....

In Interview 2, he calls a halt to a discussion on trade unionism (which he had previously identified as a theme he had missed out) because it did not keep to the agenda:

D:I'm not enthralled with this part of the conversation....I can't see the connection with deafness. It's a political thing."

D is very practised in his work at remaining focused, and to a degree it could be argued that this is second nature to him. But his motives for keeping to the agenda here are not altogether clear.

Does D want to ensure that I get something that is clearly of value for my research? Does he himself want to ensure that certain themes are addressed? For example, in terms of themes, D himself asked me to note down subjects that had been omitted from Interview 1 (e.g. his trade union involvement) so that they could be addressed in Interview 2. He was also concerned about whether he had given a coherent account (a point which is addressed again later). There is also a link here with the second theme - issues of control over communication, and D's uneasy relationship with communication due to his deafness. Reading through the original draft, D later agreed that he had been motivated by all of these factors.

Communication and control

To anyone who is deaf, communication is one of the key issues. One of the most vivid encounters in D's story relates to an experience at secondary school:

D: Even when we were learning French, through the audio-visual method, you know, tape recorder and slides.....entirely inappropriate for me, absolutely entirely inappropriate, and the French teacher was apoplectic when I was saying "Cibault" instead of "Thibault", which was the name of this family. Well, now, if I'd had the words in front of me - T-H-I-B-A-U-L-T - that would have been really easy, but because we were learning by this method that was inappropriate it was.....it was only at that sort of.....even then, I wasn't particularly aware that.....I thought everybody was having the same problem. ...there was no sort of recognition that I was deaf, and that I couldn't hear consonants properly, I just could not hear them.....

We will see later other ways in which D describes his unsatisfactory experiences of education and work, often in terms of visual and tactile images, and the sheer difficulties encountered in socially exclusive environments. D has also developed different strategies for dealing with this. One of the most interesting discussions came about in Interview 2 when D was explaining how email has partially reduced his disadvantage by providing alternative means of communication. Commenting that "nobody ever telephones me now", he went on to observe:

D:.....I think that means I don't have all this rubbishy surfeit of communication, you know, 'I'll be there in minutes' on the mobile telephone or conversations that don't really need to take place....So I think it helps me.

R:I think what you're saying is this gives you more control over...

D: Yes, yes. That's true. Control is....true for me. But it's not *more* true for me than other people - I think everybody wants to control. What I've discovered....erm....most recently is that I have as much *right* to control as everybody else. So that why should I have to suffer the disadvantage of a telephone conversation, or a conversation in a crowded room - why should I have to suffer that loss of control, that humiliation, that sort of perspiration, that, you know, when you can't hear and you're out of your depth, why should I have to put up with that? And that's quite a nice discovery.....

This chimes with D's most recent strategies for getting himself included, which require him to be particularly active and assertive, as we shall see. In reading the original draft, he himself commented that this was a very important point - that he has the right to have the conditions to do his job properly, just like everyone else. There is, however, another dimension to this, which relates to the way in which D controls the communication in our relationship, and his communication with his friends:

R:you are the one who has control....because I can't really telephone - I can send you an email, I suppose, but there's no way for me to contact you unless you choose to contact me, other than email, so that....

D: Now that is a very interesting theme, because I think that it is almost related to the fact that when I was at XX College (*both laugh*) you were sort of meant to be on call all the time.....and I think there's a sort of overspill to that, and I know you find it difficult to contact me sometimes, and I make myself non-contactable, and I don't think that's anything personal, it's more that I do....I enjoy, I've learned to enjoy isolation, and (*pause*) that is interesting, so I don't miss not having a land-line in my house...."cos I think, well, if they want to communicate with me, they'll have to wait (*R laughs*) until I'm ready.....

Telephones can, of course, be intrusive to most of us, and we feel duty bound to respond quickly to their urgency. What D seems to have found is another way of doing things, and this becomes particularly important later when considering the diversity debate and the way in which we can learn from difference. It is also clear that D has *taken back* some control over communication, and that he was also exercising some of this power in the interview itself. When the disabled take back power, this can be seen as threatening to the "mainstream". They are stepping outside definitions of disability (i.e. where the disabled person is at a disadvantage) because it appears to give them the advantage for the moment - a reversal of the "normal" order. "The 'well-adjusted' disabled person is someone who lives up to non-disabled peoples' expectations as brave, cheerful and grateful when being helped. Conversely, they are quickly criticised if they act 'out of character' by being assertive and demanding." (Davis, quoted in Barnes and Mercer, 2003, p. 7).

In line with Davis's comment, I have seen at first hand colleagues react adversely to D's assertiveness in the work situation. I can speak from personal experience when I say that it can be immensely frustrating, and sometimes strange, even disturbing, when things are done differently on the personal level. The discomfort is, interestingly, in the loss of control. The difficulty is that we tend to operate with a zero-sum attitude towards power, where if someone else takes back power, we assume that this must mean that we have less. We are back in the world of either/or oppositions mentioned by Corker (Corker, 1998). The consequent challenge is about *equal* empowerment.

D's explanation also highlights the issue of how we allow communication media to control us rather than vice versa. It opens the door to new ways of doing things, and invites us to consider how new possibilities might benefit everyone, not just the disabled. It issues a subtle challenge to the status quo and asks us to think differently about disability. Although D is not here speaking explicitly in terms of the social model of disability, his perspective raises questions. It asks not how the

disabled person can be made more like an able-bodied person, but how society can be reconstructed so that while impairment might still exist, "...disabling barriers and disablist values and attitudes have disappeared." (Oliver, 1996). Such an enablist Utopia is empowering for everyone, not just the disabled (Oliver, *ibid.*, Abberley, 1996).

West, quoting Jerome Bruner, points out how culture is inside each individual psyche as much as in the "external" world, shaping what people think and feel about themselves and others. We live in an ever-changing matrix of conversations with ourselves and with others, and out of this can emerge differences and new ways of seeing things. The act of "telling new stories can, potentially, be a profoundly empowering as well as a subversive act." (West, 2001). Such story telling may occur on collective level as well as individual level. This is one of the attractions of the narrative approach - that it enables links to be made between the individual and the social. D's story, as we can see above, dips in and out of collective stories, and we will see how this happens again.

Coherence and consistency

After Interview 1, D wondered how I was going to get anything out of it, and was pleased and surprised to find that when he read the transcript, there was a coherence to it. At the beginning of Interview 2, I asked whether he minded that I had included all the non-lexical utterances in the script (in Bell's study, one respondent had remarked that it made the interviewee seem stupid - Bell, 1999):

D: It's making me intent on avoiding ums and ers in this session, because it must be tedious transcribing them...I am anxious to be helpful and to please.....it's not an issue for me in the transcript.....except that I feel I should have done better, because I do try to avoid ums and ers

in..... daily speech.....in general, my feeling is that ums and ers don't detract from the *content* of what I'm saying, but they may detract from the *effectiveness* of it.

It seems to me clear that D is seeing the interviews as a means of expressing himself, and that there is actually a message (or a series of messages) to be given through the research itself. This would resonate with D's own political take on deafness, as we will see later.

D's pleasure in the coherence of Interview 1, and issues round consistency, are expressed several times in Interview 2, most notably when giving feedback about Interview 1:

D: What also struck me about the transcript was that it was....it....it was.....it did have an overall general coherence to it, and a general articulateness in spite of the ums and ers....there was a thread to it....a unity to it.

Although D applied the term "coherence" to the *transcript* (and hence to the messages for research), I think he was also saying that he had discovered a consistency and coherence to his own life story. He later agreed with this comment. In Interview 2, he again mentioned consistency, explaining how an interview with him at 17 or at 30 might have been quite different. He thought he might have been saying at that point "I'm not very deaf." He commented that his attitudes have changed as he has gone through "phases" with his deafness - for example, he is now much more aware of it, and much more assertive about being included. The discovery of internal coherence through telling his story may have been for him a particularly positive experience in the light of the "dark days" of the early 1990s, from which he has emerged to some degree renewed.

A lot of work has been done on the theme of coherence in auto/biography, and the process of producing a narrative of self. "Telling a narrative about one's life....often involves taking a particular approach to the self - as experiencing transformation and change." (Byrne, 2002). Not everyone is able to construct such coherent narratives about themselves, but it does seem to be an important ingredient for mental health and for the ability to create positive outcomes from personal change. West again talks about "the therapeutic power of story.....if story makes sense, symbolically, of experience, even if some of the facts are historically elided or distorted, this may still constitute a 'royal road to meaning and healing!'" (West, 2001). In this context, narrative truth, which is about recognising and creating meaning, is seen as something different from historical truth, which is in theory about verifiable facts (although in truth the dividing line between them is very blurred). Does it matter if one's life story bears very little relationship to recorded facts, if it helps one to find positive meaning? I think it does. West himself defines a "good story" as one which is "...more open, more reflexive and sensitive to our weaknesses and our failures as well as successes.." (Reid, West and Law, 2003, p.4). It is therefore a creative engagement with the actual circumstances of our lives, and not an escape from them.

In reading this report, D himself commented that "any interviewee wants to be a hero and seen in a good light", but his satisfaction comes from being able to connect the various elements of his life together so that they gain in meaning. West defines the "good story" as one that can make "connections across disparate, often disconnected parts of a life" and see this with new eyes, "creating more of a whole in the process." (West, 2001). In D's case, there is a sense of discovering that he is able, that he can take back control, that he has managed to survive tremendous difficulties and reach a place in his career that he perhaps thought he would not be able to reach. For example, he felt now that he was "more tough and resilient than most people" given the challenges I've set myself....so there's loads of people who were absolutely...erm...destroyed

by XX College, but actually, ultimately, I wasn't. I did survive it.....experiencing survival and coming out of it is...erm...makes you stronger, so even in terms of mental fragility...I think I underestimate my powers in that area....". He also describes in another place how he has become "much more assertive" and uses the following example to illustrate this:

D:...I used to take responsibility for not being able to understand people on the telephone...you know, that it's *my* fault, you know, *I'm* being stupid.....well, why should - why on *earth* should I have that attitude? And why should people think that because I can't answer the telephone I can't do a decent job, for example? So there's....it's those sorts of subtleties - why aren't people adapting the way *they* are far, far more consistently?

In this excerpt, it is also possible to see how D has moved from a deficit model of his disability ("there's something lacking in me") towards a more social model of disability where social inclusion can be achieved by changing attitudes, behaviours and systems (Finkelstein, 2001). How does D construe that in political terms?

The Politics of Disability

Elsewhere, D describes how he has gone through distinct (although often overlapping) "stages" in his deafness:

D:.....the realisation dawned thatit wasn't necessarily a deficit in me that I should be concerned about.....so from being apologetic, which I still am, to being amusing, which I still try to be, I've had to become more assertive as well...

Asked a question about how he viewed the perspective that "disability is socially created....that people may have an impairment, but it only becomes a disability when it's actually something that gives you a social disadvantage...", D's response is a cautious agreement:

D: Yes, I think I go along with that.....but I think - I think in a sense you've got to say, I don't go along with people who....who are blind or deaf....who take that extreme view "actually, I haven't got a disability" because I...I regard that as unhelpful, that it's not going to achieve inclusion....

Inclusion is the key here: D is concerned throughout the interview to promote his own inclusion. However, he feels little political involvement with disability issues. As a member of the Labour Party (albeit feeling the Party to be a little tarnished at the moment) and a Trades Unionist, he describes his politics as:

D:a kind of universal approach. But I've appreciated the efforts of campaigners for disability....like the RNID....even if I've never been part of that - NEVER been part of that. At one stage, I'd think "well, what's that got to do with me?" That's why when people start signing at me, I don't really like it very much.....it's sort of making assumptions about me."

I know from D's previous conversations with me that as well as the "apologetic", the "entertainer" and the "assertive" modes of coping with deafness, D has also sometimes "pretended" that he can hear better than he can. Pretence is a kind of denial of a disability because of social reactions to it. It is a common, probably universal, experience of all disabled people. D's brother, J, explained to me that he needed to be perceived as hearing by his law clients in case they assumed he wasn't competent. This behaviour is characterised as a late phase in the "learning process of a stigmatised person" according to Goffman (Goffman, 1963). Goffman describes this as "learning to pass" as a

normal to avoid being stigmatised. The stigma of deafness particularly is, as D describes it, that "...you are considered stupid, or slow on the uptake.....as I became more aware of my deafness, I think it was more of a question of, erm, trying to entertain as well as, you know, apologise for appearing stupid...." A stigmatised person always walks an uneasy tightrope. Goffman describes it as "ambivalence" and describes the "ambivalence built into the individual's attachment to his stigmatised category...it is understandable that oscillations may occur in his support of, identification with, and participation among his own." (Goffman, 1963, p51). This ambivalence is perhaps what lies at the heart of D's later description of his "brand of socialism":

D ...I think my interests are directed towards social and economic justice as a whole, not picking out that little pool of disability and addressing that.....for me, that's a bit of a side issue...

The stigmatised group can, in this sense, be perceived as a kind of ghetto to which the individual feels that he or she cannot, or does not want to belong. Theoretically, of course, there is no reason why the politics of disability should be seen as a minority interest, particularly as it often challenges common-sense assumptions and definitions not only of disability, but of normalcy. Likewise, Goffman's work, for example, applies equally to anyone who is socially defined as different and sheds a great deal of light on the psycho-social processes of labelling and of constructions of normalcy. Feminism sheds light on what it means to be masculine, and so on. In the introduction to this piece of research, I argue that these are *the* debates for modern times. Nevertheless, I can see that D might not want to be defined and constrained to think along these lines just because he is himself deaf, in the same way that I would object to someone arguing that I should focus on women's issues rather than disability because I am a woman.

On the other hand, although D feels that "that particular pressure group interest is something I could never...think of being interested in for myself...", he *is* interested in research into the position of senior managers in education:

D: Look at the profile of senior managers in FE colleges, and how many have got cerebral palsy? How many are deaf? How many are registered blind? I don't think very many.

This again returns to issues of diversity and inclusion, and if D carries out his research, may lead him to a reappraisal of the debates..

Imagery, metaphor and emotion

One of the key images that D uses again and again in Interview 1 is that of "fog", of "mist" of "gaps in knowledge" - what we might term confusion and unknowing. He uses this to describe the experience of growing up deaf.

One of the issues is that D was unaware of his deafness. His older brother, B, was obviously deaf, and to some extent, the burden was on D and later, his younger brother, J, to somehow compensate their parents (both hearing) for B, who was "awkward and cussed and difficult." This made D "anxious to please" - he also felt that it meant that both his and J's deafness was largely ignored. At home, at school and at university, his deafness was not acknowledged nor were attempts made to identify his educational or career needs. As a result, D thought that everybody was in the same position, and learned to compensate and try to fill in any gaps by concentrating on learning from the written word (something he is now extremely good at). Looking back at his school years, he describes the experience as "deep in the mists of time" where it is hard to "join up the gaps". This confusion has resulted in two particular developments. Firstly, as he describes it, "the big question

is, for me, is...is what I might have achieved if I hadn't been in a fog all the time", which leads him later to feel that he hasn't got his "just desserts":

D: I *do* feel that.....I do feel that despite being deaf...erm.....I am..erm...more *knowledgeable* than most people and better *qualified* than most people, and...erm...more *energetic* than most people - or *have* been more energetic - maybe not so much now. More *innovative* than most people, so why haven't the rewards been mine?

Despite his obvious success in the educational world, D feels strongly that he has been "subliminally disadvantaged" by the status quo, and when asked to say more, states:

D:if someone with cerebral palsy comes along to an interview for a senior management position.....people would be looking for obstacles, not positives....it's almost as if you get *further* scrutiny....

Secondly, D feels that he has had to do more than other people to achieve his current position.

R: I'll just offer this as an idea, but I think there has been an element in your life of you feeling you have to do more - and better - than other people.....

D: I think I agree with that.....when I get glimpses of other people's...er...attitudes, and.....in terms of conscientiousness, they *always* fall short of mine.....it always comes as a surprise to me - and then I think "Why? Why?" I know that I always dot the "i"s and cross the "t"s more than anyone else.

This has led D to take on extra challenges - as a young man, for example, he embarked on a series of major hitchhiking journeys across Europe, he lived for a year in Marseilles, and has several

times simply moved job and area - all activities that most people would find daunting. An important linked theme is self-reliance. D's experience of family life and then of public school (where he was inevitably bullied), led him to the conclusion that he couldn't trust anybody. The effect of deafness on his family was to isolate individuals - he describes this as "five different people living under the same roof, there wasn't much sort of ...*family* involved." These are all, one way or another, experiences of the "fog" which he describes. For example, he only felt that he was able to stop setting himself challenges when he "realised that...that loads of people (had) been much less challenging to themselves...":

R: So perhaps you became aware that you didn't have to do that in order to be OK....

D: Yes. Yes, yes, yes. I agree with that.

Some of D's striving, then, has been precipitated by the fog, because he has found it difficult to know where "the mark" is. In other words, the fog has obscured the mark which D feels he has to reach in order to be OK. It has also affected his confidence. In several places, he talks about being a "fraud" and of "winging it". In an earlier post, he was required to assess teachers on teaching practice:

D:I couldn't hear a word of what was going on! But I still wrote really convincing reports....I had to concentrate on all sorts of other things in the classroom.....what I think I'm saying is, I could do something convincingly - apparently convincingly - but it's back to this fog again - what is....you know, what is good and what isn't.

Elsewhere, he takes the theme and develops it, explaining how he had helped a colleague:

D: And yet - is it me being...erm....a fraud, or is it me being very quick on things and clear-thinking, and....and so on? And is it a matter of confidence? I've never entirely unravelled that....

R: It seems to be about not accepting that you can be genuinely valued for what you're capable of....

D: Yes, because I just think I'm going to get found out....*(long pause)*

The confusion he feels is clear from the inherent contradiction of on the one hand, not feeling he has got his "just desserts", and on the other, feeling that he is a fraud. There are also those issues of confidence. Because D exists in a "fog" it is difficult for him to be sure whether he is capable or not. These are on one level, personal issues about how D copes with his disability. D himself has been through three experiences of mental breakdown at critical points in his educational and working life. I do not think that D himself would relate these directly to his deafness.

Nevertheless, they do seem related to the pressure under which he puts himself, and this in turn has been affected by his deafness and his family situation. These are, of course, also social issues.

Corker refers to deaf people "running twice as fast" in the workplace in order "keep up". She explains the pressure to be not just a model employee, but a model deaf person. A model deaf person is one who overcomes every barrier and "copes with the minimum of support without complaint" (Corker, 1998). As we saw earlier, interventions like counselling that come into play when the pressures become too much have not yet really embraced the social model of disability and often focus on the individual's capacity for coping. However, Corker points out that effective counselling practice can also "embrace a commitment to environmental change as the main route to equality, social justice, client self-empowerment and human rights." (Corker, 1998). D himself acknowledges that he received some very effective counselling which took account of the conditions under which he was working, but it did not explicitly explore the impact of his deafness. There still seems to be a scarcity of both theory and practice which makes explicit links between

the individual difficulties of living with disability and the behaviours and structures of oppression - a point expressed by Shakespeare and Watson (Shakespeare and Watson, 2002) and explored earlier. Narrative approaches can help make these links providing that they are able to hold both individual and social structure in mind in a creative tension. In a sense, that lies at the heart of our joint research here.

The kinds of experiences that D describes are potentially highly emotionally charged, yet as I have mentioned, it is rare for him to express strong emotions. D also uses his sense of humour to good effect, although we didn't explore the role that this has played in the past in deflecting bullying and whether humour may still form part of his armoury of defence. For example, asked about his feelings about school, he responded:

D: ...I sort of rail against things sometimes, but rationally, you know, given the circumstances of the ...of the time.....So...so...yeah, there's a certain amount of railing, a certain amount of anger, but also it's tempered as I get older with a certain amount of, I suppose, amusement....

Later, on reflection, he ponders:

D: Anger (*questioningly*). Do you know, I do feel so....cross sometimes, actually. (*Pause.*) I...I suppose I feel cross because...erm....the EO agenda has moved on and yet....awareness of it makes me realise how much further it's got to go."

His frustration, so clearly apparent in the earlier extract about "just desserts", is not only about the lack of awareness and understanding on the part of others, and the way in which the whole burden

of dealing with his deafness falls on him alone, but also the failure of both organisations and individuals to embrace diversity:

D: ...I just want....there to be a recognition that *I've* got to go about things in a very different way, and that what is....people must recognise that a good job is ...is...a many-splendoured thing, it can be done in very, very many different ways.

Finally, in Interview 2, we extended the concept of diversity to describe positive attributes in the individual that may develop as a result of disability

D:I do feel I have been very lucky, despite my deafness...and also deafness has maybe been responsible for developing aspects of personality which are attractive....

R: I s'pose it could be the case that deafness has meant that you have developed certain attributes and talents that you might not have developed in the same way had you been hearing...

D: Yes, I agree with that. I agree with that. They've developed differently in being, I think.....

Diversity, therefore, doesn't only relate to the organisational benefits of exploring ways of doing things differently, but also to individual, *different* qualities that may develop in the disabled person. It is about a celebration of the multitude of differences in humanity. In a political environment where difference seems to be under threat (witness the recent resurgence of either/or debates about whether we should assimilate immigrants rather than develop multiculturalism) we need to be addressing the universal benefits we might reap from encouraging rather than repressing difference.

Conclusions

In the Introduction, I set out three main aims:

1. To collaborate with D in producing his story, exploring feelings and issues around his deafness, and focusing on the context of education and work.
2. To explore any links between D's unique individual story and broader the cultural narratives he might use to make sense of his deafness.
3. To look at whether it might be possible to make general statements about inclusion and diversity on the basis of D's story, with a view to raising professional awareness.

I wanted to do this using an extended narrative case study, and in ways that explicitly acknowledged how D's story would be a joint creative collaboration between us. It would also be situated within a number of ongoing professional dialogues with which we would engage. I also wanted to be alert for unconscious aspects of D's story - what we might call the "sub-texts" that D might bring into play. By doing so, we hoped we might both gain a more profound understanding of D's story and its links to those collective stories mentioned above. We hoped that through this, we might be able to raise awareness of deafness in general, and perhaps be able to make some "fuzzy generalisations" of the type mentioned by Bassey (Bassey, 2003)

How far were D and I successful?

The process of carrying out interviews, transcribing and then engaging with D in discussion, amendment and review did produce a very coherent and vivid account of the experience of deafness, and I feel that we were also able to engage with theory in quite creative ways. There was a great deal of rich material, which we edited and honed to produce this particular version of D's story. D had the opportunity to change anything he wanted at any stage. The process worked

because we were personally close and had a relationship of trust, although we were successful in keeping the actual research within quite distinct boundaries. It also worked because D is a very articulate and well-educated individual. A similar close collaborative approach might be successful with a more distant subject, but it would need a great deal of adapting for use with someone who was a less confident communicator. It is also very time-consuming.

There were a number of ethical issues involved, particularly my concerns about being true to D's purpose in collaborating on the research. With hindsight, I could probably have been a little more adventurous in exploring D's "hidden agenda" (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000). He himself would have been willing to do this because there is personal trust between us, and because he feels it would be harmless. Nevertheless, I still have reservations about making "psycho-social propositions" about research subjects: Roper's work on transference and counter-transference should alert us to the ways in which our personal subconscious may be involved throughout the interviewing and analysis processes (Roper 2003). There is the very real danger of discounting others' stories when we do not accept what they say at face value. This is particularly acute in the case of those who have hitherto not been able to speak, let alone be heard, and I feel uneasy with Booth's comments about verisimilitude (Booth, 1996). I accept that there are narrative truths as well as literal truths, and that these may yield different insights into areas that might otherwise be inaccessible to us, but what is appropriate for one piece of research might not be for another. The question for me is how we check whether we are being true to our subjects. It requires a high degree of scrutiny and critical reworking as well as personal integrity - and doubt. I agree with West that we must have a "moral commitment to truth seeking.." (West, 2001). We also need to be mindful of the examples we set as researchers in a society where postmodern approaches to the truth are often misrepresented and abused for political and journalistic ends, and we need to ask

questions about the research itself and whose interests it serves. There are no final answers. More explicit sharing of best practice and a continuous revision of ethical guidelines may be needed.

D's experience of deafness

D's experience of his deafness is characterised by isolation and frustration. He speaks of a "fog" of not knowing what is happening, and frustration at the ways in which others exclude him. Despite most people appearing well-meaning, they rarely "go that extra mile" of including D in a "matter-of-fact commonly-accepting way." He always has to ask for adjustments to be made, he feels that if he applies for a more senior post, that he will be more closely scrutinised, and so on. If the RNID report is anything to go by, these experiences are not unique to D. 74% of deaf people feel that they have less opportunities of promotion than their hearing colleagues. Very few get all the help that they need at work. (Bradshaw/RNID, 2002).

This experience comes about because deafness (and disability generally) is construed in opposition to being able-bodied. From this perspective, the disabled person is seen as the problem, rather than the way things are organised - it is linked to the "deficit" rather than the "social" model of disability (Oliver, 1996, Barnes, 2003). For the disabled person, this is first of all extremely tiring. He or she has to make all the adjustments in order to keep up. D, for example, gets very, very tired during social occasions. He is constantly struggling to hear and to join in. At work, there can be pressure to be a "model deaf employee" (Corker, 1998), and D has suffered mental breakdowns when the pressure to achieve has been particularly acute. He himself mostly explains these events in terms of his own individual "mental fragility" rather than in terms of social issues. He did, however, express satisfaction at the discovery of an internal coherence through the process of telling his story. He was able to use this to give meaning to the painful experiences he had undergone at XX College. He survived, and feels that he has emerged stronger, more resilient and more ready and

willing to challenge exclusion and take back control. D's story is a "good story" in the sense described by West. Telling it has allowed him to see with his story with "fresh eyes" and generated for him new "insight and meaning". (West, 2001). This is discussed in Coherence and Consistency, p.34.

Secondly, deafness is emotionally frustrating. D often wonders what he might have been able to achieve had he been hearing. He feels he might have been a linguist, for example. He feels unfairly blocked, "subliminally disadvantaged by the status quo." He has expertise, qualifications and a successful track record, but feels that he has not been properly rewarded in comparison with hearing colleagues. Even more frustrating, it is always difficult to prove disadvantage in this way, and there are very subtle processes of selection at work. D feels that "people haven't wanted to take the chance" on him, that they wonder "can someone who's deaf manage?", that he is perceived as different and therefore problematic. These feelings are discussed in Imagery, Metaphor and Emotion, p.40.

It is important to note that we are not talking here just about people's attitudes (although these are important). Attitudes shape social structures, but are in turn shaped by them. There is an iterative process resulting in structural inequalities that become in-built, where they then effectively "programme" the way we organise things. The issue is wider than disability and is about exclusion in general. As an analogy, consider the way in which the primacy of the private motorcar effectively disadvantages those who do not, or cannot, own or drive one. They may be excluded from a wide range of leisure, learning and work opportunities, simply because we take the car as the norm and build our way of life round it. Whole complex webs of vested interests come into play to maintain the status quo. Inclusion can be achieved, but requires a continuous sustained effort and a great deal of faith and commitment.

One of the ways in which D responds to his exclusion is to take the initiative. He regularly walks around the room in meetings so that he can see people's lips. He makes a point of asking for what he needs. He communicates in the ways he feels most comfortable. To do this he needs to be quite assertive. As a result, he has only recently felt able to do these things. Only recently has he become aware that, just like anyone else, he has the "right to have the conditions" to do his job properly. It is interesting that hearing colleagues have, on occasion, responded negatively. In stepping outside of non-disabled people's expectations and acting "out of character", he threatens their status quo (Davis, 2003). He is asking for an adjustment *on his terms*, rather than accepting one on theirs. He is no longer the "model deaf employee." (Corker, *ibid.*).

Individual and collective stories about disability

In the Introduction, I mentioned that I was interested in how D might dip into collective social discourses about disability. He did so quite naturally in the two long interviews. The two theoretical discourses with which we engaged most were those of labelling theory and in particular, the experience of stigma (Goffman, 1963), and the deficit and social models of disability (Barnes, 1996 and Finkelstein, 2001). The social justice agenda was also significant.

I mentioned above that D has only recently become aware of his "rights". In fact, he has moved through various overlapping "stages" of both accounting for, and dealing with, his deafness. As a young boy he developed skills and abilities that went some way to compensating his elder brother's "cussedness". He talks about being in "apologetic" mode, seeing his deafness as a *deficit* in him, a problem in him, which he somehow needed to make good. At other times he has pretended to hear better than he can. Goffman also talks about stages - stages in dealing with the stigma of having a disability (Goffman, 1963). Bearing a stigma in this way results in a great deal of ambivalence about identity, about "belonging" to a stigmatised group and wishing to "pass" as normal in order to

escape the undesirable consequences and derogatory assumptions made about one. These were discussed in *The Politics of Disability*, p.37ff.

Perhaps partly as a result of this, D has always been a political animal (he has been an active member of the Labour Party and a Trades Unionist) but has not been interested in disability issues as such. He supports inclusion and social justice across a broad spectrum, but feels that disability-focused politics are not for him. However, he is moving in his thinking towards a more social model of disability. On several occasions he talks about social adaptations that can be made, and ways of promoting inclusion by addressing some of the more structural inequalities I mentioned earlier. Again, this is discussed in *The Politics of Disability*. Interestingly, D became more interested in reading about this while we were involved in the research, and has borrowed several of my books!

Raising Awareness

In the Introduction, I mentioned that D and I hoped that we would be in a position to make some "fuzzy generalisations" that might inform professional practice (Bassegy, 2003). Elsewhere, I agreed with Finkelstein that research needs to identify "appropriate social change" that will not simply reinforce an unequal status quo (Finkelstein, 1999). What generalisations can be made to help with this?

First of all, it is clear from D's story that even well-meaning people lack deaf awareness. They make assumptions about his deafness, they feel discomfited when he takes back control, they make only desultory, sporadic attempts to be inclusive.

Secondly, when the able-bodied are inclusive, they feel that they are the ones making a special effort and they have trouble maintaining this. They are unaware of the effort that disabled people have to make all the time, just to keep up. Yet "I" can very easily become one of "them". One in five workers will have a long term disability, and the risk of disability increase with age (Labour Market Trends 2002). This is not a minority issue - it touches every one of us in some way.

Thirdly, despite this, many able-bodied people still act in actively disabling ways. For example, the disabled person is expected to be grateful for what is given, and may be penalised for being assertive about what he or she needs. Many people are unwilling to change their own practice proactively in order to be more inclusive. D feels that he actually has to force people to act more inclusively. He has to make all the effort and may be rewarded with incomprehension, even hostility. Most people are unable to see how diversity can ultimately also benefit them - for example, by identifying new, more innovative ways of working, or by demonstrating techniques that would allow them to take back control over communication.

Fourthly, at the social and organisational level, the benefits of diversity are not well understood. D describes a good job as being a "many splendoured thing....it can be done in very, very many different ways." Some of these ways might be more innovative, more flexible and more productive. Diversity might also mean, amongst other things, harnessing particular kinds of talent that would otherwise be missing. D, for example, relies heavily for his information on thorough reading rather than discussion. He described one occasion where in a policy meeting, he was the only person who appeared to have read the relevant government documents. As a result of his deafness, he has a different, more in-depth approach that is an advantage in some kinds of work. Many organisations still fail to monitor and address the diversity of their workforce in an active way, and are missing out on a whole range of aptitudes, skills and expertise.

Fifthly, at the theoretical level, there is a need for ways of thinking that can encompass both the individual experience of disability, in all its facets, and how it is socially constructed. There are more general theories that overcome the individual/society dualism - Giddens, for example - but few that specifically address disability. D himself felt liberated to find that such theories were possible, and was especially interested in the work of Shakespeare and Watson (Shakespeare and Watson, 2002) and MacLeod (MacLeod, 1998).

Finally, there are specific issues relating to education and particularly to careers guidance. It is clear from D's story that, as in the case of the counselling he received, his teachers at school and his lecturers at university ignored his deafness. He became a successful teacher, but feels that with hindsight he would have chosen something that engaged his writing and thinking skills. Had he been hearing, he says, he might have been a linguist: I would say that with particular support, perhaps he could have done so anyway. Whether or not this is so, it reminds us that unless we actively work to address and champion the specific career needs of people of all ages with disabilities, we will be colluding in perpetuating their exclusion.

D and I have further work to do in terms of developing a more focused approach to raising awareness. This could include:

- Further research into disability
- Acting as a champion for equal opportunities and diversity in our work
- Ensuring that inclusion issues are added to every agenda
- Ensuring that we personally are as inclusive as we can be in practice
- Designing and delivering seminars and training on deafness, disability and diversity.

I argued in the Introduction for a celebration of difference. I would like to end by quoting Bill Clinton:

"...the whole course of human history can be seen as a constant struggle to expand the definition of who is "us" and shrink the definition of who is "them"...[We must] celebrate, not just tolerate, our diversity, on the simple theory that our differences make life interesting, but our common humanity matters more." (Clinton, 2002).

This issue is about us. It is not about them

Bibliography

Abberley, P. "Work, Utopia and Impairment", in Barton, L. (1996), (ed), *Disability and Society*, London: Pearson, pp. 61-82.

Barnes, C. (1996). "Disability and the Myth of the Independent Researcher", in Barton, L. and Oliver, M. (eds), *Disability Studies: Past, Present and Future*. Leeds: The Disability Press, pp. 239-243.

Barnes, C. (2003). *Disability, the Organisation of Work and the Need for Change*. Statement presented to the OECD in March 2003. Reproduced on www.leeds.ac.uk/disability-studies/archive.uk, downloaded 20 June 2003

Barnes, C. and Mercer, G. (1997). "Breaking the Mould? An Introduction to Doing Disability Research." In Barnes, C. and Mercer, G. *Doing Disability Research*, Leeds: The Disability Press, pp. 1-14.

Barnes, C. and Mercer, G. (2003). *Disability*. Cambridge: Polity Press

Bassey, M. (1999). *Case Study Research in Educational Settings*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Bell, S. (1999). "Narratives and lives: women's health politics and the diagnosis of cancer for DES daughters." In *Narrative Inquiry*, Vol. 9 Iss. 2. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, pp. 47-89

Booth, T. "Sounds of voices: issues in the use of narrative methods with people who have learning difficulties", in Barton, L. (1996), (ed), *Disability and Society*, London: Pearson, pp. 237-255.

Bradshaw, W. (2002). *The Employment Situation of Deaf and Hard of Hearing People: Research into Deafness and Employment*. UK: RNID

Bradshaw, W. (2002). *The Experience of Employers: Research into Deafness and Employment*. UK: RNID

British Educational Research Association (1992). *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*. Edinburgh: BERA

Bury, M. (1996). "Disability and the Myth of the Independent Researcher: A Reply". In Barton, L. and Oliver, M. (eds), *Disability Studies: Past, Present and Future*. Leeds: The Disability Press, pp. 244-248.

Butler, C. (2002). *Postmodernism. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Byrne, B. (2002). "Narrating the Self". In *New Working Paper Series, Issue 7, March 2002*. London School of Economics: Gender Institute. Reproduced on www.lse.ac.uk/collections/genderInstitute/pdf/narratingTheSelf.pdf downloaded 11 November 2003.

Clark, C., Dyson, A. and Millward, A. (1998). "Theorising Special Education: Time to Move On?" In Clark, C., Dyson, A. and Millward, A. (eds), *Theorising Special Education*, London: Routledge

Clinton, W. "United States Should Lead, Not Dominate." In *Global Viewpoint*, 16 December 2002.

Downloaded from www.digitalnpq/global_services on 1 January 2004.

Corker, M. (2002). "Deafness/Disability - Problematising Notions of Identity, Culture and Structure." In Ridell, S. and Watson, N. (eds) *Disability, Culture and Identity*, London: Pearson.

Reproduced on www.leeds.ac.uk/disability-studies/archive.uk, downloaded 29 July 2003

Corker, M. (1998). *Deaf and Disabled or Deafness Disabled? Towards a Human Rights Perspective*. Buckingham: Open University Press

Davis, L. (1995). *Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness and the Body*. London: Verso

Dominice, P. (2000). *Learning from Our Lives: Using Educational Biographies with Adults*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Ezzy, D. (2002). *Qualitative Analysis: Practice and Innovation*. London: Routledge

Finkelstein, V. (2001). *The Social Model of Disability Repossessed*. In The Disability Archive UK.

Reproduced on www.leeds.ac.uk/disability-studies/archiveuk, downloaded 30 July 2003

Finkelstein, V. (1999). "Extended Book Review on Barnes, C. and Mercer, G. Doing Disability Research." In *Disability & Society*, Vol. 14, No. 6, 1999, pp. 859-878.

Gillham, B. (2000). *Case Study Research Methods*. London and New York: Continuum

Griffiths, M. (1998). "The Discourses of Social Justice in Schools." In *British Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 24, No. 3, 1998

Goffman, E. (1963). *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd

Hollway, W. and Jefferson, T. (2000). *Doing Qualitative Research Differently. Free Association, Narrative and the Interview Method*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Irving, B, and Marris, I. (2002) "Towards an Inclusive Framework". In *Careers: Guidance: constructing the future*. Stourbridge: Institute of Careers Guidance.

Irving, B. et al. 2000. "In Pursuit of Social Justice: careers guidance for Muslim girls in England." In *Revista Espanola de Orientacion y Psicopedagogia*, Vol. 11, No 20, 2 Semestre 2000

McLeod, J. (1998). *An Introduction to Counselling*. Buckingham: Open University Press

Oliver, M. (1996). "A Sociology of Disability or a Disablist Sociology?", in Barton, L. (1996), (ed), *Disability and Society*, London: Pearson, pp. 18-42.

Phillips, D.C. (1993), "Subjectivity and objectivity: an objective inquiry". In Hammersley, M. (ed) *Educational Research: Current Issues*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing

Reid H., West L. and Law B. (2003). *Challenging Biographies: Re-locating the Theory and Practice of Careers Work*. Canterbury Christ Church University College: Centre for Career and Personal Development

Roberts, K. (2002). Introduction. In *Careers: Guidance: constructing the future*. Stourbridge: Institute of Careers Guidance.

Roper, M. (2003). "Analysing the Analysed: Transference and Counter-transference in the Oral History Encounter." In *Oral History, Autumn 2003*, pp. 20-32.

Rustin, M (2000), "Reflections on a Biographical Turn in Social Science", in Chamberlayne R., Bornat J. and Wengraf T. (eds) *The Turn to Biographical Methods in Social Science: Comparative Issues and Examples*. London: Routledge. Also other various articles.

Said, E. (2003) "A window on the world." In *The Guardian, Saturday 2 August 2003*.

Shakespeare, T. and Watson, N. (2002). "The Social Model of Disability: An Outmoded Ideology?" In *Research in Social Science and Disability, 2002, Vol. 2*, pp.9-28. Reproduced on www.leeds.ac.uk/disability-studies/archiveuk, downloaded 2 August 2003

Smith, A. and Twomey, B. (2002). *Labour Market Experiences of People with Disabilities*. Labour Market Trends, UK: Office of National Statistics

Spinelli, E. (1997). *Tales of Unknowing: Therapeutic Encounters from an Existential Perspective*, London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd.

Stake, R.E. (1995). *The Art of Case Study Research*. London: SAGE

Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE

Swain, J., Griffiths, C. and Heyman, B. (2003). "Towards a social model approach to counselling disabled clients. In *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, Vol. 31 No.1, 2003 pp 137-152

The Commission on Social Justice, 1998. "What is Social Justice?". In Franklin, J. (ed) *Social Policy and Social Justice*. Cambridge: Polity Press

The Chambers Dictionary, 1998. Edinburgh: Chambers Harrap Publishers Ltd.

Travers, M. (2001). *Qualitative Research Through Case Studies*. London: SAGE

West, L. (2001). *Doctors on the Edge: General Practitioners, Health and Learning in the Inner-city*. London: Free Association Books.

Appendix 1: Interview 1 Transcript

Sunday 30 November 2003

Ruth: OK D, it's your opportunity to tell your story about education, work - all of those things, so whenever you want to start, that's fine...*(short pause)*it's about knowing where to go back to really, isn't it?

D: So I'm talking about education, work and disability, am I?

Ruth: Well, you can focus on those things, but just as important really is to tell your story, particularly in relation, though, to things like education and work , 'cos I think a lot of those issues will come out if you just kind of "go with the flow" really.

D: Well, I never had any difficulties in terms of education, as *I saw it*, or I never *realised* I had any difficulties in terms of education because I was good at reading, writing and arithmetic, so I was good at all those things that were valued in school - in primary, and indeed secondary schools at the time. But I wasn't particularly aware of my learning styles or indeed my deafness - though interestingly, although I seemed to learn effectively, I probably wasted quite a lot of time, as a child and as a teenager, in trying to learn through methods that were no good to me, and *I* wasn't aware of that, and I don't think any of my teachers wuh...were....was....were aware of that....any of my teachers *was* aware of that, so although I think I got an effective education, I think there are gaps, and I think there's a certain amount of fog, looking back, where I didn't grasp things as quickly as I might have, and I had to*grasp* concepts mainly through reading, which is er...er.. er quite a long-winded way of going about things, because a lot of people learn effectively, or part of their armoury is aural...learning, and I don't think I had that.

Ruth: Mmm

D: And then there are the *(longer pause)* psychological aspects of learning....erm...with deafness. The first thing, I think, is that..... you don't know how much you're missing, if you don't know how deaf you are, and we were never encouraged in the family to realise the extent of our disabilities, particularly me and my younger brother. My older brother was deaf, and he had great big battery packs with hearing aids in both ears, so it was quite obvious *he* was deaf (*slight note of humour in the voice*), but the other, the other two of us were.....not neglected, but *our* deafness, *our* disability was ignored, mainly because we coped much better with it..... And there are other psychological aspects because if you don't *know* that you're deaf, and you don't *know* that you're missing a lot, it - maybe sometimes you are considered stupid, or slow on the uptake, and so you get into *apology* mode all the time, where you think the deficiency..... is in *you*, rather than in the way that people should adapt in order to teach you, so in terms of *my* education, there was a... there was always that..er..sense of being anxious to please, whereas in my older brother, he didn't seem to give a damn...or...or...he defended himself by being awkward and cussed and difficult, and I reacted in...an entirely different way.And then..... as I became more aware of deafness, I suh ...or *my* deafness, I think it was more a question of, erm, of trying to entertain..... as well as, you know, apologise for appearing stupid, and then...

Ruth: Entertain? In what way?

D: Well, be amusing....

Ruth: Mmm..

D: ...as a way of getting over the embarrassment of..of deafness. And I didn't.... don't think I I think it was unfortunate that I liked subjects that weren't very good for someone who's deaf, like modern languages, for example, and all of those things, particularly French, and I've always been good at Latin, and to a lesser extent, Greek, and I chose those because you didn't have to speak to them...er..erm....you didn't have to speak them, you just learned them...you know...in a... in a...a reading style way. (*Pause*) and then....and then....as I..erm..got older, I was more aware of my deafness, particularly at *this* end of my life, when the educational climate has become much more inclusive - not entirely so, but moving more in that direction - the realisation dawned thatit wasn't necessarily a deficit in *me* that I should be concerned about, but....but...forcing other people to change their behaviour to accommodate *me*, and having to be assertive about it, so...erm...so from being apologetic, which I still am, to being amusing, which I still try to be, I've had to become more assertive as well, so...so there are...erm.. there are stages in the way that I've approached it. But even when I was doing my MBA at..at B...n, I was constantly having to get people to say...repeat what they were saying, or turning to my neighbour and saying "what did he say? What did she say?" And people were very tolerant about that - you know, these senior managers, they were tolerant, and considerate, but I don't think they got it, I don't thinkthey.....they...they made the adjustments that I forced them to make.....asked them to make, but that's what they did, they didn't go that extra mile of genuinely including me in a.....in a.... in a matter-of-fact commonly-accepted way.

Ruth: Could you say a bit more about them "not getting it"....just to sort of explain what you mean by that? What would be the difference....how would....how would you know if they *had* "got it" as opposed to "not getting it"?

D: I think it's a question of instead of waiting for me to say "I didn't hear this" or "I didn't hear that", it would be sort of automatically ensuring that I...erm.. *did* hear, and making...erm...making quite fundamental adjustments to their own speech and enunciation - it was always me sort of being 5 seconds behind in being included, so it was reactive rather than proactive... I think..I think that's quite a good way of expressing it. And also there was no notion of needs analysis, either, you know, what were my needs. I don't need a...an induction loop..erm..what..what *do* I need, the kinds of adjustments that *would* be necessary. And I make those adjustments now anyway in meetings - I walk round and stand opposite to people, and perhaps actually I should have done that in.. as part of the MBA actually - gone round and just walked around the room. It might have helped me stay awake as well (*slight note of humour in the voice*), because I always find it such an effort to concentrate that it makes me sleepy.

Ruth: When you...taking you back to your..your school bit for a moment, how did you *feel* about all that? I mean I know you said you were in a fog, but it was a kind of *mental* fog 'cos you were missing things, but what were your *feelings* during that time about, say, the teachers and other children and so on, at school?

D: Well, I think one of my main feelings was that I thought *everybody* was in the same position as me, because I didn't know the extent of my..deafness. In...in family terms, I feel that probably, my particularly my mother, recognised that my older brother had real difficulties and...and very poor hear...hearing, worse than mine, but that was quite enough for them to.....to manage with, particularly when you had two younger children who seemed to cope quite well, and were no problems....no problems in school ort...or anything like that, so...so...but...so I thought that

everybody had similar difficulties - that, in fact, that I didn't necessarily have a hearing problem. It's only now when.... say...I watch the television - I used to...erm...enjoy watching "Softly, Softly" from 8 to 9 o'clock, but never really understood what was going on, but I thought, well that's what everybody ..erm..does, they don't hear what's going on - it's only with subtitles, and...erm....not hearing the music of the Rockford Files and so on that you actually realise how much you're missing. So I think I must have been compensating in a very (*pause*) sustained way without actually being aware of it. Even when we were learning French, through the audio-visual method, you know, tape recorder and slides....entirely inappropriate for me, absolutely entirely inappropriate, and the French teacher was apoplectic when I was saying "Cibault" instead of "Thibault", which was the name of this family. Well now, if I'd had the words in front of me - T-H-I-B-A-U-L-T - that would have been really easy, but because we were learning by this method that was inappropriate it was... it was only at that sort of....even then, I wasn't particularly aware that.... I thought that everybody was having the same problem.

Ruth: Mmm, mmm

D: And there was no sort of recognition that I was deaf , and that I couldn't hear consonants properly, I just could not hear them. Erm...and that's not the teacher's fault - I don't think that's *anybody's* fault. It's just the sort of lack of awareness at the time.

Ruth: When...when were youwere you tested for these things when you were a child?

D: Pardon?

Ruth: Was your hearing *tested* when you were a child?

D: I'm sure it was...I'm sure it must have been..... I'm sure it must have been...so...so I don't know what really entirely was going on.

Ruth: Mmm. Mmmm.

D: I really don't know entirely what was going on. And if you look at my school reports, I don't think there's any mention of deafness there.

Ruth: So do you think there's a degree...I mean you hinted before at the fact that because you seemed to be coping, people kind of assumed that you didn't *have* a deafness problem. Almost like...oh well, he's OK then?

D: Well.... it's interesting, because...because....because my.... I think people in my *class* were aware of it because...because there was a certain amount of what you might term bullying.... You know, I did a Greek class on a Friday afternoon at one end of the school , and the final class was a Geography class, so there were two of us doing Greek, so we went to the Geography class last thing, and the teacher - no...and....and because we got there late.... we had further to go....the other class was a German class. And the people in the German class got the back rows, and then the teacher wasn't very assertive, so they tested my hearing, you see - they sort of whispered and so on, and if I turned round...erm...it was incredibly amusing, and if I didn't, that was incredibly amusing - so I think there must have been an awareness somewhere there....or perhaps an awareness of the situation in certain circumstances. I don't know. It's all, sort of, deep in the mists of time, really - it's hard to be aware. Or to make....

Ruth: Sure, sure....

D: ...or to join up the....the gaps, as it were.

Ruth: You....you talk.... I mean, I know that in your secondary school, obviously....I mean, those things must have started way back when you were very young, at primary school, but the....when you've talked to me before, it's always really about...quite..you know, understandably, it's been your secondary school that you've talked about, and how you....sort of.... functioned there really, and I've sensed in you before quite a lot of ...is anger the right word? About the school itself? Or..erm..something...some negative feelings about it perhaps.

D: It...it is....it is very difficult, 'cos I sort of ...erm...I sort of rail against things sometimes, but rationally, you know, given the circumstance of the...of the time - and it was a public school I went to, so..so they were good at some things at that time and not particularly good at others. So...so..yeah, there's a certain amount of railing, a certain amount of anger, but also it's tempered as I get older with a certain amount of, I suppose, amusement, really, that...that there I was, learning very, very effectively, really - *very* effectively - you know, good results, good school reports and so on, whilst missing out on a lot of things, because I was compensating in other ways. The big question is, for me, is...is..what I might have achieved if I hadn't been in a fog all the time.

Ruth: Mmmm.

D: 'Cos I was quite.....I was very hardworking as well. You sort of think "well, for what, really?" Anger. It's just that I'm not in an angry mood at the moment.

Ruth: No.

D: I mean, sometimes I will begin to feel angry about it. More....I feel more *sad* about some things, now, or about.....certainly about my declining hearing, because I've always been deaf, but actually, it's probably.....got *worse* over the last decade in particular. It *has* got worse.

Ruth: Mmm.

D: Anger (*questioningly*). Do you know, I do feel so.....cross sometimes, actually. (*Pause.*) I....I suppose I feel cross because the..erm... the EO agenda has moved on and yet...awareness of it makes me realise how much further it's got to go. It's the same at.... at work, at XX College, when I was there, I felt that in Equal Opportunities terms, there *was* an awareness that I was deaf...erm...I used to go to management meetings and walk around the room and people got (*Ruth: Mmm Mmm*) used to that, but actually, looking back there was nothing inclusive about it - it was all the efforts *I* had to make.... (*Ruth: Mmm*) all the efforts *I* had to make, it wasn't anything.... it wasn't any sort of...erm... special measures (*Ruth : Mmm*).

Ruth: From what you're saying, really, it seems that people...people *do* make an effort, but that you always have to be the one to *get* them to make the effort, that there's nothing in place that would.... you mentioned reactive and proactive before, and that must be quite hard work, because it means that where ...whatever situation you're in, (*D draws in breath sharply*) you're the one that's having to *ask* for the adjustments.

D: Yes (*slightly doubtfully*) but it's a little bit more subtle than *that*, because if you think about it, if someone is proactive enough to...to...knowing that I'm deaf, you know...and so...and so if that

person says "Right, you're deaf, you've got... so you'll have different needs from...from.... er... everybody else. What sort of things have we got to do in this meeting?" Now that's being proactive, but all I can perhaps say is, things like "People musn't put their hands over their mouths (*Ruth: Mmm...mm*) when they speak. They need to speak clearly and...and...and...*consistently* clearly, and not mumble the beginnings and ends of sentences. And they must be prepared to have me walk around and stand opposite to them (*Ruth: Mmm*). Well, actually, that last one is ..er.. is something that I've got to do, the other oneserm... are the ones where if people were genuinely proactive...you know, people like er.. er...my colleague XX... he's lovely, but he *mumbles*, you know, and I have to say things two or three times. (*Ruth: Mmm*) People actually probably don't see the advantage of speaking clearly and... and articulately the first time, because it saves them from repeating it. So I think... in a way what I'm... I'm saying is that....erm...that that ...erm...(pause) establishing...for people to establish what *they've* got to do - in fact they haven't got to do *much* different from that they ought to be *doing* reactively (*Ruth: Mmm*) in my particular case. (*Pause.*)

Ruth: Can we...if it's OK with you, can I go back with you to.....sort of the adolescent years really, 'cos that's the time when people are normally starting to think, one way or another, about what they're going to do next, and about how they're going to live the rest of their life. When was.... or can....do you think there was a point at which you thought about the future and decided what you were going to do, or was it much more gradual than that?

D: No, I didn't think about that, because, I think you have to also bear in mind that I was...erm...er..at school, and also at university in the late 60s and 70s (*Ruth: Mmm*) and it was all that hippy era when sort of careers were distasteful somehow. I mean...I.. that's... that's how it affected me, (*Ruth: Mmm*) anyway. So...so I think...don't ... I just did what I was told... (*Ruth: Mmm*) and I went to university, I got a degree and I didn't really do very much. I had this notion that I wanted to do...erm...to do social work, but I rapidly got..erm.. disillusioned (*Ruth: Mmm*) with that - partly, actually, because being deaf (*pause*) you don't necessarily develop an easy rapport with people. What you do is, you develop friendships that become probably...erm more one-to-one and more...in-depth, as it were. I'm not like, say, my friend Y, for example, who can go into a pub and make, you know, 20 new friends in an evening, or my friend Z who...who...who....erm....who can...who...er...*everybody* talks to (*Ruth: Mmm*) and I think that's partly because..... they can *hear*, I can't, I'm not... I don't do *small* talk and all of those things, but back to career, no, I *never* had a notion (*Ruth: Mmm*) of...of... and I never took into account the fact that I was....deaf might have to shape a particular career - otherwise I'd wouldn't have gone into teaching, I don't think (*Ruth: Mmm*) because I don't think... I don't think that would have been.... I don't think in retrospect that was the best way to go.

Ruth: Tell me about how you reached that decision, and.... how you reached the decision to go into teaching. (*D: draws in breath*). 'Cos you didn't *start* that way from university (*D: No, no*) did you?

D: No, when I left university I got a job as a temporary social worker in Liverpool, erm...where I felt...erm, where I wanted, I suppose I wanted to challenge myself, and I thought that social work was what I wanted to do, I didn't like that at all, so then I went back to TT (*university*) and registered for a PhD - with a view to what, I have no idea, and then, and then I did that for a certain amount of time, and then I gave *that* up, I didn't get very far with that, and lived in France for a while - there's all that idea of self-challenge, (*Ruth: Mm, mm*) you know, there's not many people who...up sticks and move to a foreign city, (*Ruth: No*) you know, and...er..and....

Ruth: I wanted to...

D:do that

Ruth:talk a bit about that, as well, before thinking about the teaching, 'cos self-challenge seems to have been quite an important feature of your life, and it goes back further than that, really, as well, doesn't it? (*Pause.*) Where do you think it goes back to? The idea of needing to.... When was the first time you became.... Or maybe you *weren't* aware that you were challenging yourself at the time, but in retrospect, you realise that now you *were*? (*Pause.*)

D: I don't know, it's hard to know...I'm...I'm...I....er...I did do...er.. challenging things, I think it's partly because..er... erparticularly in terms of secondary school, I never felt ...erm...that.. er...I could really *trust* anybody. (*Ruth: Mmm.*) I think I find that quite difficult ...and ...and that ..erm...and that....erm.. I felt that..erm..I had to rely on myself, I had to be self-reliant and that..there was nobody to rely on except me. And that was partly a matter of trust, I think, and so there was a mixture of..erm..sort of lack of trust of people, and perhaps to a degree lack of self-confidence as well, So,,I *was* setting challenges for myself. I also went on an exchange to Liege in... in Belgium, where there were three brothers, and I was exchanged with the youngest brother - and they were very adventurous (*Ruth: Mmm*) I'm...I'm sure that they gave their parents the willies, you know, but they...they were always doing quite energetic adventurous things - hitchhiking, you know - they'd go hitchhiking round Europe every summer....the older two, and then the younger one, and quite big feats (*Ruth: Mmm*). And I felt that I was probably namby pamby (*Ruth laughs*) in not doing something like that, so I did that as well.. (*Ruth: Mmm*) I had a long career of..erm..hitchhiking - by myself, as well, quite big feats of..of...er.. of, er, travel in...in some ways. And I suppose ...the Marseille thing was another one of those things where I was thinking, well, I can go off and live somewhere and...and make a life successfully. Didn't have...at the time, it didn't have *that* much to do with the PhD, because I was already not particularly interested in that (*Ruth: Mmm*), but there was....there was an income and a...a challenge there. It took a long time to (*pause*) get past that, well I still have problems with relying on other people (*Ruth: Mmm*). (*Pause.*)

Ruth: Do you know.....why that...feeling of not being able to trust people came up then, or is it something that you...feel has *always* been there with you?

D: (*Pause.*) Yeah, I think it's *always* been there (*Ruth: Mmm*). Yes.

Ruth: So it must go back to childhood and so on?

D: Yes. I think we were.... I think ...erm... I think deafness made us quite ...er...er...made us quite dysfunctional as a family in a lot of ways, 'cos I was... I was never close to my older brother, (*Ruth: Mmm*) it was always sort of a bickery sort of fractious ...relationship, based on rivalry, and it causedproblems in the family - we were...we were I often think that *then* we were like...we were five people, different people, living under the same roof, there wasn't much sort of...*family* involved. There were..all...all sorts of difficulties, which have *largely* been resolved, I think, I think things...er...have got *much* better in the whole family. Apart from A. (*D, then Ruth, laughs*).

Ruth: Well, I thought you all *do* seem to get on very well now, but....but I s'pose what you *may* be saying is that...it didn't seem to be a *unit*, perhaps.

D: Yes. Yes - it didn't feel a unit (*Ruth: Yeah*), it didn't feel as though it was a unit.

Ruth: And that that was partly why you felt there was only *you*, that needed to rely on...

D: Yes...

Ruth:that there wasn't a *family* to rely on.

D: Yes. Yes, I'd agree with that.

Ruth: Mmm. So...

D: And so.... and so.... I tended to make close friendships elsewhere (*Ruth: Mmm*) to get some of that...er...presumably to get some of that emotional..... need met, that I didn't get met in the family (*Ruth: Mmm*) at that time.

Ruth: Mmm. And you said you think that deafness made you dysfunctional as a family...erm.... do you think it might have been different, then, if none of you had been deaf - do you think it's a communication?

D: Who knows! (*Ruth: Mmm. You just don't know.*) But to sit at a dining table and ...and have someone say something, like my Dad saying something, and one brother going "Pardon?" and (*laughing*) repeating it, and the other one going "What?" and repeating it...I mean, it must have driven him absolutely fucking wild, I must.... must say, in retrospect, but there could have been... it could...there could... he could've probably made more effort to (*Ruth: Mmm*) speak clearly in the first place (*Ruth: Mmm*) and saved himself a lot of hassle. (*Pause.*) Plus my older brother's obstinacy. Like defending the indefensible, or like (*laughing*) "Well, maybe Hitler wasn't so bad after all" (*through Ruth and D laughing. Ruth: Red rag!*) Like "he built loads of good roads...).

Ruth: Sounds maybe as if B was deliberately provocative (*both laughing*). It...you...before, we were talking, and we got round to the stage of you taking your PhD, and then we went back a bit, which is....is interesting...er... that you did that, and you were in Marseille for a year, on your own, challenging yourself down there - once....

D: ...not for a year, it wasn't as long as that...

Ruth:...no...once you've actually *met* the challenge, each time, is that it, then, you go on to something else, or how do you..... how do you *see* those challenges? Do you see them as partforming part of a..development, or...?

D: No, I mean I don't, I don't... I think I got past those ...the idea.. the notion of challenges when I got my...er...my first what I call proper job, my first career job, at ZZ Technical College (*Ruth: Mmm*). I don't think I've...I've...I don't think that... I think that...that...I think that phase of my life was pretty much over. Particularly as I realised that...that loads of people who'd been much less challenging to themselves... you know, who'd....who'd taken what I'd call the easy option (*Ruth: Mmm*)

Ruth: So perhaps you became aware that you didn't *have* to do that in order to (*D: Yes*) be OK

D: Yes. Yes, yes, yes (*Ruth: Mmm*) I agree with that.

Ruth: That's interesting. So you sort of almost had to *overshoot* the mark in order to see yourself as being.....

D: Well, I hadn't thought of it like *that*.... But I certainly did sort of felt that I.... I didn't have to do those things any more.

Ruth: I'll just offer this as an idea, but I think there has been an ele..an element in your life of you feeling that you have to do more - and better - than other people, in order.....maybe it's a compensation, I don't know, but it's a way of pushing and driving yourself that you perhaps have.... I don't think you'd agree with that...

D: I think I *agree* with that...I think I agree with that, and I'm.. and when I wa....and I'm quite conscientious, so when I sort of do a bit of skiving or something like that - go home early after an event, or something like that, or decide to read the paper on the train rather than the documents I should...should be reading before, erm...then I get glimpses of other people's...er...attitudes, and they al.....and in terms of conscientiousness they *always* fall short of mine (*Ruth: Mm*)....or...my..where *I* am, and it's always - erm - it always comes as a surprise to me - and then I think "Why?". (*Ruth: Mm*) Why? I know that I always dot the "i"s and cross the "t"s more than anybody else. (*Ruth: Mm*) It was like that at XX College, becauseerm...we, all the programme managers, if you listened to us in management meetings, we were all well on top of everything, and our retention and achievement in our programme areas was always wonderful, but actually, if you peeled away the surface, there were *awful* problems everywhere, throughout the College, but people were afraid tosort of...share them, or *admit* to them. It was amazing.

Ruth: So...do you think that this sort of element of needing to do more.....that could be two things really. One, it could be a compensation in a way, but also it could be, going back to that fog you said you were in, about not knowing quite where the mark is, if you like (*David: Yes*) so you're kind of....

D: I think it's more that, (*Ruth: Yes*) I think it's more that. I'm....I'm not entirely easy with the idea of having to do...having to do *more*.....(*pause*). That doesn't have a particular resonance. But the markers is very, very, very, I think *very* true. (*Ruth: Mm*).

Ruth: So rather like a....a...marathon runner who runs the marathon but has to be told when they've finished, when they get to the end of it, that they can slow down a bit 'n....

D: (*doubtfully*)I don't know..... that's just not an analogy that.....hits the spot....

Ruth: Well, we'll...we'll dispense with it then....

D: Pardon?

Ruth: We'll dispense with it, then.

D: (*Very long pause*.) And then I got into teaching, really, having returned from Marseille, from my PhD, and moved on a whim to Oxford, and...and gone back into care work, because...I didn't particularly *like* care work, and I moved to Oxford because I had some friends there, which is a typical thing for me to do, almost 25, and I thought I'd better do something..... proper! (*humour in voice*)....as it were, and teaching seemed nice because it had long holidays - I mean, that was my

thinking - I didn't think in career terms, and in fact, I don't think I've ever thought in..particularly in career terms. Interestingly enough. (*Pause.*)

Ruth: You said before that you...might not have taken up teaching if you'd been aware of how deaf (*David: Yes, yes*) you were. Do you think that's the case?

D: Yes, I think so, I think so. I don't think....I don't think it was entirely a....a good profession for me to go into (*Ruth: Mm*)...and also, we weren't very well prepared for teaching - it wasn't....it wasn't interactive enough, it was - teaching in further education has changed hugely (*Ruth: Mm*)...well...well...well, I hope it has, and...and I think I...I encouraged it to, when I was in...in that line of work, but I think that...erm... I could probably've coped with it better if I'd been much better at facilitation, but we weren't....it was still a bit chalk 'n talk - not entirely, but still a bit chalk 'n talk....(*Ruth: Mm*). But I've taken so much to office life, you know, nine to five thirty - that I do feel I should've been doing something in that line.

Ruth: Well, it's interesting, isn't it, because you've only really been doing that for the last 3 years, so there's a who...whole great big gap between the age of 25 when you did your PGCE, and.....

D: No, my Cert. Ed.....

Ruth: ...your Cert. Ed., sorry

D: I never did a PGCE.

Ruth...oh sorry, your Cert. Ed. and...erm...you know, the age of 48, when you got your present job, when you were actually actively teaching...erm... first of all teachingsort of things like health and social care and so on - and then teaching teachers. So there's a great swathe of time there - I mean, how, looking back on that, how do you...what do you feel about all of that?

D: It was a big mistake! (*Both laugh.*) I should never've been doing anything like that!

Ruth: Would you consider yourself.....?

D: Uh... (*interrupts*) it's interesting, isn't it, because - because - because you put me on a stage, you know, like that, and I do respond quite well, I could be...I can be the most ..er..sort of uncharismatic..er...presence..er.. in - in a particular gathering or something, but put me in charge of a class and I th...get animated - and I suppose I'm aware of that, so I think ...and I...and I did gain a whole lot of skills - and I was a teacher educator for...for...however many - thirteen years, for a long time, a long time...erm...so I can't - Iit would be surprising if I said that I wasn't really very good at those things, so well, actually, that's ..I was good at ...erm...so - so the teacher education years I don't particularly regret - and also, because it was teaching *adults* (*Ruth: Mm*) and that's far - you know, I found that far easier - far, far easier than..erm... than teaching teenagers, so...so it wasn't entirely - it wasn't entirely a big mistake - but I do think I would've been better doing something else, butit wasn't entirely a mistake, and also.... also, just as I (*with pauses*) think that I..suspect that I'd fall short on things, in terms of the way I was as a manager, the way I was with documentation, and so on - I got quite..I get quite regular glimpses that actually I'm *not*(*Ruth: Mmm*) I'm...I'm far better than I think I am in compared with other people - and it's the same with teaching. Now as a teacher I was actually far more imaginative, and far more innovative, than...than many people, but I wasn't entirely aware of it (*Ruth: Mm*). And also I did think..... I think the variety of it...erm... was...was good for me as well, and my current job *is* an

office job, but there's loads of other things going on as well, so it would be very rare for me to be spending 37 hours a week in my office, there's always a meeting, or training event, or whatever, so...so in a way, in my current job, I've got the best of all (*Ruth: Mm*) worlds, some training, some teaching, some writing, some office work (*Ruth: Mm*) you know, a really good combination.

Ruth: But it's also interesting that...

D: *But*and just another thing - I used to do regular teaching observations - you know, supervised teaching experience, STEs, where I couldn't hear a word of what was going on! But I still wrote really convincing reports - and...what I used to do, as well, is...is wheedle out of people how they'd think it'd gone, and to talk through things - just to get an understanding that I hadn't got from actually doing the observation. Amazing, really! (*Smile in voice.*) You know, I that had credibility whilst...it was ..uh..you know, I'd been utterly unaware of...of the language, so I had to concentrate on all sorts of other things in the classroom. I..I just wonder, in retrospect, how valid that was.

Ruth: Well, I s'pose that's hard to answer, but it seems to me, from what you're saying, that the skills that you'd use to elicit what was going on, which would be things like, probably, more observation of body language (*D: Mm, mm*) or getting people to self-assess, interestingly, are the very things that they suggest you should do as a good assessor..

D: Amazing! (*Both laugh.*) Yes....

Ruth: B...bu...

D: (*Ironically*) Innovation through deafness! Yes.

Ruth: Well, it is interesting that you obviously have had to approach things in different ways, and we haven't really.... we've touched on that a bit, but not very much, and in relation to teaching, *and* assessment, these are not things that you would normally expect somebody who's very deaf to be able to do well, and yet, I think what we're saying is, you *did* them well....

D: No, I think what *I'm* saying is...erm...I'm saying is that I did them, and I did them convincingly, but who knows what - actually, in retrospect, who knows what ...erm.....difficulties I...I...erm...caused, and what things I missed that then sort of got consolidated into poor practice - what I think I'm saying is, I could do something convincingly - apparently convincingly - but it's back to this fog again (*Ruth: Hmm*) what is...you know, what is good and..what (*Ruth: Not knowing....*) isn't.

Ruth: That *is* very interesting....

D: It is....

Ruth: Because that seems to be a *really* big theme that goes through the whole of the deafness experience (*David: Yes, yes*) that you've had, which is....

D: It's ..erm...fog, which is a visual thing, and woolliness, which is...er.... a tactile thing, touch thing (*Ruth: Mm*) - I can't really think of anything in, sort of, otic, aural sort of terms (*Ruth: Mm*) I s'pose deafness, really...

Ruth: Deafness, yeah...but it's...

D: And my current job - and my current job - you know, dispensing information and advice...and people can write to me and I write back, and that - and it's actually partly...it's actually not an exaggeration to say fraudulent...it's not an exaggeration to say that I feel a bit of a fraud sometimes - I'm dispensing advice on assessment, on this and that, you know - quite...quite convincingly...erm...my...erm...one of my pals up North..erm..asked...asked - she was going to a meeting, so sh...so she asked me some advice - for some advice - and it's about ...erm, what was it about? It was about (*long pause*) two LEAs doing observation of teaching and learning swapping over...so...so some observation in...in one...in one authority, and another team going to the other authority, and it was a sort of pre-meeting for this, and she asked my advice, and I just mind-mapped some points and made a list of about twelve points, and sent them to her, and she forwarded them on to her...her partner in this other authority - and they were delighted with them! (*Ruth: Mm*). You know, they said "Oh, I could have spent hours on that, and I wouldn't have got...it wouldn't have been nearly so...erm...clear or ..." and I'm going...I'm going "You fraud!" to myself - I thought, all I did was spend 10 or 15 minutes making a list of points and typing them up and sending them off - and...and...and that's how I *feel*, and yet somebody else felt that that was really valuable. (*Ruth: Mm*) And it was the same thing with...with the person who's looking after the guidance and advice for the Centre for Excellence and Leadership. She came to see me, and I just mind-mapped all these points for her, and she went away thrilled - and was thinking "Well (*laughs*) what's so hard about that?" And yet - is it me being...erm... a fraud, or is it me being very quick on things, and clear-thinking, and...and so on? And is it a matter of confidence? And I ...I've never entirely un...erm...unravalled that, and it's the same with this job...erm...in LL, for which I'm getting paid many thousands more than I get at the moment, and I'm just thinking "That's a bit fraudulent" - they're probably thinking "Well, we'd better have him for political reasons" you know, like "For equal opps reasons we better have him, it would look terrible if we didn't, he'll be able to do a sort of job for us...", you know (*Ruth: Mm*) rather than saying ...and then...when...when they say - when EE says "Oh, we're so looking forward to you coming" it's me sort of thinking "Well, they'd have to say that, really." Why can't I accept? (*Ruth: Mm*). You know, that...that I...I'm good at some things, which I can't really?

Ruth: It seems to be about not accepting that you can be genuinely valued for what you're capable of....

D: Yes, because I just think I'm going to get found out...(long pause)

Ruth: It's very interesting....

D: It is, isn't it? I'm going to get found out...(very long pause). Someone will question me, and they'll find vast great gaps in my knowledge. (*Humour in voice.*)

Ruth: But what you're really touching on, in a way, is something which isn't only about deafness, it's about that whole thing about how do we...erm...how do we relate our own experience to sort of other markers, you know, what *is* the difference between reality and my perspective on it?

D: Absolutely! But...but the deafness thing is not *separate* from that, (*Ruth: No*) it's absolutely...it's absolutely...er...bound up with it. Inextricably, in...in my view, and in my case, on the basis of my experience. And I...I bet, if you spoke to my younger brother, he'd just...he'd say similar things. I...I bet he would. I bet he'd say yes, I think - it's.....I think what I'm saying is

much of my life is about, has been about winging it (*Ruth: Mm*) actually. (*Pause*). And yet, there's this sort of burning sense that I've been disadvantaged, as well, and that I sort of

Ruth: That's interesting, that idea of winging it. Do you want to say a bit more about that - I mean, how does that *feel* ...?

D: (*Laughing*) What, *really*?

Ruth: No...if you look back on something and say "I feel I've been winging it" it sort of...it makes it sound as if *none* of it's been genuine, that (*D: Yes*) you've just been sort of playing it by ear, if we can give it...an aural expression (*D: Yes, yes*) as you've gone along...erm...but how...how is that...how...I'm interested to know (*D: Yes*) how anyone's life could be different from that? Or how you feel that your own life could have been different from winging it?

D: (*Long pause.*) Well...(pause)...I think I probably - it would've...if I'd been able to hear it would've probably given me the ability to know what's important and what isn't - for example, in the...in the 90s, what was tremendously important in ..in the FE Colleges was recruiting to targets and retaining and achievement, those three things, and ...erm...understanding the funding formula, all that guided learning hours and things like that, but I felt that I was always in a fog about...about that, and then at management briefings, I missed key points, you know (*Ruth: Mm*) and yet, in retrospect, maybe that was true, or maybe nobody really understood it, not even the, sort of, senior managers (*Ruth: Mmm*) and that therefore there was a general fog. But I can't really work out (*Ruth: No*) where *my* fog began and ended, really...

Ruth: But did you use...you probably used other methods to fill in what you felt you'd missed?

D: Well, I *should* have done, you know, I should've gone to gone to the funding doc(SIDE 1 ENDS)

SIDE 2

Ruth commentary after changeover...

Ruth: D has just wondered a few minutes ago whether it would be useful to do a timeline, but that's something we might come back to...in a bit. Erm... actually, what we were talking about on the other side - 'cos it's weird how you get distracted by a pause - was about that feeling of winging it and being in a fog and not really knowing whether you...erm...what...what you've achieved is real or whether you're a fraud and are about to be found out, which I think very interesting. But you might want to talk about something else, now! (*Laughs. Then longish pause.*) Actually, we haven't - one of the things we haven't, I suppose, in a way - well, we *have* explored in a way, is looking at *why* you've done various things, and I certainly know *why* you went into teaching..erm...because you said that it was...sounded like quite a good thing to do, and the holidays were good, and that you weren't really thinking career terms then, or you weren't thinking progression and ambition...erm...so you *went* into teaching, but you didn't just stay in your first job, so somewhere along the line, there must have come this feeling of wanting to move on from there.....(*questioningly*).

D: Well....(*pause*) up to when I was 25 in ..erm..in keeping with the spirit of the times, amongst a certain tranche of the population, where...I think, once you got your degree, that was, you know, the pinnacle of achievement (*Ruth: Mm*), you know then...then nothing else particularly mattered after that, and I think I was quite drawn into that, I was quite influenced (*Ruth: Mm*) by that, but

after sort of drifting - which is what I did for the next 3 or 4 years - not very long compared with some people - I did do a Cert. Ed. That was a wonderful year, I really enjoyed that, and then I got my job at..erm, in FF, and in a way, that again, that was a challenge, 'cos I had loads of friends in the West Midlands, why, suddenly, I suddenly decided to go to the South East to...to..er...an obscure technical college on...in, sort of, North East X (*Ruth: Mm*) ..is...is - I think it was the first job that was offered, and...and...but, you know, why did I apply there, for example? Anyway, (*speaks faster*) I got that job and..erm, I..and one of the disadvantages of that job was it was such a nice job, (*Ruth: Mm*) it was actually such a nice job...ec..eccentrically, it was a sort of eccentric job, as well, that, and I was by myself, living in a nice part of the country, on the coast, and all of those sort of things, and that tends to *blunt* your ambition, you know, (*Ruth: Mm*) 'cos you think "Oh, this is so nice" and you don't realise, I think, that after a while it's not enough - it's not enough at all. So I did begin to become quite career orientated, and then just before I was 30, a.....you know, well, I...I started living with somebody, which I hadn't done, and then I watched other people getting on, and... I...I suppose I got ambition. I did get a promotion at FF, although again, I didn't really interview very well, and it was quite....erm....it was quite interesting how I got that job, because I think...I think...er.. I think GG was quite influential, because he said "Look at this...er..look at D's service to the college, I mean, I think that was quite influential, so (*speaks faster*) then I got that job, and then after that I saw someone else - a colleague - getting on. She was very, very conscientious and hardworking - I felt - that made me very restless, and I didn't get a senior lectureship at the college, and there was one or two other things that happened, so I was applying elsewhere, and I remember that..er...my wife and I were really keen to move, you know, because I think we were thinking "Oh, you know, this is just not going to satisfy us, it's not going to be, it's not going to...well, it's not going to satisfy me, and therefore it won't satisfy us as a family, so then I did get a senior lectureship at H&A College, which was another wonderful opportunity that went a bit...erm...sour....in a way - and then..but...before that, I got my MA in Curriculum Studies, and I went at that with an absolute zeal, as a means, as I saw it, of getting out. I got a promotion out of it, and it - but it was...a way of erm...it was a way of....seeking to move up, so....so - I don't think I was naïve enough to think that it would automatically mean that, but I..I think I was thinking that it...it would help, and it did, it did, it did - it enabled me to move...to move forward. And the same with the MBA, as well - I saw that as a way of rounding off my qualifications and moving forward - although it's not what you've got in terms of qualifications, it's what you do and what you are in a job that's important.

Ruth: So you went to H&A and that was a progression... (*D: (Definitely) Oh yes*)...and then you..... moved on from there, and another progression to C.....

D: Yes. Erm, I suppose it *was* a progression, because I came off the Silver Book, and it was..it was...it was more money, but it was more - actually, it was more a sort of - in a way - sideways move. When I went up to JJ, the Principal at JJ, he looked at that on my application form and he said "Was this a promotion?" and I said "Yes", and I felt it was (*Ruth: Mm*), but actually, it was senior lecturers becoming programme managers, (*Ruth: Mm*) and...with a slight increase. (*Ruth: Mm.*) I think it was around about the ..XX.... the end of my XX College time, and...and so on, that my confidence was low, I was feeling more fraudulent than usual - for...for less reason, really. And mentally fragile...not just for work reasons, either, that...that...erm..that I was thinking I hadn't got my just desserts for the effort I've put in, in career terms.

Ruth: So tell me about...erm... that bit - about sort of XX College and leaving it, which I know wasn't a very happy time for you.....(*Longish pause*).

D: Well, I think the ye... year before...when I was - my services were dispensed with, I lost..erm....I wasn't leading my programme area any more, because my heart wasn't in it. Everybody was so...poorly paid and miserable, and I was..and it was the poor programme managers who were bear.....was bearing the brunt of all of that, and the college was quids in, it was making loads of...loads of money. (*Longish pause.*) So after all that effort, that last year, I was, sort of, starting at a particular time and going at a particular time, which was unheard of! (*Ruth: Mmm*) Not staying at half past five, to.. for a meeting up till quarter past six, which is an absolute nonsense, really, considering all the marking, (*Ruth: Mm*) all the evening duties, and so on. So I think I was just..I was just finished with all of that, and I was just extraordinarily fortunate to get a job before...just before I was made redundant. (*Pause.*) And a job where I was valued from the beginning, and one in which I have really, really prospered.

Ruth: So if you were to compare the two jobs, the one at XX College and the one that you're in now, what would be the main differences in the way that you feel about them, do you think, and the way you've been treated?

D: (*Long pause.*) Well, this job, I suppose, got my career back on track (*Ruth: Mm*) really - and I came to hate the other one (*Ruth: Mm*), whereas - it's unusual in your working life. When I first started at...at FF Tech, there's things I would have done different - and I would have been much more sensible about loads of things, and...and probably...and I worked extremely hard a lot of the time, but I think there's loads of things I would have been more sensible about, with this current experience. But actually I was very happy there in the early years, but I didn't really realise it.

Ruth: Where?

D: Well, I just took it for granted. (*Ruth: Where? Sorry.*) Well, I don't know...I don't know. Whereas in this current job, I was happy from the first day I started, and hopefully I'll be happy the day that I leave. And I've never been so...and I've been really aware of that (*Ruth: Mm*), you know, it's rare that you're in a job and you think "This is absolutely excellent" - it's only...for me, it's only when you compare particular times of your life with other times where you think "That was a happy time", "That was a miserable time."

Ruth: When you look back, you mean (*D: Yeah*) whereas this....

D: Now, whereas I'm thinking, I'll be lucky if I'm ever happier in a job. (*Pause.*)

Ruth: Do you think part of that might be because you'd had such a *bad* experience in the previous job?

D: Possibly. Possibly. But the LL is a benign environment to live in (*Ruth: mm*). It's got it's quirks and foibles, and...all of that, but it's...it's not an oppressive environment...it's a supportive environment, but...where people are encouraged to do things.

Ruth: So given that that's the situation, though, you've just decided to move on from there, so there must have been reasons for that. (*D: Yes.*) Would you like to say a bit about them?

D: Well, I think...I think the main thing is that, wonderful as it is, the LL is...erm...it was a mean payer (*Ruth laughs*). So there's loads of people there..erm..who were very capable who should really have been paid more. And (*longish pause*) I felt, rightly or wrongly, that I was one of them!

(*Both chuckle.*) So...that's...that's probably the only reason. If they'd just been a little bit more generous. (*Ruth. Hmm!*) But then they probably want people to move on.

Ruth: Perhaps it's a deliberate thing?

D: Yes.

Ruth: One of the things that I sort of feel that we've not...and this is a bit unfair, because I know from other sources, that sometimes..there have been times when you felt very resentful of XX College - and also, to some degree, of the fact that people were p'raps being undervalued in your previous job in terms of pay, so...tho..those..

D: Previous job? XX College job?

Ruth: No, this job. (*D: This job.*) This job as well, so (*D: Laughs*) there's sometimes resentment there, or I felt that there have been *times* when you've felt resentful about the College itself and also about being undervalued pay-wise at LL.

D: I never felt undervalued pay-wise at XX College (*Ruth: No*).... 'cos we were...but I always felt...I *always* felt undervalued, and I don't think I was alone in that. We were *never* good enough. We were *never* good enough - it was a pernicious, oppressive environment (*Ruth: Mm*) and..er...and, you know, I really didn't like it. To put in all that effort for all those years in all those difficult circumstances, managing a group of people who were terminally demoralised (*Ruth: Mm*)....I just didn't have any leadership left in me - and also, er...you know...it could...it...er...I felt that it was -not de-skilling me - but it was...it was sucking me dry, you know (*Ruth: Mm*), that I didn't have any qualities - and I felt, actually, in a lot of ways, they were wasted years, that I actually had quite a lot to...to offer and would have had...erm...good things to offer in different circumstances (*Ruth: Mm*). And I think, you know, that's wrong - it's wrong that you should, you know, you should feel that. And I don't think...erm..I've - I don't think I feel a smidgin of resentment towards the LL (*Ruth: Mm*)...erm...except, possibly, on the pay issue. And now that's sort of gone right out of the window 'cos I'm moving on (*Ruth: Mm*), really. It's just...it wasn't just the pay, it was also the inequity - that some people were...were traditionally getting more pay, and that it was...er...there was inflexibility in...in the pay reviews - unsurprisingly, you know, either you let one or two people be re-graded and piss everybody else off, or you upgrade everybody (*Ruth: Mm*) so...so LL's never going to...never going to concede a massive pay-rise to 30 people.

Ruth: One of the things...erm..that you mentioned - oh, I've forgotten what it was now - oh never mind, I'll come back to it - it was something that you mentioned earlier that I wanted to...to bring up again - but it's gone. (*Pause.*) Would you *like* to give me - you were going to do a timeline, you said before, would you like to...have a go at that? Because we've now reached the point where you've.... moved.... jobs in our - so in other words...

D: OK...

Ruth:we've reached the present in our...

D: I'll try...I'll try and sort of summarise....

Ruth: OK

D:'cos there are a number of themes that have....that we've gone through, so...it's...it's contradictory to talk in terms of "I don't think my skills have been valued" and sometimes "I don't think...erm...I don't think I've been paid enough by the LL" whilst at the same time, saying that I feel I've been a fraud for.....

Ruth: Uh uh uh uh uh

D: most of my life' cos there *are* contradictions....

Ruth:yes, there *are* contradictions...

D: ...that's part of it, you know, the contradictions, but...when I was..erm..a child, I never...had no idea how deaf I was, or if (*Ruth: Mm*) deafness was the problem, and I didn't seem to have any problems in primary school - I passed the 11+ and..er..indeed I did well at school (*Ruth: Mm*), I was one of the stars in the classroom - not just in the schoolroom but also good at sport, as well (*Ruth: Mm*), so there was no sort of deafness issues - I might have been in a fog, but I didn't know I was (*Ruth: Mm*) - also, with quite a few activities, there did seem to actually be individualised learning (*Ruth: Mm*), you know, which is interesting, which suited me (*Ruth: Mm*) - book learning.....doing exercises, and all of that sort of thing. Secondary school - my older brother was there already, there were tremendous difficulties with him - I was labelled because of him. They ignored all the test results and so on, and put me in the B stream (*Ruth: Mm*)..erm...because he was languishing in the D stream and playing truant, and being generally difficult, and I...I...I galvanised the B stream for the year that I was in it - I got them all working doubly hard by my...by my own sort of....sort of zealous efforts, and they put me in the A stream, and then I came top in the A stream, until they twigged and they all started working harder, and I sank....sank to about 8th or 9th overall out of about 24, so...so...but deafness did become an issue, particularly with things like French, and things like bullying and so on, you know, tho..the episodes that I've talked about, and...and...erm..and there...I felt very apologetic for the deficiencies, and very uncertain and lacking in confidence, and...and feeling that I had to push myself harder than everybody else, and at university I was far, far more aware that I was deaf, but it was always my problem...there...there was no sense of anybody making...lifting a finger to do anything about (*Ruth: Mm*) it, so I did French, for example, as one of my minor subjects, which I would have loved if only I could bloody hear...hear what was going on. And also I remember one...erm... of our lecturers - R, his name was, he fell ill, so he *taped* a lecture - he used to sell Socialist Worker in the (*Ruth laughs*) centre of NN as well, he was quite interesting - and he *taped* it, and it was just.... impenetrable (*Ruth: Mm*), but there was never any talk of transcripts (*Ruth: Mm*) or someth...or anything like that, so I was probably more in a fog at university than...er...than ever before - and I think that probably gave me a lack of confidence in personal relationships as well - and then....and then after the sort of social work and PhD episodes, there was teaching, and...er... and I think that looking back at that...erm...I wasn't as...I - there were always control issues, probably, because I wasn't - because I didn't hear very well, and there...there were issues to do with that, and also, you know, it was different generation, you didn't...didn't include people who were deaf, it was a matter of amusement and...

Ruth: Control issues?

D: Well...I...I'm...some...sometimes..erm.. the things I planned to do in a classroom were not...erm...didn't take place because I was too busy trying to control classes (*Ruth: Mm*) and so on, which....er..which I found difficult sometimes, which might not have been an issue (*pauses. Ruth: Mm*) if I'd been (*Ruth: Yeah*) hearing. (*Long pause.*) And then I did become more ambitious

in my early 30s and so I did the MA, and I got..erm...er...then I got career advantage from all of...all of that, and at A and W I was full of beans and full of (*Ruth: Mm*) energy - and that's why I got the job at XX so...easily, but it's sort of...it's sort of after that that I...so I went from apology, you know, an apologetic approach to now, where I'm far, far more aware of the EO agenda, but I also felt that it's been...erm...that I've been disadvantaged in a far more *subtle* and pernicious way that...that...that the way I am has prevented me from getting a promotion to a *senior* position, (*Ruth: Mm*)...erm...because people haven't wanted to take the chance, or..erm.. they've..erm...there's something a little bit odd about me - not *odd*, but, you know, difficult about me, you know, "can someone who's deaf manage?". Then in the 90s, of course, there was the mental fragility as well, which was a tremendous...erm... challenge, you know, like I was thinking...I began to think "Well, am I...erm...cut out for the rigours and mental challenges of a senior position - actually, I now know that it's much easier up that end (*Ruth: Mm*), in my view it is because...because it's when you're a middle manager (*Ruth: Mm*) that the biggest challenges arise. Gonna make no difference to *my* executive manager - me going or staying - my executive director, but it'll make a lot of difference to the...to the manager. (*Ruth: Sure*) She's the one who's got to cope with it (*Ruth: Mm*). So *now* I'm much, much more assertive, and I just feel more - not angry - but more aware of..of the deficiencies in my education, and in my...in my ability to function in the work environment. I used to think - I used to take responsibility for not being able to understand people on the telephone (*Ruth: Mm*), you know, that it's *my* fault, you know, *I'm* being stupid, *I'm* embarrassing myself and other people on the telephone (*Ruth: Mm*) - well why should....why on *earth* should I have that attitude? (*Ruth: Mm*) And why should people think that because I can't answer the telephone I can't do a decent job, for example? Or because I can't hear in a meeting, I can't do a decent job? So there's...it's those sorts of subtleties - why aren't people adapting the way *they* are far, far more consistently. (*Pauses.*)

Ruth: So p'raps part of that is - when I talked about resentment before...

D: Yes...yes....

Ruth:...p'raps part of it is a resentment that actually, you haven't really got your just desserts for what you are...

D: That's...that's...

Ruth: ...capable of doing...

D: I *do* feel that. (*Ruth: Yes*). I *do* feel that. I do feel...I do feel that despite being deaf...erm...I am ..erm.. more *knowledgeable* than most people, (*Ruth: Mm*) and better *qualified* than most people, and...erm... more *energetic* than most people - or *have* been more energetic - maybe not so much now. More *innovative* than most people, so why haven't the rewards been mine? (*Ruth: Mm*) And I thi...I do think that's to an extent because I haven't felt enou...enough confidence (*Ruth: Mm*), but also that I've been...(pauses),,,subliminally disadvantaged (*Ruth: Mm*) by the status quo (*Ruth: Mm*). You know, for example, ..erm...my friend at South P...he..he doesn't have any concept of what it would be like to have a deaf person on his (*Ruth: Mm*) senior management team. He's not...

Ruth: Say a bit...say a bit...

D:(unintelligible) of the idea.

Ruth: ...say a bit more about that. When you say he'd have no idea, in what sense would he have no idea....about it?

D: (*slightly draws in breath*) He... if...if someone with cerebral palsy comes along to an interview for a senior management position.....people would be looking for obstacles (*Ruth: Mm*), not positives (*Ruth: Sure*). That's what I'm thinking. If someone who's blind comes in for interview, it's almost as though you get *further* scrutiny (*Ruth: Mm*) and in a...in a way...erm...you *should* have, but in another way, they would...you should be saying "Well, we need...we need to look at this category of person more, and if this person is capable of doing a good job - a different job, (*Ruth: Mm*) but a good job - then we should be positively (*Ruth: Mm*) taking this into account, and making opportunity.

Ruth: When we did the preparation interview, I introduced the word "diversity" and you told me off, actually, in the recording, you said that *I'd* introduced it and not you, but I'm introducing it again now because I think that's what....that's one word that would

D: Yes. Yes. Yes.

Ruth: ...encapsulate some of those things.

D: The awareness of the importance of diversity (*Ruth: Mm*) and being active in encouraging diversity. (*Ruth: Mm.*)

Ruth: Erm...erm...so the benefits of diversity to an employer might be innovation, flexibility...

D: Exactly! Exactly!

Ruth: ...those sorts of things.

D:and awareness, as well. That's why...that's why, serendipitously, I've been good for the LL, because it's the LL, quite by accident, I'm *convinced*, quite by accident, saying "Hey, we've got, you know, we've got a deaf person working for us, (*Ruth: Mm*) doing a really good job, you know, it's really good. To a lesser degree, for N, as well. You know, "Here's...here's this person we've got - you have to use Typetalk (*Ruth: Mm*) to speak with him. You'll....you'll find it quite quirky, but hey! Look! We're...we're a diver..., you know, we're a diverse employer. We're aware." And yet I don't think - I don't even think in PP and the LL, they've *quite* got it. PP probably more so, I don't know, I'll wait and see (*Ruth: Mm*), but certainly the LL...erm...they haven't got it - it's just by - it's luck. (*Ruth: Mm.*) It's luck. They're lucky to have had me. (*Tiny laugh.*)

Ruth: Well, that's...

D: ...from that point of view.

Ruth: (Laughs.) I was going to say, you touched before on the contradiction, and this is where it's interesting, because at the same time as we're saying that you feel you haven't got your just desserts, at the same time as that, you still feel like a fraud.

D: Exactly! (*Ruth: Laughs.*) Exactly! They're lucky to have got such a convincing fraud as me! (*Smiling. Both laugh.*) They're lucky to have such a successful winger. (*Both laugh.*)

Ruth: (*Still laughing.*) I don't know what else to say really!

D: It is interesting - you know, it's very, very interesting that, very interesting.

Ruth: I think maybe some of it's to do with that disjunction that there is between...erm...the kind of way that world views things like status and power and value, and what we all feel about ourselves inside, which is "Hey! I'm not like that!" So it's almost like spin and reality, or...if that's the right way - it's the way we feel about ourselves - like when you read all these jobs, and they say "We want this proactive..."

D: Yes. Yes.

Ruth:and they give this fantastic (*D: Yes*) description of the person they want (*D: Yes.*) and so you think "Bloody hell! I could never be....."

D: Yes, yes, exactly!

Ruth: ...any of those. And yet the person who does this

D: And you see other people in those jobs, and you think "That's not how I'd describe that person." (*Ruth: Yes.*) Say my executive director - she's obviously very competent and this and that, but dynamic? Innovative? I don't think so (*Ruth: Mm*). Certainly not more than me (*with mock petulance.*)

Ruth: (*Laughs.*) Well, I'm just wondering if we ought to - we've gone over...over...our hour just a little - actually, I don't know if we have, we probably haven't - I just wondered if there were other things that you felt you wanted say about...the timeline was quite interesting to do, 'cos - I suppose that's, sort of like, your view from this point, this vantage point in time, looking back over the past - be very interesting in 10 years' time to do the same thing, what you feel the shape of your life has been, career-wise.

D: Well, I think one thing that I feel is that I've felt in the past that being in edu - in the education sector, not at FF Tech, because the...you know, the EO Agenda wasn't, you know, very well developed, or even at H&A but XX College in the 90s, one of the feelings that I felt was that.... I was being *well-treated* (*Ruth: Mm*), you know, my deafness was being *well-treated*, taking into account - amidst all those other things...erm...and - and at the L, I felt that I'd been well-treated, but in retrospect, particularly XX College, I felt...I felt...no, there was a lot of *lip-service* being paid, because...and...and that I didn't help. It's like *some* disabled people say "I don't - I wanna get to where I've got to on *merit* (*Ruth: Mm*), not on - because I'm deaf. Or...or I want to be Chief Constable on merit, not because I'm black, you *know* (*Ruth: Mm*), like the Kent Chief Constable, and I..and I think *I* would say, now, no, I can't say that I want to be where I am on merit, or I *do* want to be where I am on merit, but I just want the rec....there to be recognition that *I've* got to...erm...about things in a very different way (*Ruth: Mm*), and that what is...people must recognise that a good job is...is...a many-splendoured thing (*Ruth: Mm*), it can be done in very, very many different ways. It's like..erm..I *never* phone up. Q and S are on the telephone all the time, in the team. S phoned me up twice last night, and I...it wasn't that I was happening to be watching the football, (*Ruth: Mm*) or The Bill or whatever, and didn't want to speak to her, it was also, I didn't want to speak to her because every fourth word - I was tired, I'd (*Ruth: Mm*) been up since half past six (*Ruth: Mm*) I didn't *want* to communicate with people by telephone (*Ruth: Mm*), but does that mean I'm going to do a lesser job? No! I don't think so, I think there's too much

communication (*Ruth: Mm*) like... or you can do it as effectively (*Ruth: Mm*) in different ways...erm... (*pauses*). But now in retrospect, I don't think that XX College treated me very well, they didn't take into ac...things into account, didn't support me - only reactively (*Ruth: Mm*). Same with the LL.

Ruth: Well, from what you've said before, it's all been reactive....

D: B...b...benign. Benign.

Ruth: Benign but reactive...

D: ...but well, in a sense, not enough. But I don't think it's enough for people with disabilities, like me - B.....J.....(*his brothers*) probably wouldn't - J would recognise it, but...but..I, you know...erm, "don't promote me because I'm *deaf*" might be the...or ...or "I don't recognise myself as having a disability", some people would say, and I don't think that's fair, I don't think that's right, I think that's..erm..I think that's...erm...misguided (*Ruth: Mm*), I think you've got to recognise that you can't function in the same way. You might not call it a disability, but you can't function in the same way, and *therefore* ...but you've still to be given the same opportunities (*Ruth: Mm*).

Ruth: But some of that not recognising you've got a disability, some of that grows out of that whole thing about...erm...I mean there is that story, isn't there? about the place in Martha's Vineyard, where...where so *many* people were deaf, hereditary deafness, that in fact signing and language both became things that...everyone did, whether they were hearing or not (*D: Mm, mm*) because the proportion of deaf people in the community was so much (*D: Mm*) higher, and therefore, the argument then is, well...um..you know, actually... deafness does - or can, even profound deafness can have it's own language and so on, so it's a minority culture rather than a disabled culture. It's different, so it's....that's where some of that comes from, it's not a disability, it's different.

D: Yes, I understand...I understand that, but...erm....erm....you know...erm...British Sign Language being a separate language and a separate Deaf Community. Yes, that's.....that's OK, but...erm...but they've still got to - everybody's still got to operate in the mainstream - Do....(*a French colleague*) (*Ruth: Right*)...erm...Do can't....erm... just speak French at work (*Ruth: Mm*), or she'd never have got the job (*Ruth: Mm*), no matter what her other skills are...

Ruth: And it's interesting that sometimes in guidance, when we're putting down disabilities, we might put an inability to speak English, even if somebody has other languages, (*D: Mm*) as a potential disability (*D: Mm*), so it's a sort of weird understanding of disability, but what we're saying, then, is "in the context of the English-speaking community..."

D: Yes

Ruth:...that's a minority (*D: Yes*), and it's going to be more difficult to function. (*Pause*) but it is that notion of there being a mainstream society and the other society, whereas I s'pose what I'm saying is that the Deaf Community might argue on the basis of the Martha's Vineyard thing, that if we all learnt to speak and sign as a matter of course, but then, how far do you take that? Because...

D: And also, yeah, languages...

Ruth:...languages, yes, exactly, yes, yes, that's quite difficult

D: I mean I s'pose what I'm saying is there's a lingua franca, but ...I just...I hope you've got the themes...I mean it...it depends on my mood whether I'm resentful or angry or (*Ruth: I know*) sad about it....

Ruth: Of course

D:...it's not...it's not fixed. You get me onto XX College, and I can be absolutely...and VV (*a local HET*), as well, I can be absolutely furious.

Ruth: Mmm (*sympathetically*). I *have* got the main themes, I think. Erm...I'm *more* interested in whether you feel you've told your story, because the story...is...I mean, you've told an extracted story, which is all you can do in an hour, anyway, but it's about whether you feel you've said the things that you want to say about your career and your work and so on. 'Cos we could actually do...it...it..would be interesting to - it wasn't part of the original research , but it would be quite interesting to do it again in a different time and a different place, and what you chose to say *then* actually might be quite different. (*Long pause*) but for today, do you feel that you've said what you want to say? (*Pause*).

D: Yes. P'raps one final thing, and that is...erm...that is....erm....as a backdrop to all of this...er...I have always felt myself to have been a very lucky person (*Ruth: Mm*), interestingly enough, you know, so...er...yes. Sort of lucky in my...er...in my life, in my friendships, my relationships, and..you know, in everything, really...my health, and..er.. (*Ruth: Mm*) very lucky, so I think that's got to be a major underlying theme (*Ruth: Mm*).

Ruth: You say you've *always* felt that? Do you think you've *always* felt that?

D; I think that theme came up when I was in...when I was going to counselling in the mid-90s. I remember..erm...CD (*his counsellor*) wincing when I said that, you know, given.....given all the things that were happening to me at that particular time.

Ruth: Why did he wince?

D: Well....it was what ...I was explaining seemed so dire and horrible to him that...for me then to say "Well, I feel very lucky" (*laughs*) about things (*Ruth: Mm*) seemed to him perverse (*Ruth: Mm*), but I *do* feel that.

Ruth: I mean, one of the things we *didn't* talk about....erm...was the fact that one of the first things that you said to me when I knew you was about your mental fragility, which I think...is interesting. (*Pause.*)

D: Yes - on *that* one...on that one...erm...I'd have...an...an...a history of mental breakdown, you know, in 7-year cycles (*both laugh a little*) - coming up for one now...erm...yes.....

Ruth: You're well overdue...

D: I have a history of...erm...mental breakdown....erm (*thinking*) ..one....two...(long pause)...three really - three episodes, three episodes - but even in that - even taking that into account - and each time I think I probably got a bit stronger - but even taking that into account, *actually*, I think I'm...more mentally tough and resilient than most people, (*Ruth: Mm*) given the

challenges I've set myself, so...so...so there's loads of people who were absolutely sort of...erm...*destroyed* by...by XX College (*Ruth: Mm*), but actually, ultimately I wasn't (*Ruth: No*), I did survive it.

Ruth: You've come out and...

D: Yes.

Ruth:strong and...

D: and experience - and also experience is another good thing to.... you know, experiencing survival, and coming out of it is...erm... makes you stronger, so...so even in terms of mental fragility, I think - although *I* might think that, I think I underestimate my... (*Ruth: Mm*) powers in that area - because I think that was a...I think my problem with a..a..a.. some sort of really senior post - would I be up to the pressure? but actually...in my view, there's less pressure (*Ruth: Mm*). (*Pause.*)

Ruth: Do you think your "episodes" as you called them have (*laughs*) - do they...do they *have* any relationship with your deafness, do you think? or it might be very difficult to disentangle (*D: Mm*) them..

D: No, I don't think so.

Ruth: Or pressure that you might feel you put yourself under?

D: Mm, no, I don't think so. I don't think you could tease out that strand, really.

Ruth: Well, I was just interested to know whether *you* felt that, but if you *don't*, then that's....(*Very long pause.*) What do you think precipitated those episodes?

D: Oh...I'm not sure we can go there!

Ruth: OK, that's fine. That's your prerogative. (*Pause with general light laughter.*) Do you want to - call it a day now, 'cos it's nearly lunchtime? (*Laughing.*) OK, we're finishing now, it's.....

D: ...suspect notes, for the benefit of the tape...

Ruth: 12.50. (*Laughter*). And also 'cos we're booked in for a nice nosh in about three quarters of an...nearly an hour. Over.

TAPE FINISHES.

Appendix 2: Interview 2 Summary

Sunday 7 March 2004.

D's overall responses to the transcript:

- Amusement
- Sharing
- Covered the main themes
- Some things missed out (said they were "to be expected" as reflection changes things)

R asked about hesitations and non-lexical utterances (re: possibility of these making interviewee appear less fluent/stupid (Bell).)

D: It's making me intent on avoiding ums and ers in this session, because it must be tedious transcribing them.... I am anxious to be helpful and to please, but also, it's good training to try and speak without ums and ers, so perhaps I might learn something from it as well. But I wasn't bothered in the slightest.....

D:it's not an issue for me in the transcript..... except that I feel I should have done better, because I do try and avoid ums and ers in....daily speech..... in general, my feeling is that ums and ers don't detract from the *content* of what I'm saying, but they may detract from the effectiveness of it.

What about Ruth's "shaping" of things? Some "drift" from things that were germane to D and might have had relevance to R due to relationship/reading, but this was "quite rare".

D: What also struck me about the transcript was that it was...it...it was...it did have an overall general coherence to it, and a general articulateness in spite of the ums and ers.....there was a thread to it....a unity to it.

(Ruth: And that was in terms of the content? R. D: Yes)

D: I'm *always* thinking...how can that be done better? And I think I've developed that reflectiveness far more...in comparison with other people....just as an example, I do feel that W.....was not reflective at all, I used to sit in a car being driven by her and she'd make same errors over and over again, because she didn't ever think things through sufficiently. Whether that's connected with being deaf is entirely another question - I'm not sure it is.....

R:it does link in with some of your earlier themes.....you mention that...you have always dotted every i and crossed every t, and it may connected with that theme, and that may or not have been connected to deafness - probably not *only* to deafness, but could be linked to it

We discussed themes that D felt he'd missed (recorded in the field notebook). On the degree of pretence involved in deafness, he had no more to say except...

D: ...perhaps I'm choosing to pretend less in my professional life than before, because I, in a way, made a conscious decision to include myself more, and therefore I don't have to pretend..... I'm not prepared to put up with pretending any more. Although I suppose it still does go on.

Ruth mentions another theme - ways in which D can use his deafness to advantage:

D: Yes. I think, reflecting on that, the only use I have for it is to carve a little niche for myself in the sense that people will remember me because I go and speak opposite - go and stand opposite people to hear them, I tell people to remove their hands from their mouths, I do all of those sort of things - and those things etch themselves quite indelibly in people's memories....as someone might wear a funny red bandanna....that's the use aspect of it..... I've become aware that that's how people can remember me.

I.e. D does this not to gain particular advantage, but just to be able to hear. The USP is a side effect that can be used.

D;and maybe there's an element of (*pause*) sympathy there that I'm getting, you know, the poor bastard can't hear very well, so..so better make an extra effort, and he's struggling to do a job in difficult circumstances...or, he's doing a good job in difficult circumstances, so perhaps there's an element of that...

D then discounts that because there are other means of communication that are as important, e.g. email, which have reduced his disadvantage - "I'm not as disadvantaged as I was". And "nobody ever telephones me now." Few people even use Typetalk - he just uses it to keep his hand in.

D: But interestingly, I...I think that means that I don't have all this rubbishy surfeit of communication - you know, 'I'll be there in minutes' on a mobile telephone or conversations that don't really need to take place. If I...I've got to do something for Tuesday, but I can email the administrators this afternoon, rather than have some sort of frenzied telephone call in between inputs at an event, trying to explain what I want. So I think it helps me. It actually helps me - it protects me from all that rubbish that other people seem to have to put up with. Maybe they don't regard it as rubbish.

R: ... most people are drowning in information nowadays, and I think what you're saying is that maybe this gives you more control over...(D: *Yes, Yes*). 'Cos I think it's a control issue in terms of communication that's important to you...

D: That's true. Control is ...is true for me. But it's not *more* true for me than for other people - I think everybody wants to control. What I've discovered..erm..most recently is that I have as much *right* to control as everybody else. So that why should I have to suffer the disadvantage of a telephone conversation, or a conversation in a crowded room - why should I have to suffer that *loss* of control, that humiliation, that sort of perspiration, that, you know, when you can't hear and you're out of your depth, why should I have to put up with that? And that's quite a nice discovery, and my younger brother, J, I don't think has made that discovery yet.....because he works in a rather less tolerant commercial world, where if you're not up to scratch.....your clients will find another way of getting the work done.

With regard to issues of control and communication.....

D:it's more subtle than I believed when I first started my little peroration

R: Yes, it is very subtle, the whole *issue* of control and communication, and there's links between that and what's happening in society generally are interesting in themselves, but I'm not sure how far they can be unpicked in..in this context. Maybe we can unpick them between us (*both laugh slightly*), because I think they're interesting points...

D: But you'd think, for example, I'd be more interested in texting, and the subtleties - you know, the complexities and intricacies of using a mobile telephone, but interestingly, I..I haven't been, I haven't gained that interest at all, I'm not a texter, I find it a shallow and unsatisfactory mode of communication.

R: I'm aware that you don't use it, and I have to say - this is nothing to do with you professionally, but the fact is that in our communication, if you're not around, you are the one who has control over that, because I can't really telephone - I can send you an email, I suppose, but there's no way for me to contact you unless you choose to contact me, other than email - so that....

D: Now that is a very interesting theme because I think that is almost related to the fact that when I was at XX (*both laugh*) you were sort of meant to be on call all the time, and there was always some sort of emergency - they weren't actually emergencies, but it was the frenetic, sort of compelling nature of the environment, you always were meant to be contactable at the drop of a hat, by senior manager, or by lecturer, or whatever, and so - and a lot of that was unnecessary - I remember getting stuff from the Personnel Director "Contact me NOW!" about something, and that was entirely inappropriate, it was a power thing, I should've learned to just ignore it ...managers should NOT generally be at everybody's beck and call - that's not in MY view what it's about, leadership is NOT about...erm, well, leadership and management are different, I s'pose, but even management is NOT about, you know, people being able to contact you every second of a working day. And I think there's a sort of overspill to that, and I know you find it difficult to contact me sometimes, and I make myself non-contactable, and I don't think that's anything personal, it's more that I doI enjoy, I've learned to enjoy isolation, and (pause) that *is* interesting, so I don't miss not having a landline in my house, I don't actually miss not having a computer in my house to check my emails, 'cos I think, well, if they want to communicate with me, they'll have to wait (*R laughs*) until I'm ready. And it's interesting that people have got hold of that, because when I at home, I come home at weekends, sometimes there are no messages on my telephone - not one. Nobody telephoned me. And sometimes in the past, I've thought - I've thought about my friends, and think "You're all bastards! You never get in touch with me, you make me get in touch with you. But that's actually no accident, because it's not very rewarding trying to get in touch with me. I don't pick up the phone.

R: These things are true, my darling.....Well, I think I have always assumed that it was related to your deafness....but I'm not sure that that's entirely what it IS related to...

D: It is. A lot of it.

R:I understand why you want to control the communication, because otherwise, for somebody who's deaf, it can be completely out of their control - it IS out of control for a lot of us, but I think it's exacerbated....

D gives 2 examples of people who've never be able to understand that. Who don't understand what it is to be deaf, and who won't use alternative methods.

R: ...but I think it's interesting because people do have different preferred modes of communication...

D: Yes

R: ...not just about deafness, but the people that you've just described, the very gregarious people, and those sorts of people need the personal communication, whereas other people can exist quite happily on modes which are a bit more distant..

We discussed "winging it":

R: ...in the context...of shaping...I just wondered whether you felt in the context of the interview you were also winging it?

D: In the interview? In the interview?

R: Yes.

D: (*Long pause.*) No. No. What, pretending things?

R: No, it's not quite the same as pretending things..... more about giving a good account of yourself, in a sense...or that there's a front or an image to be kept up..

D; No, not in the context of this interview. I don't have to keep.... I don't have to maintain an image in my professional role, I don't think. Well, not beyond the image I already have ofthat of someone working for a national organization, and reflecting the views of that national organization, and maintaining the standards of that organization..... it's funny, in terms of winging it, do sometimes get the feeling inside that I'm not winging it as much as I think I am, or that other people are winging it more than I used to think they were.....

D then alludes to a recent event where he became aware that he was the only one who'd actually read the document under discussion, and had a depth and complexity of understanding that the others didn't have. In his present role, being forced to read rather than rely on personal communication might be an advantage. Learning from text should "in some ways be the principal activity", and is certainly valuable as an activity in its own right.

Ruth mentions the way we wear social masks, re: Goffman in the *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*.

R: ...it's partly about the energy we need to have to maintain the self-presentation, and how quite often we are not aware of the self-presentation, particularly in personal relationships, while we might be a lot more aware of them when they relate to work and so on. So I s'pose it was partly connected with those ideas.....

D: In some ways, I'm *not* very aware of self-presentation in either a personal or a professional way, and in some ways I am *very* aware, and sometimes - not exactly manipulatively aware, but certainly aware. In the national launch events, sometimes, I'm aware enough to know when I'm in the mood for...for getting a grip on what's going on....

A short discussion followed about the amount of energy needed to maintain a positive, engaging professional awareness at public and semi-public events, and how personal relationships might be a "haven" from that..

Frugality, self-reliance and contempt for materialism were picked up from the field notes and discussed as linked themes, linked to control...

D: ..it's how they link with deafness which is the interesting one. I think the frugality is partly family traits (*but mentions that J isn't frugal, and perhaps B isn't either*)....it partly stems from the fact that I always think.....well, I'm selling my labour to the highest bidder, but I'm not going to get very high bids, and how much longer am I going to be capable of working, you know and getting rewarded in quite the way that I do, and...frugality, I think, stems not from the fact that I want a swanky new car and that I know that I'm going to be employed for the foreseeable future, it stems from how much my deafness is going to prevent me from earning a good living, and therefore I need cash reserves and stable housing...to buy me time and security....there's a market for consultancy, for inspection and so on, but I don't think it's quite so straightforward for me - after being in these national organizations, I don't think the transition to consultancy or inspection are at *all* straightforward.....if ALI wanted to employ me as an associate inspector, I'd have to have professional support all the time.....I feel convinced that my deafness has made me frugal to buy me security.

R: I find that really interesting...I'd never thought of that before, and I don't think you'd ever expressed it to me in that way before...it.....probably explains why you felt that you desperately needed to take the new job as well.....I did sense in you then that need to take the job because you weren't sure if you'd get another offer...

D: Yes, yes. Yes. Because people who aren't deaf might have similar insecurities relating to parts of their temperament...they might be lacking in confidence...or have panic attacks, or be agoraphobic.....but I always do feel "how much longer am I going to be able to operate at the level I operate"'cos even the education sector is not that enlightened.....it tries to be inclusive where learners are concerned, but it's certainly not inclusive where employees are concerned.....

Regarding self-reliance, D also mentions again the school experience of isolation and bullying - having one friend who was younger and who was shy (had acne) but no close friends, and "I learned to depend on myself". Also R mentioned that in the family, deafness meant that the family didn't cohere, and wasn't functioning as a unit, thus exacerbating isolation. D agreed with this.

Contempt for materialism was another theme recorded in the field notes. D didn't think it was particularly related to deafness.

R: I suppose it IS connected, because if you have money you tend to save it. You are not a conspicuous consumer (D: *No*) ..erm... so the two do go together in a way...that part of you is putting all of what you've got into sound, steady stuff that would stand you in good stead later....somehow, our identity is not bound up with having the newest, wonderfulest bit of equipment or car, or (D: *absolutely*) house or whatever...

D: I think I'm comfortable to say that contempt.....it's a bit strong.....distaste....it's a bit strong.....lack of interest in material things - I can't really see the deafness connection very clearly.

R: Do you think it is a class thing, in a way? The sense of it beingthe "intellectual" class, knowledge workers, or whatever.....

D: No, 'cos I often think that it's the intelligentsia that's the most materialistic, you know, with....well, that's just such a wide generalisation....

R: ...I think it's about what you value...I don't value material things as much as intellectual or spiritual things. I don't know - what do you value? What ...do you value most?

D: Time. That's what I think I value. Time. Time to fritter away. I do enjoy frittering time away.

R: And is that something you can quantify and have more of, or is it something that you value because largely you DON'T have it?

D: I think - I don't know. I don't know. Time to read and time to - I really like it when I'm comfortable at work - not too much on, and the garden's OK and car's cleaned, and my bike's in the garage....and I've got a bit of food in the house, and I've got some time for reading and doing the crossword....and I like the idea of being able to wander about.

R: You value having time, but time isn't a value, is it? (*Pause*).

R: asks about D's trade unionism in relation to values....it is a subject he wanted to raise and is in the field notes.

D:I'm not enthralled with this part of the conversation...I can't see the connection with deafness. It's a political thing....I don't think I ever felt that I was (*pause*) unprivileged - I passed the 11+, I went to public school, I came from middle class stock....I think my socialism came from....and I didn't feel any sense of injustice, I don't think, particularly, from my deafness, not social or economic injustice. I think the socialism came from - sprang from a different fount.

D then mentions the interview process, and how mood affects what is said - and then states "it's only when things come through repetitively....that they are hugely reliable".

TAPE SIDE 2

R says she will shape a bit - the question whether "there was any political dimension to your understanding of deafness....whether you feel that in any sense collective action or any of those things are important for people who have got a particular disability.....your politics has always been Labour-leaning, trade unionism....it hasn't focused on any....

D: No. No. It had no disability focus...it's been very general - a kind of universal approach. But I've appreciated the efforts of campaigners for disability....like RNID....even if I've never been part of that - NEVER been part of that. At one stage, I'd think "well, what's that got to do with me?" That's why when people start signing at me, I don't really like it very much, 'cos I'm not a signer, and although it might be useful, it's sort of making assumptions about me.

R: What about that whole sort of perspective of disability studies....that disability is socially created.... That people may have an impairment, but it only becomes a disability when it's actually something that gives you a social disadvantage, that society can maybe be reshaped to deal with that?

D: Yes, I think go along with that - I go along with that, but I think - I think in a sense you've got to say, I don't go along with people who....who are blind or deaf and say, and who take that extreme view "actually, I haven't got a disability" because I...I regard that as unhelpful, that it's not going to achieve inclusion, so if you ask me, am I disabled, I'd say "Yes, I am disabled", or "I'm hearing impaired, but I'm disabled" but maybe in 20 year's time, 10 years' time, maybe I'll be in a

position to say "no, I'm not disabled" because I am included. I might have an impairment, or I might be different in some way, but I'm not disabled, because disabled means you can't do something. At the moment, I feel "yes, my deafness means that I can't do some things", and I'm coming to the view that I can include myself, so although I'm impaired, the disability's perhaps receding.

R mentions that the two things that might go with this, politically, are anger at the way society is currently constituted, and collective action to change things. What is D's position if he doesn't feel part of the Deaf Community? He felt that the most useful way for him to approach it was via research into deaf managers that might impact on policy. R mentioned her own involvement in feminism in the 1970s, how the social model of feminism had helped explain some of the emotions she was feeling and to help her explain features of her own situation, and how collective action could change that and reframe things.

D: Are you saying the personal is political?

R: Well, I AM saying that - I'm saying that, but I think that collective action only engages people if they can see the personal bit in it....and I think what you seem to be saying is that, in a sense, those things are there, but somewhere in the sort of political movement that we might call....disability rights, it hasn't engaged you at the personal level.

D: No. No, it hasn't, and that's because...I think there's a danger of - it's like in equal opportunities, equality of opportunity, actually, it's a bit of a mirage, isn't it? Because giving people equality of opportunity, for me, in my brand of socialism, it's not entirely what it's about. I do believe individually that people should fulfil their potential.....I feel that strongly.....but....it's a bit of a con trick if your advancing disability rights whilst at the same time society - British society - is getting MORE unequal in economic terms, so...I think my interests are directed towards social and economic justice as a whole, not picking out that little pool of disability and addressing that...for me, that's a bit of a side issue.....

R: What about the view that says that unless you've got people who take something really seriously and focus on it, that..... the disability voice will get lost.....?

D: I agree with that, but that person, or that group of people is not me, not my interest - except perhaps from the research point of view.....that particular pressure group interest is something I could never....think of being interested in for myself. I'm too interested in too many things - and always have been, really.

A short discussion follows on what research might interest D.

D:we're all into the learner being at the centre of everything, and educationally inclusive, and, you know, all of this sort of thing, but actually, most post-16 institutions have not even scratched the surface of inclusion in terms of lecturers, managers and senior managers. Look at a profile of senior managers in FE colleges, and how many have got cerebral palsy, how many are deaf, how many are registered blind? I don't think very many.

R: That would be interesting to find out...

D: Exactly! If I could be bothered.....or anybody could be.

There was general agreement that session could end.

D was worrying about the consistency of the interview. An interview with D at 17 or 30 would have also been quite different. He might have been saying "I'm not very deaf". Also he had recently been shocked to find that music he had previously been able to hear, he no longer could. R said she was not bothered about consistency - this would only be an issue if it had to be "perfect". D had felt that there was a coherence to the first transcript despite the inconsistency. It was a "coherent inconsistency".

R: I think there are analogies between doing something like this and what actually happens in life, because it's quite often only after you've done things that...you can - I hesitate to say, SEE a consistency, but you give things meaning..... but I think it's only in retrospect, quite often, that the consistency becomes clear, at the time it often seems quite inconsistent....you know, you're buffeted along on it, really....

D: There are phases, of course, I've gone through phases with my deafness, and therefore what is consistent with one phase might not be consistent with another, 'cos my attitudes have changed. And fundamentally, I do feel I have been very lucky, despite my deafness...and also deafness has maybe been responsible for developing aspects of my personality which are attractive.

R: I s'pose it could be the case that deafness has meant that you have developed certain attributes and talents that you might not have developed in the same way had you been hearing....

D: Yes, I agree with that. I agree with that. They've developed differently in being, I think.....

D; But I would finally like to emphasise that I do feel lucky, I've been lucky in my life, and either because of, or in spite of my deafness.

R: It's very interesting, because that was EXACTLY what you said at the end of the first transcript, that you felt you'd been lucky. We won't deconstruct the notion of luck.... We can do that later (*laughs*). Are you happy for that - do you have anything else to add, at this point?

D: No!

FINISH