

Time to Think

Open University Journeys in British and Irish prisons during the years of conflict, 1972-2000

Oral History interview clip transcript

Name of Interviewee:	Student B
Interviewed by:	Jenny Meegan
Date of interview:	22/11/2011

Important

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of this transcript, however no transcript is an exact translation of the spoken word, and this document is intended to be a guide to the original recording, not replace it.

In some cases, interviewees may have made changes to the transcript.

Personal/sensitive information regarding individuals who may be living has been removed from transcripts where necessary.

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Student B Clip

Clip title:	It really taught me how to be free
Duration:	N/A
Clip start point in full interview:	N/A
Clip end point in full interview:	N/A
Interview identifier:	040_S-01

Description:

Student B was imprisoned in the UVF Compounds (the Maze and Long Kesh Prison) in the 1970s and describes the difficulties of studying there but also the value of Open University study and education which gave him real freedom.

Note: There is no audio available for this interview.

Transcript:

You were doing The Open University in a Nissen hut [Compounds of the Maze and Long Kesh Prison] with sixty other men with riots and all sorts of things happening round you, so, it was not exactly the most tranquil of—

No, it was not and any time you could be sitting working and suddenly the doors could burst open and the prison authorities would be in to tear the Compound apart and your papers might or might not be there when you went back and ten days' worth of research work could be gone in an instance. And you just had to learn that, that is life, nobody owes you a living and that you just start over again, because it taught me that determination, Jenny, you know that if I set my mind to it I will do my uttermost. And it also taught me the value, that if I commit I think very, very carefully before I ever commit to something, but once I commit, I give it a hundred per cent, if I can give it that I think that is a really valuable thing. But I think most of all The Open University taught me how to be free. It really taught me how to be free, that despite being imprisoned, despite having liberty taken away when I went into my OU material I could be somewhere else and I could be free in my mind. And it taught me that it is not about buildings, it is not about place and community or anything like that, it is about the value of yourself, and that how much freedom education could give me.