# Eda.docx

Q: Okay, so how do you think that Edinburgh, as a city, was feeling in the run up to the referendum?A: I think it was quite energised actually. I would say it was a slow burn because I think for a long time, nobody really cared that much but, you know, once the momentum built up, I think almost everybody was involved at some level and had an opinion. Whether they wanted to discuss it or not, everybody had an opinion.Q: Yes. When you say, kind of like, things built up, do you have a sense of what drove that?A: I don’t really know. I mean, I suppose it must have been campaigning by the people who were standing for the elections but I think it got beyond the normal bounds of politics and actually got involved, everybody sort of took it into their lives. A lot of people would say they really have no interest in politics, they’re all as bad as each other, and yet they’d be driving around with a ‘Yes’ or a ‘No Thanks’ on their car. Farmers were putting them up in their fields and things just outside of Penicuik. It’s rare that you see something from the political sphere spilling into people’s everyday lives.Q: Yes, so why did that happen, do you think, with the independence debate rather than the general election or local elections?A: I think because people felt that whatever happened, it’s probably going to impact them directly and I think people feel a bit helpless in general elections and don’t feel represented, and just feel, “Well, does it matter what we vote for in Scotland?” For example, we tend not to vote Tory in Scotland and we have a Tory government so is there actually any point in voting, but I think in this one people felt it would impact on them and I think also as it got closer and closer and it started to look like every single vote was going to count, people were sort of roused from their apathy and thought, “Actually, yes, my vote could be the one that counts,” and did what they thought they should do. Q: So, you think how close it got in the end was important?A: I think so, yes, yes.Q: Were people discussing this? I mean, you said that a lot of people weren’t really-,A: I think everybody was discussing it. I think some people were not necessarily wanting to put forward their own point of view and say, “Okay, I’m voting for,” or, “I’m voting against,” which is fine because the whole point is it’s a private vote, but that doesn’t stop people discussing it, you know, just in more general terms. I think, all the different places I went into, everywhere and people from all spectrums, you know, it wasn’t just university educated people, it was everybody, I think, was discussing it. Q: Do you think that that was like a good level of debate that was going on between people?A: Yes, I do actually.Q: Like a high level of debate?A: I think the fact that there was a level of debate is higher than most things [laughter] but I mean there were occasionally remarks and points of view that you just felt, you know, it’s idiots just repeating what they’ve read in ‘The Sun’ or something, but I think the fact that there was debate going on amongst so many people, and I think a lot of people did make an extra effort. I mean, I didn’t read all the white paper because it was really long. It’s like that thick [laughter] but I actually read quite a chunk of it and I have never done anything like that before.Q: Right.A: And it was because I thought, do you know, I need to be informed about this and not just take my opinions from my friends or the newspapers. I wanted to actually read the source.Q: Yes. So, what kind of things were you reading in the newspaper? What was the kind of tone of the local media, the Scottish media?A: Well, I guess, I got a feeling that-, I think the Glasgow Herald came out as being quite for independence and the rest, to a greater or lesser degree, against it. I would say that I think the tele was reasonably unbiased, I think. Q: The local news or the national news?A: Both, either. I think there was actually a lot more social media about this than I’ve ever seen about any other political things really, you know, not just things were coming up on news feeds on Facebook but people were actually attaching tags to their cover pages and things saying, you know, ‘Yes’ or ‘No’. Q: Yes. Is that something you engaged with?A: I personally didn’t. I didn’t have a ‘Yes’ or a ‘No Thanks’ tag anywhere but, you know, people were wearing badges and things, weren’t they? Q: Yes, it felt to me like a very visual thing in the city.A: Yes, because everybody had-, well, not everybody but a lot of people had their flags up in their windows and things like that, yes. Yes, I guess there was a lot going on.Q: And do you feel that it was generally kind of good campaigning on both sides?A: I have to say, I did think that the SNP came out a bit better. The thing that I didn’t like about the campaigning was the fact that the other parties were all against it and all against it and then what was it, a week or 10 days before the election , they suddenly started making all these grand gestures and big offers and all the rest of it and really that sort of changing everything at the last minute, it just made me hate them.Q: Do you think that actually helped them?A: I think it probably did. I think there’s a certain type of person who is afraid of change. Q: Yes.A: I think they were afraid to vote ‘Yes’ and I think those kind of last minute promises that were made , I think really reassured those people that, you know, the change would be very gradual and very manageable, whereas if you voted ‘Yes’, it could all be different this time next week. I think in a lot of voters’ minds, that probably did work for them but I think a lot of people just got really naffed off and just went, “Well, look actually, if you’d said this six months ago or a year ago or at any point when you weren’t absolutely terrified of losing,” [laughter], “then we might take you seriously.”Q: Do you have a sense of what was behind that kind of growth in the ‘Yes’ movement? I mean when the first polls came out, you know, it looked like it was not going to be much of a battle.A: I think that as time went on, I think the people in the SNP came across as quite reasoned most of the time and quite capable, and I think rightly or wrongly, a lot of Scottish people had anti-English feelings in them and feel that the country is being ruled by a foreign country. I’m not saying I necessarily agree but there’s a lot of that feeling. I think most people do not trust politicians at all and almost just kind of think, “Well, if they’re all going to be as bad as each other, let’s at least have ones that we know where they live and it’s going to be easy to go to Edinburgh Parliament and tell them what we think,” you know, whereas I think sometimes London is so far away that it’s just out of people’s sphere completely. Q: It looks and feels to me like that momentum has kept going.A: Mm.Q: Do you think that’s-,A: With the 45-, is it 45+ thing, is that what you mean? Q: What’s that?A: There’s a group and I’m sure it’s called 45+ or 45 and more and it’s for people that voted ‘Yes’, the 45% that voted ‘Yes’ have got a big thing going still to try and keep the momentum because I think having generated so much, they now don’t want to lose us. Q: Okay, so specifically that momentum is for independence?A: Yes.Q: Right, right.A: I’m sure it’s called 45+.Q: Right. Right, okay.A: And people have that on their Facebook’s as well, a little tag that says 45+.Q: Right.A: You just thought that was for ages, didn’t you? [Laughter].Q: No, no, no. I’ve not heard of it.A: Yes, definitely.Q: Right, right. Okay, and so do you think that that’s-, do you get a sense of what the outcome of that is going to be? Do you think there’s going to be some other referendum in the future?A: I think there will be. I mean, I don’t think anybody can face it right now but I think so many promises were made, and I don’t really believe they’ll keep them and I think they’ll wriggle and squirm because that’s what they do.Q: The new powers and stuff like that?A: Yes.Q: Yes.A: I think sooner or later, unless those promises are fulfilled, yes, there will be another referendum and I think at that time, it probably will go independent, but I think if they do keep all their promises then probably not for , you know, a generation or whatever.Q: I mean, how did it feel for you, or what do you think the mood in the city was as the results came out?A: I wasn’t here, I was in London.Q: Oh, right. Okay, okay.A: In London, the mood was, they were absolutely ranting about having, like basically independence for London and all their local papers and things were saying, “Oh, today’s the Scottish independence referendum ,” but they were saying, “Look, there’s many more people live in London than there are in Scotland so we should have our own powers and our own devolved taxes and everything,” so it was a real eye ope ner for me because, you know, I live in Scotland and it was always Scotland and you go down to London and they’re just , you know, kind of a bit horrified , I think. They’re like, “What are you talking about? There’s much more-,” That’s what they were saying, “If Scotland goes independent, the big cities in England will.” Q: I remember reading about, like Cornwall wants independence and all this kind of thing?A: Oh, definitely Cornwall do. They’ve got their own language and everything, and the Shetlands want independence from Scotland. It doesn’t matter how far down the line you go, I think there’s going to be a point where Glasgow’s going to want independence from Edinburgh, you know.Q: Why is that? Why do all these regions want independence and from what?A: I guess they don’t want to be homogenised, you know, and I think there is a feeling that the whole world is going a bit that way. You can go into the shopping centre in Dubai and you’d see exactly the same shops as you see in Edinburgh, and I think people like their own quirks and identities and differences, and fair enough, you can be proud of your quirks and your identities without becoming a screaming nationalist, you know. Q: Yes. Do you think that was a big thing in Scotland as well?A: Yes, definitely. I mean, in a way, it’s almost the not so serious things that get-, like it’s when you get you know, Brussels telling you that haggis is not fit for human consumption and things like that. I mean, that drives folk mad, you know. I mean, obviously it’s not on the same scale as human rights laws and all the rest of it but that’s the stuff that makes the headlines, isn’t it, silly ones? Q: Yes, and how do you think that Scotland is now, kind of like, after the referendum? Do you think that’s been a good thing for the SNP or a bad thing? A: I think it ended up being a good thing because I think 20 years ago or 10 years ago, it wouldn’t have even seemed possible. I think the fact that they achieved so much and they’ve obviously got all the other politicians , I think that’s really shown that they are seriously a power to be reckoned with and they’re not a sort of fringe party or a weirdo party anymore. Actually, this is real. Lots of people believe this and follow this. I think they did well. I think they did well.Q: Do you think they ran a good campaign?A: Yes, I think they did actually, better than a lot of the other ones anyway.Q: Better than the ‘No’ campaigns?A: Yes. I think the ‘No’ campaign had real problems getting anybody as a sort of figure head. I think they ended up with Alistair Darling and I don’t think he did a very good job of it. I got the impression that he was picked because there was nobody else rather than because he was actually really fired up and dying to do it. Q: Yes. Yes, and do you think that that’s going to have a lasting impact until the general election this year, the SNP campaign, I mean?A: Yes, I think it will. I think an independent Scotland seems much more realistic and not just a pipe dream anymore and I think that will affect what people vote.Q: So, do you think it’s changed the attitudes people had toward the other political parties?A: I think a lot of people are a lot less keen on Labour and Lib Dem in Scotland than there used to be. That’s just my feeling. As a whole, I don’t think Scottish people like the Tory’s very much but I don’t think that that’s changed at all and I don’t think the referendum has impacted on that. I just think they’re kind of a bit of the enemy and that’s just the way it is and that hasn’t changed but I think the ones that have really lost out are, I think probably the Labour party worst of all because that was a lot of Scottish people used to really like the Labour party and I think they haven’t done themselves any favours in the referendum, you know. Ed Miliband coming up at the last gasp but not actually knowing where the Fife was and things like that and, you know, things like that. I don’t know where his constituency is but then I ’m not trying to tell anybody there how to vote. Q: That’s true, yes.A: If I was going to come to your constituency then I would actually try and find it on a map first, you know.Q: Yes. Did it change how people in Scotland viewed the Labour party?A: Yes. Yes, I think there’s probably a lot of reasons but I think the Labour party are now seen as more of an English thing than they used to be, you know, because we now have a choice. I mean, it used to just be like, “If you dislike the Tories, you had to vote Labour,” and then you kind of vote Lib Dem but now the SNP are a realistic choice as well. I think they’ll suffer for probably more than-, well, they have to suffer more than the Tories because they can’t really do worse in Scotland. Q: Well, that’s true. It seems to be what the polls are suggesting as well that Labour are probably going to lose seats. I mean, that’s what they were saying about a month ago or something like that.A: Well, I think they deserve to because they didn’t really stick up for the Scottish people amongst all of that.Q: Right. What about kind of leadership in the whole process because both Labour and the SNP have new leaders? Do you have any perception about what happened with the new Scottish leader of the Labour party? A: I don’t even know who she is, I have to say. I knew it was a woman but I don’t know anything else about her.Q: Right, okay. Okay, fair enough. That’s fine, but what about the SNP? I mean, do you think that Salmond going is going to have an impact?A: I think he’s a pretty astute guy. I think he probably knows what he’s doing. I felt terrible for him, I really did [laughter] because I just kind of thought-, I felt like saying to him, “Well, don’t resign. You don’t have to resign just because you’ve lost, you know, because you’ve done so much anyway,” so I did feel bad for him , but I guess that he’s going to ha ve some other plan whereby this is actually not the end of his career. I’m sure he knows what he’s doing, you know, and I think they probably want to put a little bit of distance now between themselves and the fact that they lost that referendum , and so putting in a new leader is a way to do that. Q: I mean, do you think Salmond and the SNP genuinely see the referendum as being a failure?A: I think on some level they must because that’s what they wanted, that’s what they were fighting for and they didn’t win. They didn’t persuade enough people that they could do this. I don’t think I’d use the word ‘failure’ but I don’t think-, it’s certainly not the outcome they wanted. Q: In some ways, I mean, they swayed a lot of people.A: They did, they did and they got it much closer, I think , than anybody ever really deemed was going to be possible. Q: Even the SNP.A: Exactly, yes, yes. I think we all got a bit of a fright when we realised how close it was actually going to be on the day.Q: Mm, yes. Do you have any kind of opinion in the sense of how it’s going to be because, you know , Nicola Sturgeon is taking over? Does she represent kind of distance?A: I think she does. I think she does. I mean, she’s very clear, quite calm and quite cautious, and she seems-, I mean, she’s very bright, she’s very capable, you know, she knows what she’s doing, she’s got experience of the whole political scenery. Q: Yes.A: She’s got the backing of Alex Salmond.Q: Yes.A: I think she could do it. I think she’s quite smart. I think she seems to give the impression of being a bit more trustworthy. Q: Oh right, okay.A: But it’s just an impression, isn’t it? That’s her job is to come across as being a bit more trustworthy.Q: Yes, sure. Is that a slight hesitance about her?A: Yes. Yes, I feel like she plays her cards pretty close to her chest.Q: Right.A: I think I hadn’t really formed that much of an opinion of her.Q: Right, okay.A: I kind of like Alex Salmond. You know when he was being quite, you know, not a lot of substance to what he was saying and even though I didn’t always agree with what he was saying, I found him quite charismatic. I could see why people would warm to him and I didn’t feel that way about Nicola Sturgeon but that could be a good thing because I think there was an element of showmanship that come through, you know, whereas I think she comes across as a bit more serious. Q: Do you think you need that level of kind of level of charisma to be a leader and get people to believe in you ?A: I think maybe you do. You need some charisma. You shouldn’t, you know, people should vote for you because you’re good at your job and you’re honest, hardworking and decent, but that’s not how it works. I do think that one of the people that really suffered from that was Gordon Brown, you know. I think that was his problem more than anything was that he was not charismatic from the off and when it came to the crunch. Q: Yes. What do you mean, like when he was Prime Minister?A: Yes.Q: Right, right.A: I mean, he’s certainly bright enough and experienced enough, you know, but he’s not got that kind of spin, slippery thing going on and yet sometimes it’s almost like he needed a bit of that just to make people like him or believe him. Q: Yes, yes. Did you watch any of the TV debates or anything like that?A: I did watch one of them but I just got really annoyed with wee things. It annoys me when they don’t allow the other one to answer or when they don’t answer the questions o r when they keep going on and on and on. I think the one I saw was the one about what currency we were going to have. Q: Oh, yes, yes.A: Alex Salmond was sort of saying, “Look, we’re going to have the pound,” and the other ones were saying, “Oh, you can’t say that, you can’t say that,” and it’s just the same argument. They just kept saying the same things over and over and over, and you’re thinking, “Right, we’ve got 45 minutes for this debate, could we maybe just move it on and discuss some other thing,” you know, because it just got into a circle I thought, so I got pissed off and put it off.Q: Do you think those big messages, those big topics were important in the debate for people?A: It wasn’t important for me. I don’t know about anybody else [laughter] but that wasn’t important to me. Q: Were there key messages for you or key issues?A: Well, you see this white paper, what I read of it, I don’t know that it was achievable but it showed what they were aiming for.Q: Right.A: What they were aspiring to for the country. They were aspiring to a society that seemed very equal, very fair, very just, very decent and obviously you’re not going to just turn a society into that immediately but a lot of what they were aspiring to were ideas that I approved of.Q: Right.A: So, things like that.Q: So, that kind of resonated with you then?A: Yes, that meant much more to me than whether we were spending euros or pounds or Nessie’s or anything else, you know. I don’t really care. Q: Nessie’s would’ve been worth it.A: Nessie’s would’ve been great. Q: I never heard that. Was that a thing people were talking about? I think people would love that.A: Well, we were talking about making up our own currency and you would have things like a hundred sporrans to a Nessie [laughter]. You’d have a mealy pudding note and things like that [laughter]. We don’t care if we don’t get the pound, we’ll make our own things.Q: That would’ve been so hard core.A: It would’ve been nice.Q: I mean, were you disappointed afterwards, after the referendum?A: I was pretty heartbroken actually but I couldn’t say anything because my husband was really, really against Scottish independence and so I didn’t really like to say too much because he got really upset and uptight, really uptight, and I was just like, “Never mention this at home ever again.” Q: Right, so you couldn’t discuss it, you couldn’t at all?A: Well, we did but we just had to be a bit careful. No, I was disappointed. I was heartbroken and I thought it was an opportunity missed and he was visibly relieved. It was just bizarre but we didn’t fall out about it. W e just agreed to differ on it but when they were saying the nation was divided, they weren’t kidding.Q: Even households.A: Yes.Q: Do you think that was difficult that there were households that were split down the middle?A: Yes. It was funny as well because just for a laugh, we had a family gathering a few months afterwards and there was eight members of the family there and we did a vote on it. It was amongst the eight of us and it came out four and four and that was out of husbands, wives, mothers, daughters and brothers and sisters and all these, you know.Q: And then was there a big barney about it? A: No [laughter].Q: Oh, right. Good, yeah, good times. I get a sense that it was disappointing. What was it for you that was lost?A: I think just the opportunity to make a fairer, better, more just society and to have control over things like justice and I’m damn well against nuclear weapons and stuff as well so I’m kind of keen on the idea of getting rid of all that stuff out of the whole lot, not just Scotland. I don’t think it would’ve been a magic wall written in gold or anything like that but I do think it has been an opportunity that we just won’t get while we’re still part of the UK. Q: Are you looking forward to the general election? Is it anything like the same level of interest?A: I’m looking forward to it probably, and I’m interested, but I am looking forward to it with a degree of trepidation because what I am probably most worried about and it may just be a silly thing to be worried about but what I’m most worried about is UKIP getting lots of votes and then Scotland being ruled by a sort of Tory UKIP coalition in London. That is my greatest fear, frankly. Short of the Nazis, that would be my greatest fear, so I’ll be watching intently but not with any [laughter] great joy probably.Q: Yes, yes. Do you think it will still matter as much what happens in Westminster? A: I think it will because I think it depends who wins and where the power goes. I mean, if you got something like UKIP that wanted you out the EU, well one of the big arguments of the ‘Better Together’ campaign was that you have to be in the EU or you’ll all starve and die . So, theoretically we could be voting for a situation whereby [laughter] we get taken out of the EU whether we want it or not, you know. You just don’t know but I think the next general election is going to be really interesting because I think there are all these smaller parties now that could make huge gains and could have Scottish Ministers in Westminster, you know, then those people saying, “Oh, we don’t want these SNP people on our parliament, what are they to do with us?” It’s very messy. Gone are the days when it was just blue or red. Q: Do you think that’s a good thing?A: Yes. Yes, I do.Q: I think that’s pretty much everything.A: Is that enough?Q: Yes.[Transcript Ends 00:33:44]

# Jim.docx

Q: So, how long have you been in Edinburgh?A: I’ve been here for about six years.Q: Oh right, okay. What brought you to Edinburgh in the first place?A: I came here to do my undergraduate degree and then just stayed and carried on doing more graduate studies.Q: Oh right, okay. Do you remember the first time you heard that there was going to be a referendum?A: Yeah. It was-, it must have been about three years ago or so. I mean, pretty much when it was announced. Q: Yeah.A: Yeah. Q: What were your feelings at the time?A: Very mixed.Q: Okay. A: They still had basics then, really. So, I liked the idea of an independent Scotland just instinctively, but I’m quite suspicious of the SNP. Q: Oh right, okay. So, what instincts?A: Probably-, so partly just dislike of the UK and the feeling that it would be funny to watch it split up.Q: Okay.A: Also, just that the politics in Scotland are so different to England that it would make sense for the people of Scotland to be able to run things themselves.Q: Yeah. When you said just like the UK, do you mean Westminster rule? A: Westminster rule and just the UK and the history of it, but the whole thing, but that’s more emotional and not really particularly well thought out.Q: Okay, okay. Do you think for most people that the referendum was emotional?A: Yeah, definitely. I think it was, yeah.Q: More so than particular policies or things like that?A: I think the question of whether or not Scottish people would be better off financially made a big impact, but it was really-, there were points either way of that. So, it was hard to decide based on that alone.Q: Yeah. I mean, were there-, so, how did you end up voting in the end?A: I voted yes.Q: Okay. Were there any things at all from the no campaign that resonated with you at all? A: So, not from the official no campaign, but from left wing people I know campaigning for no, the idea that just putting up more borders wasn’t a good idea. That did appeal to me and I could see the sense in that.Q: Okay. That’s interesting. So, you knew people that were campaigning for no? A: Yes.Q: As part of the official no campaign?A: Kind of. Most of them were very left wing, Labour party members. So, they weren’t-, they were really on the fringes of the official campaign, I guess.Q: Okay, okay. Right. Do you think that the no campaign, in general, ran a good campaign? A: No, not at all. I think they-, they didn’t have positive message at all, basically. Yeah, I think they only really won through inertia in the end and if there was to be another vote in 20 years, it could go differently.Q: Okay. So, do you think it’s more likely now as a result of-? A: Yeah, yeah. I think it’s very unlikely that either central ruling party will make Scotland happy with what’s going on. Q: Right.A: Yeah.Q: Do you think that it was-, I mean, to me, it feels like a lot of the-, I guess a lot of the stuff that was coming out of the yes campaign was anti-tory party and anti-austerity and stuff like that. Do you think it would be more difficult if Labour, even New Labour is slightly more left wing were in-? A: Very slightly more, but the SNP are definitely more anti-austerity than even the Labour party, apparently. So, I don’t think it would make that much of a different. I think as a side effect of how the Labour party conducted themselves, they are going to really struggle in May to get Scottish votes.Q: Yeah. So, why do you think that’s been?A: I think people in Scotland just felt patronised, frankly. So, whenever I went back to England, people would say things like, “oh, it would be a real shame if Scotland left because it’s part of our cultural heritage”, and they-, so people in Scotland felt like they were just treated as a tourist site, basically. Q: Okay.A: A quaint odyssey which everyone in the UK or in England wanted to keep and I think that just really irritated people in Scotland. They were trying to have a sensible debate, but they didn’t feel like anyone south of the border was really taking them seriously.Q: Yeah. What do you think about the media coverage? A: I think it was very pro-no, but in a subtle way, if that makes sense.Q: Right.A: Yeah. I think the BBC in particular was playing a seemingly equal but pro-Westminster position. Exactly. Q: Right. What even-, what was it like do you think in the Scottish media more specifically?A: I’m not that sure. So, I know that The Scotsman was pretty openly pro-no and The Herald was pretty openly pro-yes, but as far as I can tell, The Herald was the only big media institution which was pro-yes openly and everyone else seemed to be pretty much on the no side, as far as I could tell.Q: Was there any different-, I don’t know if you interacted with-, did you watch any of the TV stuff?A: I don’t think I did.Q: Okay. Like any highlights or anything?A: No, not that I can recall, I’m sorry. Q: Okay. No, that’s fine. That’s fine. So, who were you generally-, were you generally quite open talking about the referendum? A: Yeah, yeah. So, I guess, more of my interaction would have come with talking to people who I know and friends of friends and stuff at parties or in coffee shops or anything like that. I probably got a slightly biased view of it because I think a lot of students living in central Edinburgh probably tended towards voting yes. Q: Why is that?A: I think it’s just the kind of person. So, there are a lot of left-wing bias amongst students and universities anyway. I don’t think that necessarily means you’d vote yes, but it would definitely head that way, I think, because they were seen partly as a Tories versus Scotland kind of thing, amongst some people anyway. So, I got the impression that a lot of Scottish people were pro-yes, but that might just be because of the Scottish people who I know. Q: Right. How did you feel that living in Edinburgh was during that time?A: Very mixed. So, Edinburgh, as you know I’m sure, is fairly wealthy compared to the rest of Scotland and I think there are a lot of people who work in London or work with people in London. So, I think particularly in central Edinburgh, a lot of the more professional people were probably no voters or going that way. So, yeah, but much more mixed than somewhere like Glasgow or Dundee, I think where it was more of the yes vote.Q: Do you feel that there were people in Edinburgh that would vote for Labour if they were independent?A: Yeah, definitely. So, there is a reasonably large green movement in Edinburgh and they were all mostly pro-independence and there was a green campaign for independence, and there was something called the Radical Independence Campaign, which was partly based in Edinburgh and in other cities, which was campaigning quite a lot.Q: So, what was their kind of platform?A: Basically to make independence less about nationalism and more about the kind of society we could have in a non-Westminster rule Scotland. So, less about Scotland being great and more about decentralising governance and stuff like that. Q: Yeah. Okay. Did you do any campaigning yourself? A: No. No, I wore a badge, and put a sign up but I suppose that comes back to me feeling ambivalent about it. I didn’t really think it was worth putting a lot of energy into campaigning. Even if yes had won, there would have been a lot of campaigning to do to get the SNP to do what we wanted it to anyway. So, even if we were in a slightly better situation, it wasn’t going to change things that much really, because the SNP are still essentially a centrist party.Q: Yeah. So, is that generally your problem with the SNP? Just before you were kind of discussing it.A: Yeah, I also know there is a reasonably large right wing quite conservative part to the SNP, so my prediction really would be that if there was independence, the SNP would split quite soon into at least two different parties. Q: Oh wow.A: I’m not sure they could stay as one party post-independence.Q: No. How do you think the SNP have done in general out of the referendum? A: Very well. I think, yeah-, I think it looks like they are going to get a lot of seats in May and I think they’ve come out looking the best. I think particularly Alex Salmond carried himself very well and came out looking like more of a reasonable person than any of the others. People I know in England would say, “Oh, Alex Salmond, he’s just a big nationalist idiot”, but everyone in Scotland, I think, even if they were voting no can see that he was a capable politician and quite genuine in what he was saying.Q: Do you think it hurt the SNP that he’s stepped down?A: No, I think it was good actually. I think it let them have a fresh start and have a post-referendum new image kind of thing.Q: What do you make of Nicola Sturgeon?A: I think she is great as heads of political parties go. I would rather have her running the whole country than any of the other candidates.Q: Okay.A: If anyone was going to. Q: Okay. Do you think that she is going to be able to keep the party together? A: Yes. I reckon so. I think if they do badly in May there will be problems, but they all seem to be trying to do quite well. So, I think it will be okay.Q: Okay. Why do you think that for most people the SNP has suddenly grown so fast?A: I think-, so I think even a lot of no voters, they actually agreed with a lot of what the SNP say in terms of social policy and in some degree the taxation policies, and were maybe hurt by some of how the Labour campaign during-, what Labour’s done. So, I think a lot of more traditional Labour voters probably identified with SNP policies a lot more now. So, even if they wanted to stay in the UK to support people to have the border or something like that, they might vote SNP now.Q: Right, okay. What do you think that Labour did wrong? A: Well, I mean, it’s just a bigger instance of what they’ve been doing wrong over the last four or five years, which is that anytime the Tories say something, they say something very slightly to the left of it, but still pretty right wing basically, and that’s how they really hurt themselves. They try to follow the Tories in what they’re doing rather than having their own identity. Q: Do you think that’s been through Scottish Labour in Holyrood as well?A: Yeah, it is. Yeah.Q: I mean, do you follow very much of the Holyrood politics?A: Not that much, but a little bit, but not particularly closely.Q: Yeah. Do you have any contact with your local MP? A: No.Q: Local peers or MSP?A: MSP. I don’t actually know who the MSP is. I don’t know.Q: Fine, fair enough. Do you think that the no campaign generally ran a good campaign?A: Yeah, I think they did. Yeah.Q: What did they get right?A: It’s hard to say off the top of my head. So, I guess-, so one thing they got right, but they got wrong was trying to lay out what was their case for why they thought Scotland would be better not independent, but then they didn’t answer that and I think if they’d-, so one thing people were concerned about is that they didn’t seem to give a very clear picture of what would happen post referendum and I think maybe they could have emphasised that more and done more.Q: In terms of detail?A: Yeah, the detail of it, they were maybe lacking.Q: In economic areas or social policy?A: Yeah. So, I think they had the details, but they didn’t want to pin themselves down to anything. As soon as you’ve done that it’s very easy for someone else to see that some of the numbers are wrong or something and turn it against you. Q: Okay. What do you think for most people the strongest message from the yes campaign was? A: I guess around the austerity stuff. So, particularly what has become known as the bedroom tax, which has been a really big issue in Scotland. People have been really concerned about-, and a lot of SNP councils, I think just the SNP in general have said that they are going to basically stop that as far as they can by just giving more money to fund second bedrooms and that kind of thing, I think that message really does appeal to people. Q: Yeah. Do you think that generally this referendum has been good for Scotland? A: I think it’s been good for the UK actually. I think its revitalised politics to some extent . I guess the down side to that is that UKIP’s got stronger but there has definitely been a move away from Labour and Tories and to see voting for other people is more possible. I think Scotland on mass potentially voting SNP in May has helped change that, but certainly in the more fringe elements I’m involved with its-, so it was possibly bad in that it was a distraction from maybe more important campaigns, but it did get people thinking on quite a large scale how Scotland and how the UK could be governed differently. There is something called the Common Wheal, which you might have heard of…Q: Yeah, I think I-.A: It was like a manifesto, I guess, for a more social demographic Scotland and which was being supported by this Radical Independence Campaign and other people from the Green party. So, I think the emergence of those groups has been quite positive. I think the problem will be to stop the nationalis m question in the future. So, people obsess about-, so there has been these people calling themselves the 45%, the amount that voted yes and I think that’s really stupid. Firstly because it labels you as being in a minority, a minor group, which isn’t a good label to have, but secondly it just makes you look bitter, basically. So, I think if all the social groups which have grown up around the campaign can move forward and come up with new stuff it would be very positive.Q: Did you feel that there was-, aside from the nationalism thing, do you feel that because of the issues that came out there was actually a greater consensus about policy? A: Yeah, yeah. I think most of the people voting yes or no agree on the kind of Scotland they want to see. So, the only reason I think no won was because of concessions which were promised at the time, so taxation powers and so on. So, I think the problem could be if Scotland gets granted enough powers to look like its responsible, but not enough po wers to actually improve things, and just be given enough rope to hang themselves kind of thing. Yeah, but there was definitely some agreement, I think, on both sides of what it’s going to be. Q: Do you think those concessions have gone far enough?A: Not to my knowledge. They seem to be very slow to deliver them, and particularly on taxation things, I think there are risks in giving Holyrood tax money raising powers, but not have control of foreign police, stamp duty control and how the money gets spent.Q: Alright.A: Yeah, it should be more accurate.Q: What did you think about the engagement, in two ways? Do you have a particular view point on votes at sixteen? A: What was that?Q: Votes at sixteen?A: Oh yeah. I think that’s definitely good. Yeah, I think people at sixteen are perfectly able to express themselves and it would encourage them as-, because obviously very few people who are young are voting in general and I think it could encourage people to vote. Not that I think voting achieves that much all round, but it gets people engaged in a way that’s quite beautiful and I think-, yeah, I think getting young people voting would be good. Q: Yeah, and what about the turn out on the day?A: I think it was fairly amazing. I mean, it’s the largest turnout ever in the last 50 years in the UK. I think it does demonstrate the strength of debates about what’s going on in Scotland. I guess the challenge is to carry that interest forward and get people thinking about these issues, which needs to happen . It’s not easy, but it’s one thing to get a lot of people engaged on one day, but taking that forward has got to happen. Q: Yeah. Why do you think the turnout was so much higher than it’s been for a general election or a local election even? A: I’m not sure, really. I was pretty surprised, to be honest. I didn’t think it would be quite that high. I guess it felt like a once in a lifetime opportunity to actua lly make quite a big difference. I think because it was so close, both sides had been putting a lot of effort into signing people up to vote. Whereas in the normal election, there are so many seats where you don’t really need to bother getting people going out to vote.Q: Yeah. How are you doing for time? A: I don’t know, I don’t have the time on me.Q: It’s ten to.A: That’s okay.Q: Another five minutes?A: Yeah.Q: Okay, great. So, what organisations are you involved in and how would you like to see these policies being taken forward in Scotland?A: So, mostly the organisations I’m involved with are non-parliamentary. So, I’m involved in a libertarian socialist organisation who are more likely to be interested-, so we were a little bit in debates about the referendum and where it really mattered and this kind stuff. It’s really important, I guess, it’s for social issues we would like to focus on. So, things like bedroom tax and problem landlords, particularly in Edinburgh. There is a very good rental campaign going on at the minute. So, those issues, more on the ground stuff which I think-, yeah, groups like Common Weal did quite a good job at getting people stirred up again in useful ways.Q: Do you think-, you mentioned that it was not really part of one group or party or anything like that. Do you think that we are increasingly going towards a system where people are more interested in the policies than the parties? A: I hope we are. I would be happy to see a party system fall apart. I don’t have much faith in the parliamentary system, but if we did have something more like independent MP’s voting on individual issues, I would be for that. I think it remains to be seen where that goes. There is so much large scale funding that I think it would be hard to move things that way, but people have definitely lost faith in the model of politics we’ve had for the last fifty years. So, hopefully we’ll move towards something else…Q: Do you think it’s different in Scottish parliament? A: I think the hybrid system makes a bit of a difference in the sense that people feel more able to vote for smaller parties because-, so voting for the greens isn’t just completely discarded because they might get a MSP in. So, that helps people at least change their mind set a bit about party politics more towards individual issue politics, but it ’s still fundamentally a 4 party system. So, I don’t think that much.Q: Yeah. Do you think people are temporarily swayed by the characters and the leaders of the parties?A: I think that was a feature of the independence campaign to some extent. Alex Salmond is very charismatic and a very good speaker, so be made it about him to some extent, which was maybe a mistake. I don’t think in the long run that is going to be necessarily something that matters so much. Q: Okay. You don’t think it’s-, I mean, you had Ed Miliband.A: Yeah. He has a similar image problem, I guess. Yeah. I think it’s what the media chooses to make of it. So, there seems to be-, if there are papers with him looking silly, it becomes about him. I don’t think it has to be. I think it’s-, yeah, it’s just up to what people make of it to some extent.Q: Yeah. Okay. I think that’s covered pretty much everything.A: I hope that was okay.Q: No, that was fantastic. That was perfect. Thank you so much.[Transcript Ends 00:21:04]

# Paula.docx

Q: Great. Can you remember when you first heard that there was going to be a referendum?A: To be honest, no [laughter]. I wouldn’t have said I was terribly politically aware because it started, sort of, impinging your consciousness when you started to worry, “Oh Lord, there’s a chance that we actually might get it right now.”Q: Right, okay. So, that was, I guess, probably closer to the day when the polls were coming out and things like that?A: Yes, well I read The Independent every day and there was more awareness in the press, so the more you read, but I can’t honestly say when that started happening.Q: Okay. What kind of things were The Independent saying about it?A: Well, they’re always nice and valid, so you always get a good picture to be honest and it was really interesting. At the same time from somebody that was a wee bit wary of Scotland going independent at that point, a wee bit scary as well, and at work and even amongst your friends, we became aware that this is an issue that people feel really strongly about. Again, I can’t remember exactly what The Independent was saying. They were putting the case forward for both sides, which is what we all needed to know and to be honest, both sides of politicians are a waste of time.Q: Did you get any sense, I don’t know if you read any of the other newspapers or watched the TV debates or anything like that?A: Yes, I did watch debates and Newsnight. I think there was in Inverness possibly that was quite well attended and again, strength of feeling and the fact that they had young people’s debates as well because there was the great thing about the 16 year olds being involved and the initial reaction was maybe 16 year olds couldn’t care but they did. The schools and everything were good at putting forward what this is all about. I think it was a great thing for Scottish education as well.Q: Yes. Would you approve if the age of voting in the general election was reduced to 16?A: Probably. Well, before the referendum, I would’ve said no but now that I’ve seen how engaged they got, it’s probably a good thing, isn’t it?Q: Right, yes, and do you think that the rest of the media was as balanced as The Independent maybe?A: No [laughter] the media is the media [laughter] and I’m biased because I like The Independent so I’m not unbiased either.Q: Well, it’s not particularly biased to say that you like The Independent. Do you feel that the debates have any impact on how you saw the issues?A: Yes, they did. As I say, I wasn’t greatly politically aware before that and I wanted to know what is this going to mean for us, so I did read and I did listen, and it kind of confirmed my gut feeling at the time that it was useful to hear all the stuff and also to hear what the politicians-, it astounds me how they drivel on and there’s nothing to back it up at all. Q: Right.A: As you get older, you begin to realise that these aren’t grown-ups running the country, they’re just people like you and I and they do not know everything and they come out with things that they think people want to hear a lot of the time and it’s all the party line and I do wish they would concentrate on their jobs instead of their perception in the media which is huge at the moment, you know, Twitter-, these things are all instantaneous and I think it’s colouring their actions far too much.Q: Okay, so they’re trying to say things that are-?A: They’re watching what they say. They’re toning it to what they know they should say.Q: Right.A: And it’s not useful to the people asking the questions who don’t get the answers that are true. We get what the party line is or what the politically correct, you know, in every sense of the word.Q: Yes. Do you feel that-, so, if not from the politicians, did you feel that you did get the kind of facts, as it were?A: It was really difficult, to be honest, even the daily papers, because what is the source of this information and how do you trust it? Everybody’s got their own wee agenda. Q: Yes, absolutely. Did you feel that there were particular messages that were important for you?A: The welfare state, I think, it was a big deal for Scotland because we have many needy population groups and my concern is, how are we going to pay for it? I don’t like the way that things are going in the country as a whole. I think the Conservative s are another thing, you know, you should be looking after the poor in society, not punishing them. It’s just not the way Scotland likes to see itself. At the same time, there’s the economics of it, it all has to be funded. Are there enough taxpayers in Scotland to pay this? So, I think that’s a point, we needed a lot more information on how they thought this was all going to work, and now that the oil’s going down the tubes, they’ve all gone pretty quiet.Q: Really?A: Do you think that’s deliberate, the Saudi’s? Well, obviously it’s deliberate from their point of view but do you think there’s any kind of [laughter], I’m getting conspiracy theory here.Q: They can afford to do that. So, the economic arguments were very important for you?A: Yes. As a taxpayer, somebody who saves and lives within my means, I wouldn’t mind paying a higher rate of tax if I knew it was going to be spent properly, and I do not trust politicians as far as I could throw them.Q: Yes. Did you feel that the political parties ran a good campaign on both sides, the ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ campaign?A: I’m trying to think back what they were all burbling on about. I think Gordon Brown did a good job. They pulled him out and that’s possibly quite telling because he is somebody that you listen to as you know, he has integrity I think. What he says might not be popular but it’s what he believes and I trust his maths as well. Q: Do you think that he had a big impact in swaying people?A: Well, I was already swayed, so I’m not sure. I’m not entirely convinced that we are still ‘Better Together’ because things have just gone from bad to worse. I didn’t think they’d done the ground work to enable us to go independent and make a good job of it at the time. Q: It sounds like some of those messages about being independent from the south at least politically, are those kind of-?A: That’s attractive? Q: Appealing, yes.A: More maybe in a federal way. I think Scotland gets quite a good deal, whether that continues is another thing that’s possibly up in the air, but I also like the fact that it’s being European. We’re better, bigger than we are individually and I think that’s the way to go, otherwise we’ll have no say in world affairs at all. Q: Yes.A: It’s a shame to knock back all the history that we have with England just because the Tories are not good at running the country.Q: Yes. It does feel a little bit like, you know, throwing the baby out with the bathwater.A: Yes.Q: So, you said that people were starting to talk about it. Were they talking about it at work?A: Yes, not hugely.Q: In your friend circles and things like that?A: Yes, but you were very aware of people meaning, shall we say, and there was a nasty couple of elements, not amongst my friends who are quite intelligent but there was a certain amount of social bullying in Scotland, people going, “What do you mean you don’t want independence?”Q: Where did that come from?A: I assume the tabloids, some of the nationalism and patriotism getting muddled up, and there’s a nasty side to that as well, isn’t there? I think you can go too far. Some people do like wearing flags, Alex Salmond for one [laughter].Q: What do you feel the mood in the city was like in general in the run up?A: In the city?Q: Yes.A: I have no idea. Do you mean in town?Q: I mean around you in Edinburgh in general, I guess.A: I don’t work in Edinburgh, I work in a small village outside Edinburgh.Q: Okay, what was the feeling like there?A: Some of the older staff were more moderate but the younger ones were very gung-ho and obviously with the papers they read were pointing them that way and also it sounded like a great new thing, you know, exciting that Scotland would be its own country and run it, whereas if you were older, you would ask more about, “Well, wait a minute. How is this going to work?” so I think people did get a wee bit carried away maybe with the thought of it. Q: Yes, and were people who came into work, were they talking about it at all?A: Yes [laughter], usually in the, “Oh Lord, where’s it all going to end?” type of thing. Q: Right, okay.A: I think that’s possibly the outlook of the people who come in, they’re not feeling great anyway.Q: So, after the results came out, did you feel relieved, happy with that?A: I was relieved and I kept very quiet about it [laughter]. I keep very quiet on opinions anyway. I don’t feel it’s my place in the workplace to sound off about my opinions.Q: Yes, sure.A: And besides, I’m too busy doing my job to be honest, I don’t get the opportunity and I have to really focus, so the chat goes on around me and I contribute and we have a nice time and we have lots of laughs but I tend not to hold forth about politics to be honest. I don’t know enough for a start.Q: Do you feel that now-, I mean, are you generally happy with the Scottish government and the way that’s run? A: [Laughter].Q: I mean, it sounds like you have mixed feelings-,A: Yes, I do.Q: About health specifically but I don’t know if you think more generally about education and welfare and things like that.A: I don’t know enough about it. I just see what happens on the ground, if you like, and go by people’s experiences and what I read in the paper about how things are going with the NHS down south and I think in Scotland, we’re doing quite a good job. I don’t know who’s arranging for that but I think there’s good initiatives so more power to them really.Q: Yes. Do you get the impression that, I mean, have your views of the political parties in Scotland changed after the referendum, during the referendum?A: Yes. Well, it sort of changed anyway because the SNP have blossomed into this wonderful thing whereas there used to be the Tartan Tories , so their membership has changed and Labour which was traditional, sort of, Scottish heartlands. They’ve lost that and I think that’s a shame but then it’s only fair for goodness sake, and Ed Miliband, I believe, is very intelligent and well-meaning but he comes across just awful. Q: Right.A: I was watching him on television the other day and I listened to him on the radio and it was holocaust memorial day and he has a huge stake in that and yet his story was awful, like it had come as a surprise to him. He knew he was going on Five Live and what they would be asking about and it was just really poorly presented. I just felt ashamed. I thought, “He should’ve done a better job of that.” Q: Yes, and do you think things like that are important to swing voters?A: Yes, in general they are. If you listen to this person and think, “Ugh”, whereas Cameron, you know, in public does the job.Q: In what way, that he’s more confident?A: Yes, a private schooling. I don’t know if Ed Miliband was privately schooled, but there’s a difference in their performance, if you like, and it’s sad because it’s not how I would like to see things but these days that matters as well.Q: So, why do you think so many people have joined the SNP after?A: Disillusionment with the other parties?Q: Right, just Labour in particular?A: Well, yes, because there wasn’t a huge Tory following in Scotland anyway. I take it we’re still talking about Scotland, yes? Q: Yes, yes.A: Yes, just in general. I would like to see more from the Green party to be honest and the Lib Dems have quite a large following and again, because they sort of lost face with the coalition, I think people have swayed from that as well.Q: Right. A: Yes, that’s a shame as well.Q: Yes. Do you get the impression of why people are swaying from the Lib Dems?A: Again, there was a lot of slagging off going on in the press, so people are swayed by what they read. Q: Yes.A: And they don’t know how much of it is based on anything at all really. Q: I mean, in general, do you think that the process has been beneficial for Scotland?A: I would like to say yes for exactly what people think and that’s a good thing and become more aware of what the issues are. I don’t know on the ground if it’s done anything at all yet [laughter].Q: Do you think the Scottish parliament might get more powers then or anything like that?A: Yes, they have, haven’t they? I mean, we were promised more but the taxation thing, that’ll be interesting. Interesting, as in scary. What are they going to do but we’ll see.Q: Yes, yes. Do you still feel some apprehension about-?A: Oh, yes. I will spend my life scared of what’s going to happen next. I’m a professional worrier [laughter].Q: So, were you quite nervous in the run up to the referendum?A: I did think about it and I thought, “Well, just look at it as I do with all my other worries. Look at it as it’s going to be interesting.” [Laughter].Q: Yes.A: These are interesting times.Q: Yes, yes.A: I’ll deal with it when it happens.Q: Yes. Did you feel that-, were there any kind of positive messages from the ‘Yes’ campaign that resonated with you at all?A: [Laughter], I’m thinking hard. Well, I think Westminster is far away and very London centred and they don’t know about how we live up here so much. So, I think it’s good that they’re raising taxes in a country that they are spent proportionately on what’s needed, so I think it should be a good thing but as I said, I’m not sure I trust, you know to process who’s going to be doing that as they will have their own interests. Nepotism is human nature. It’ll be jobs for the boys and is it better the devil you know [laughter].Q: Yes.A: Change for the better always seems to have unintended consequences. For instance, the twenty mile s per hour limit that they’re proposing in Edinburgh, I think that sounds like possibly a good thing but in practice, what is it going to do? My daughter, she’s got the nice job I told you about. She does a bus run and they have to do scoop people up who are obviously suffering. There can be delays for whatever reason getting these people out of their houses and onto a bus but they have a time schedule that they have to stick to and she went back the other weekend to do a volunteer day to see how they were getting on and the boss was telling her that because the twenty miles per hour limit would mean that the bus run would take so much longer that it would need two buses. They don’t have the funding for two buses so they would not be able to provide the service. Q: At all?A: At all. I said, “Are you sure?” and she said, “That’s what I’ve been told,” so they got in touch with the MP who did talk, but that’s an unintended consequence that you could see maybe a knock on effect. It’s meant to be a good thing but what actually happens in practice is something totally different. Q: Yes, yes.A: I’m always apprehensive about change. Nobody likes change.Q: Yes, and what about Nicola Sturgeon, and the change there? Do you think there’ll be much change?A: I think that’s a good thing because she’s a woman, she comes across very sensible, she’s good at putting things across. Alex Salmond, a lot of people had a problem with, me one of them, but the party itself hasn’t changed so again from my point of view, I still have reservations. I wouldn’t vote SNP right now [laughter]. No, I think she’s doing a good job. Q: Okay, because I mean you’ve mentioned jobs for the boys. I mean, one of the things she has promised is to greatly increase the number of female ministers in Scottish parliament.A: Well, that would be good but I would like to see a meritocracy rather than a quota of, yes, we fulfil 50% are women because they were there, you know. Q: Yes.A: We should all be getting the right person for the job, not just colour, sex, whatever.Q: Have you ever had any engagement with your local MP, letter or been to a surgery or something?A: No, not to that extent. Years ago, I had an issue when my husband was running a service and the health board wanted them to open on Saturday mornings and there was no patient benefit, however it was in line with Lothian guidelines that they should be open on a Saturday morning. We produced a letter of appeal to the local MP to take it forward and he was very helpful and very supportive. It didn’t work but we did our best. Q: Okay.A: That was the extent. No. As I say, here, we have good services, we have nice facilities and no complaints really. I believe there’s an issue going on down at Crammond with building on what used to be greener ground sites or something.Q: Right.A: There’s a lot of, “Not on my backyard!” pertaining with difficulties with transport but people need houses so, you know, it’s a nice part of the town, it’s got to expand somewhere.Q: Yes, and there’s no plans for anything like that round here at the moment?A: I’m terrible with directions. It’s out towards the airport.Q: Oh, yes. Crammond. I know Crammond, yes, yes. That’s a bit further out, isn’t it?A: That way and Cammo, and again towards the airport as well, I think, so they’re planning on expanding housing stock but it’s needed, isn’t it?Q: Yes. Yes, absolutely. A: There might not be transport links at the moment but then they’ll need to build the infrastructure as well. It would be nice to see them building houses instead of shopping malls. I don’t know when shopping became a pastime, you know.Q: No. Okay, well I think that’s everything actually.A: Well, thank you for listening.Q: Thank you for coming out. Thank you so much, that’s really great.[Transcript Ends 00:25:02]

# Adrian.docx

Q: So, I just wonder if you can think back for me for the first time you heard that there was going to be a referendum.A: Well, I’ve always taken an interest in this. I was actively involved in the 1979 campaign to set up what at that time was called a Scottish Assembly.Q: Oh, okay.A: I was very disappointed actually by the way that was handled. And then they agreed to hold last year’s referendum. Well, I’ve known about it ever since the process started. So, that’s the background.Q: You said that in 1979 , there was a sort of petition, was it?A: No, there was the suggestion that there would be a Scottish Assembly set up at that time under the Labour government and the Labour party were hostile towards it. I was a member of a party that was formed at that time called the Scottish Labour party which was campaigning for an Assembly. What came to be known as the forty percent rule was introduced, which went completely against any parliamentary procedure; it had to be forty percent of the voting population who would vote in favour, not simply a majority, but forty percent of the total number of voters eligible to vote, before a decision in favour of an Assembly would be accepted.Q: Okay, right.A: Which was a very underhand way of doing it, introduced by a Scotsman who was the Labour MP for a London constituency at that time. So, I mean, I still feel quite annoyed when I think about it. Anyway, that’s all in the past now. I was a bit cynical about what was going to happen in the recent referenum and my cynicism, I think, was proven founded . But anyway, that’s where I came to be interested in it.Q: So, I mean, so when the SNP had the majority and it was clear that the referendum was going to happen, what kind of sense did you have as to how likely it was going to be to get the ‘Yes’ vote? A: I thought it was unlikely. Although, the SNP obviously did make substantial progress during the campaign, I always thought it was very unlikely there would be a ‘Yes’ majority. I thought there would be a substantial minority and that if the minority were big enough then there would be a move towards a greater expansion of powers. Q: Right.A: I mean, I’m in favour of home rule. I’m not in favour of complete independence. I think that having proper control over domestic policies: something like the Basque system in Spain where the Scottish government takes the tax revenue and then delegates to London what it sees as the amount that is needed for UK services and retains the rest to develop its own systems and services. That’s how I hoped it would develop and, well, I think it did go some way towards that , but I’m still a bit sceptical about what’s going to come out of it. I mean, Cameron immediately set the whole thing back, by his declaration on the morning after the referendum that it would be English votes for English laws that would be tied to it, you know. I’m very cynical a bout Westminster, I must say. That’s my position. I met recently a friend who writes copy for the Labour party, who was down in London at the time of the referendum writing stuff for Labour politicians to utter, and he said that he felt very upset. He felt quite contaminated by what he had to do. He’s a very strong Labour supporter but he felt that what happened was not in his view really ethical. Anyway, that’s another perspective on the matter.Q: I mean, did you have any particular opinion on what appeared on the ballot paper in the end? A: I thought there should’ve been an intermediate choice. I realise that would’ve been difficult but I don’t think it would’ve been impossible to have some intermediate option to say, “Well, I want more devolution but not independence” because the question at the end was always going to be, well, what happens if there’s a ‘No’ majority? There’s no clear statement of what that ‘No’ means and, well, obviously that’s what’s coming with the Smith Commission. I think the Smith Commission has done a reasonable job but being a business man, Smith did it in a very business like way. He said, “Well, we’ve got so much time” and the deadline was set for two months after the end of the referendum. I think that was – although they listed it from one point of view, it was not the best way to guarantee you would get a clear outcome – because what happened in the end, and my friend, again, was involved in some of these discussions with the Smith Commission. Well, not involved but he was present and he said that there was a lot of horse-trading going on and that what came out was what different parties were willing to compromise on and whether it would have been any different at the end of a longer session, I don’t know; but I think it probably would’ve been. So that’s that.Q: I mean, what do you think the rationale was for that timetable? A: Well, I think he wanted it to be-, I think he didn’t want it to draw out and clearly, being a business man, he thought, time was important and if you set a time limit then people’s minds would be focused on that. That’s how I think it was. Obviously I’m not privy to his thinking but that’s my thoughts about it. Q: It’s interesting because you’ve described it as, you thought it would’ve been difficult to have an intermediary option on the ballot paper. Do you mean difficult to negotiate politically or difficult practically?A: No, I mean practically: to say, well, within that range, what powers would you want to have?Q: Oh, I see.A: I mean, yes would have meant independence; and, again, I think the great majority of Scotland don’t want independence but they want to have more control over their own affairs. We got left again with a compromise that is determined mainly by Westminster. Well, I think within the independence campaign, I thought George Osborne really made it plain. He said, “Well, if you go for independence you can’t have the pound.” Well, the pound: it’s a United Kingdom, there are two kingdoms in it and the pound belongs as much to Scotland as it does to England and he said, “Well, you can’t have the pound.” Well, that suggested to more than myself that Scotland isn’t an equal partner. Scotland is a kind of subordinate unit in an arrangement which is dominated by one party who decides the way things happen. That seems to me to be how things are, and will remain so unless there is proper home rule; and I don’t think home rule will be coming out of what the Smith Commission recommended.Q: I mean, do you think in general that the process has been beneficial for extra powers in Scotland?A: I think it has. Q: What has come out of it recently? What’s being discussed at the moment?A: Do you mean by the recommendations, by what has emerged from the Smith Commission? I think it’s – well, of course, we still don’t know what’s going to come out and there are still lots of constraints – I mean, it’s some way towards home rule but they are still uncertain whether the Scottish government is sovereign or whether everything is subject to some kind of agreement by Westminster. So, I mean, I think ultimately home rule. Of course, the difficulty getting a federal system going is that England is such a big unit relative to the other nations of the UK and to devolve some powers to different areas in England is going to be difficult is partly because England has its legal system and you couldn’t have legal powers delegated to different regions unless they had their own different legal systems. But again, Spain is a good example, where the Basque Country have home rule. They decide; they take in the tax and then delegate a portion to Madrid. Catalonia has something more like Scotland has currently. It gets money from Madrid to decide how to spend on its services, but the main powers are still retained in Madrid. I think something like that would work, where there were regional assemblies in England and Welsh and Scottish parliaments with different powers. So, how that would then work would need further thought, how it would be that-, whether it would be that they would get block grants, whether they would collect. I suspect it would be block grants we’d get. The other thing I think in amongst this was the dominance of London and the south east. I mean, everything is sucked into London and it means – well, I used to work in Newcastle many years ago and I heard recently somebody in a radio discussion saying that for every, I forget how much, it was something like for every fifteen or seventeen hundred pounds of public expenditure per head goes to London and the south east, seven pounds per head goes to the north east. So, the inequalities: it’s not a matter of Scotland against England; it’s a matter of London which is so dominant that the rest of the country is suffering. And I suspect, incidentally, the same would happen with the high speed rail, that people would get jobs in London and commute from further afar. As far as I understand now, a former student who now works in York says that people commute from York daily to London because they can afford houses in York and maybe they were previously employed in York, but now they keep their house there and they go to London to work. It’s just incredible. Q: You talked about what George Osborne was saying about the pound and things like that. What do you think were the most important messages from people from the ‘No’ campaign, that they were trying to get across? A: Well, I think the currency was a major one.Q: Do you think that was influential to people?A: I think it was, yes, undoubtedly. I think, well, the argument that if Scotland became independent it couldn’t share the pound because the interest rates would still be determined by the monetary committee and the implication that-, what would Scotland be like if it were independent? Well, it could join the Euro or set up its own pound and then that was ridiculed by, “Oh, it would be the Merc or the Bawbee”. So, silly comments like that that undermined any credibility in the Scottish currency.Q: Comments in the media or-?A: Well, not only the media: by politicians as well.Q: Right, right.A: People or the newspaper. When I think again, the newspapers were a disgrace. There was only one that was broadly of the independence campaign, which was the Sunday Herald. It was disgraceful, frankly. The press were supposed to be reporting things objectively, rather than presenting a party line and, well, I think that was one of the factors that increased the ‘Yes’ vote actually. People were so disenchanted by this constant monotonous litany of, “Oh, you can’t have this, you can’t do that”. The people just gave up on the press . They didn’t believe them any longer, thinking, in many cases, “Oh well, this is just another scare story” and I think the same will happen if there is a Euro referendum, although I am in favour of, I’ m in favour of remaining in the EU, but the EU campaign will be, well, it will all be fear of what would happen if we left and I think that would put me off; but I would still vote for remaining in the European Union. Q: Did you see a difference in-, I don’t know if you compared the national newspapers and the Scottish newspapers, apart from the Herald.A: Well, there was no difference. There was no difference. The Scotsman was just loud and clear every time there was a story. I forget the journalist’s name, but he was always-, and he was obviously told what line to present in his articles and it was always twisted round to give a negative message. I think the Herald was a bit more balanced; but it was the Sunday Herald that that gave more balanced view. Scotland on Sunday is of course owned by the same group as The Scotsman. The Evening News, well I don’t really buy it much. Well, certainly anything I did see was negative. Well, I think newspapers like The Press and Journal in Aberdeen were, again, hostile.Q: Right, right, and did you watch any of the TV debates?A: Yes. I did.Q: What did you make of those?A: Well, I thought the first debate Alex Salmond was stupid when the first question he asked Alistair Darling was-, well, I forget its exact format, but it was something like, is Scotland open to invasion by aliens, because that was something somebody had said on the ‘No’ side. There were one or two other similar stupid, stupid arguments of the kind that the ‘No’ side was putting up, and he was trying to ridicule them but he only set himself up as a figure of fun by pressing questions that nobody really took seriously. I mean, all he needed to have said, “Well, look, these are the kinds of things that they’re saying, but nobody believes them now”, and ask a serious question, but I think that he really undermined his position in the first debate. Then Alistair Darling, in his dogged way, managed to really highlight the silliness in that. I think on other points actually Alex Salmond put forward a stronger performance than Alistair Darling did, but I think his whole position was really torpedoed by that way of approaching his first questions. Then in the second debate, I thought he really wiped the floor with Alistair Darling. Alistair Darling just was-, well, he couldn’t answer the question being made, but by that time, I actually think opinion was beginning to change. I was aware after a holiday during the first two weeks of September when my wife and I got back a couple of days before the referendum date. While we were away I was reading some newspaper – well, being abroad and having to depend on digests of news from different papers – and it was clear that the ‘Yes’ campaign were gaining ground. We were in a group with a lot of Americans who were taking a surprising amount of interest, because Americans are usually so ignorant about what’s happening anywhere outside America. So, I think they were really agog and said, “Oh-“. In fact, while we were there, the ‘Yes’ vote in one of the polls got 52% of the total and the Americans were really interested. Well, because I was one of the few Scots in the party I was asked questions by a number of Americans.Q: Okay. Do you think that the ‘Yes’ campaign ran a good campaign?A: They did, yes. They did. Q: What did they do that worked so well?A: Well, I think that-, well I think Alex Salmond is a credible figure. I mean, I know a lot of people dislike him intensely. Not just dislike him, but hate him and think he’s a shyster. There is an element of that about him. He is a bit of a smart Alec, he does bluster and things, but I think there was a lot of intelligence in his points. I remember in the debates, the first debates, he got Alistair Darling on the hop when he asked, “Do you think that Scotland could be a successful small independent country?” and Alistair Darling couldn’t answer because – well, David Cameron had admitted Scotland could be a successful small country – he obviously couldn’t answer ‘yes’ without undermining his own case. So, I think that was very clever. Well, I think that, maybe because I personally was more convinced about the ‘Yes’ campaign, I thought they were a better campaign, but I thought that because the ‘No’ campaign were just so almost uniformly negative, “Y ou can’t have that. If you do that then this will happen, or people are going to flood out the country”, which is ludicrous. Who is going to, because there is a vote for independence? People are going to have to find jobs. Where are they going to find jobs and so? So, there wouldn’t be a rush for, but that kind of stuff, I think, well it put me off. In the longer run, as I said earlier, I think it put a lot of other people off because the campaign was just so devoid of any reasonable arguments. I mean, there are reasonable arguments for the union, but that was the thing that they were not presenting in a way that said, “ Well the union is a good thing. It’s a partnership and we benefit from being in a union. As England benefits from our presence, we benefit from their presence”, that’s my position, but I was willing to vote ‘yes’ because I just thought that the No side’s arguments were so poor. Q: Yes. I mean, did you think that anybody was making those positive arguments about keeping the union?A: Well, I didn’t hear any. There may be-, because there were so many radio debates or radio phone ins, there were people making those comments in phone ins, but these were private citizens.Q: Yes. There wasn’t an official party line? A: No, the people who were from the campaigns were always arguing. There may have been one of two who said “We’ve been a successful union for more than 300 years”, and that kind of thing was said, but there was no emphasis, no focus on the benefits of the union. It was all about the non-benefits of independence.Q: I wonder if you think-, do you think that there were, for the public as a whole, do you get the impression that there was some particular lines from the ‘Yes’ campaign that were influential to people, that were persuasive to people? A: Well, I think the argument about not having money through the Barnett formula. Scotland has a tenth of the population and third of the land mass and therefore needs more resources for those and economic development. The Barnett formula, how far is that a rational formula? I’m sure there must be a strong political element in the decisions made. They’ll say, “Well, we’ll give them a bit more and keep them happy”, but I think there is an underpinning of proper, reason ed analysis. So, I think that, while having said that, I think that people would feel that the way that everything is determined on the basis of a block grant that comes from Westminster on the basis of a formula that nobody really quite understands and then is presented by pa pers like The Sun in England as “Oh, the Scots are just leeching. They are all scrounging and they are all welfare cheats”, and so on, which is another element, I think, that got a lot of people’s backs up and maybe increased the ‘Yes’ vote.Q: Yes. Do you think that the SNP did well out of the referendum? A: Undoubtedly, yes. They increased their membership to become the third largest party in the UK. How far they’re going to be able to build on that is an open question because people may become a bit bored. “Och well, I’ve joined but I’m not going to be an active member”. I think there is always that danger, but the fact that they got such a big increase in the membership was an undoubted effect of the referendum.Q: Do you think that momentum is going to continue through to the general election?A: Oh, I think so. Yes. I think the problem for them is that they’ve got all of these new members who have come in from other parties in many cases. A lot of Labour supporters, for example, as has happened in Glasgow, for example. You’ve seen that the Labour vote has just melted in Glasgow and there may be some concerns, I don’t know, but they will be coming with a different set of priorities and knowing that they have to be brought together and hammered out in a new political setup where you’ve people coming in who eventually agree with some of the things that SNP-, although I think SNP coming forward as a social democratic party with ideas more to the left than the labour party was a big benefit for them, but they are going to have to develop their policies in a way that will keep people with different perspectives and priorities happy. There will be some people from a more traditional position within the SNP who will be arguing for other ways of doing things. Of course, there is still the debate over devolution max, devo max, against independence and that’s always going to be a fault line inside the SNP. I think Alex Salmond’s success was in presenting himself as a devo max person. I think he obviously still ultimately would favour independence, but I think he was able to get a lot of people over from the Labour side by presenting himself as somebody who was seeking more benefits within the United Kingdom for Scotland.Q: What do you think Nicola Sturgeon’s position is?A: I think she’s pretty much like that. Ultimately, again, she is like Alex Salmond, that she would wish independence, but it quite happy to go to some intermediate stage with a view to building on that onto ultimate independence, which I think would have been Alex Salmond’s position as well, but I don’t think that independence-, well it may happen, I don’t know. I mean, if you read, Iain MacWhirter wrote a very interesting book, well he wrote one on the referendum campaign, which I think was very, very interesting, very informative, but he’s written another one called Disunited Kingdom, which came out earlier this month, in which he looks at the referendum campaign and at the composition of Scottish politics. He makes his point about George Osborne saying you can’t have the pound, and he thought that that was an offensive thing to say because it did state a position that a unionist would not state. A proper unionist would say, “Well, we are all together and the pound is as much yours as it is ours”. Anyway, that’s another matter, but I think that he is ultimately saying, they did very well on the ‘Yes’ side. Ultimately they didn’t persuade enough people, but he thinks that ultimately there will be independence. I mean, because of the way things have settled down and because of Westminster’s bullying negative attitude towards Scottish aspirations, that there will ultimately be a successful campaign for independence. So, that’s-, well I’m not sure about that myself, but I think I probably on balance would agree with him, but it does depend – because you can’t say anything definitively – it does depend on the way that Westminster behaves ultimately, I think, and the opposition in Scotland behave. It’s going to be interesting to see what happens in the election. I was hearing Ruth Davidson this morning on a radio discussion, an interview. I’ve got very ambivalent views about her. She comes over as quite an unpleasant person in some respect s, but quite a convincing person in other respects, but she was talking about the conservative vote often getting support and going up in constituencies and how the last time they had an equivalent number of voters for conservatives at the last general election as there were Lib Dems or SNP, but they came out with one victory because they were dispersed across the country. Q: Even with PR.A: Yes, but this is for the general-.Q: Oh right, okay. Okay.A: UK election, not the Scottish election, the British, the UK election. Q: Okay.A: They were going to say that she has now got campaign hopes of those seats and they now think they can win if they get enough people. So, she is talking about – well, I hope that doesn’t happen. There would be nothing worse than a conservative majority anywhere – but that’s what she is thinking. Well, I don’t know how successful, because I think there is such an antipathy towards Conservatives in Scotland that it’s going to be a hard, hard struggle, which she accepts. I don’t know if I went off the point there. Q: No, no. Not at all. Not at all. I wonder what you think about the prospects for Labour now after the referendum in Scotland? A: I think the prospects for Labour are pretty grim actually. I think Jim Murphy doesn’t come over for me as a convincing person. Q: Right, right.A: I think he was a divisive-, he is divisive, I think. He was so prominent in the ‘No’ campaign and so many Labour people didn’t vote ‘No’. In Glasgow, I think, Glasgow and the west of Scotland, Lanarkshire, in the Glasgow area, they lost so many seats-, so many votes there that it’s going to be a hard struggle for them. Q: Why do you think that is? Why did they lose so many votes?A: Well, I think they’ve had such dominance in Glasgow and of late as the council for Strathclyde and for Glasgow. The MPs, I mean Labour MPs in the Scottish party, it’s been absolutely disastrous for their constituents. A lot of shop stewards who are semi articulate and don’t present very convincing arguments, but are there because of the usual if they put up a donkey, it would win because people just vote the same way, I t hink that’s passed. I think people see Labour as a busted option in the west because of the deprivation in Glasgow and in Lanarkshire and Ayrshire. Those-, I don’t know how far you’ve travelled there, but going to Ayrshire, it’s really depressing. It’s like the north east of England where, of course, the decline of heavy industry, the destruction of heavy industry, has left people hanging onto a vote because they always voted that way and then find that at the end nothing has happened. Seeing, well, all of the disgraces over things like MPs’ expenses or tax avoidance, all of that kind of thing, I think again that’s just poisoning the whole atmosphere. Q: Yes.A: Michael Martin, a Labour MP from the west of Scotland was the speaker in the House of Commons, was supporting these expenses scandals. He was telling MPs, “Put that on your expenses claim-“. There was quite a good documentary at play on TV about it, and based on the evidence that was available, he was telling people, “Oh, put that on your expenses because your salary is not as big as I think it should be and you-“. Again, a shop steward approach to things. For his members, he was doing his best. Rather than saying, “W ell, this a representative house for the country and you should really be setting an example”. So, anyway, again that’s going a bit beyond the point you asked.Q: Do you feel that, I mean you were talking about the differences in Glasgow and Ayrshire, do you feel that the support for ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ was very regional?A: Quite a large difference. Glasgow and Dundee, Strathclyde and Tayside, or Dundee, certainly were very strongly ‘Yes’. Edinburgh was pretty strongly ‘No’. Aberdeen was mixed.Q: Do you think that there was variation within Edinburgh?A: I haven’t seen any analysis, but I would suspect there was. I think the affluent, middle class suburbs would have voted ‘no’ and well Leith, parts of Leith, Pilton and Craigmillar would have voted ‘yes’. I suspect, but that’s just pure speculation.Q: Why do you think there was such a divide along the income lines?A: Well, I think income would be influential. People who have got a good lifestyle and things are okay as they are, whereas if you are less well off – since the government introduced these changes to the welfare system, the bedroom tax and all of that kind of thing – then people say, “Is that what Westminster has done for us?” and that is concentrated in areas of impoverishment because it only affects you if you’re in a council house. Well, of course, the much more harsh principles on which benefits are allocated again would be affecting people living in areas where benefits are an important issue. I think Edinburgh tended to support the ‘No’ campaign because Edinburgh has got pretty well full employment – it’s not full, but there is not a l ot of unemployment in Edinburgh – whereas in Glasgow and the west there is. In Dundee, which is beginning to rise, again there is still quite a lot of deprivation. Q: That’s interesting. How do you feel that the mood in Edinburgh was in the run up to the referendum? A: Well, I think people were excited about it. I think it was a very stimulating time actually and I think that has remained. I think people are now much more conscious about politics. I have lunch every month with twelve former colleagues who retired within five years of each other and we inevitably talked over our lunches about the referendum and voting in terms of – well, nobody was every asked, how are you going to vote? But there was a lot of discussion and it was pretty evident from that that the majority, not universally, but out of twelve people certainly the majority were ‘No’ voters and were willing to express quite hostile attitudes towards the ‘yes’ campaign.Q: Right, interesting.A: I think that, of course, that’s a particular segment of the population, very middle class, but they were talking about their neighbours and one said, “I haven’t met anybody who is going to vote ‘yes’”. I did in a later meeting say, “I’m going to vote ‘yes’” for the reasons I’ve stated, to increase the yes vote but in the expectation of an overall ‘no’ majority. A couple of other individuals around the table have said to me that they were going to vote ‘yes’, but didn’t express this to others. So, I think what happened was that in the polls that were taken before the event, several people around this particular table of former colleagues said that they thought ‘no’ voters were unwilling to say that they were going to vote ‘no’ because the atmosphere was developing around ‘yes’.Q: Right.A: That the ‘no’ vote was underestimated as a result.Q: Okay, okay.A: Now, I think there is probably something in that, but I don’t know.Q: I mean, apart from that group of friends, did you have discussions with, I don’t know, members of the family or with people in the pub or cafes? A: Yes. I mean, my wife voted ‘no’.Q: Okay.A: She happens to be English, but that’s not the reason she voted no. She just things were better as they were and there was no problem in it. We didn’t come to blows or anything in the household. We were and remain very amicable. I know that, well one of my sons lives in London and he said he would vote ‘yes’ were he living in Edinburgh. I would discuss it with him in the presence of my wife’s sister’s husband; but I’ll be saying more about that in a minute, but my son said, “Well, I think it would be best to have a federal system”, in the discussion with this brother in law, and my brother in law interjected – it’s so typical, I think, of a certain attitude. It’s not all English people by any means, I’ve got a lot of English friends, many of whom are sympathetic to what happened in Scotland – but his starting line was, “Well, what are they going to do about the national debt?” and that was supposed to be an argument. I mean, well, how they are going to pay their part of the national debt? that was his question. That was not based on a wish to look at the issues. Without any prior discussion, what are they going to do about their bit of the national debt? How are they going to pay that? On the assumption obviously that Scotland couldn’t afford to pay its part of the national debt because it wasn’t rich enough. As it happens, from the campaign, John Swinney had set aside a sum to be paid for the payment of the national debt on an annual basis, as it would be for the parliament of Westminster. As a matter of fact, Scotland entered the union without a national debt, but that’s a separate issue. Anyway, so my son and I know my older son voted ‘yes’. I don’t know about my daughter. Her partner is a very strong Marxist.Q: Oh right, okay.A: Still, but I think he was in favour of ‘yes’. Well, I know he is in favour because we had quite a lot of discussion and he strongly implied-, he didn’t say, “I’m going to vote ‘yes’”, but it was apparent to me that he was going to vote ‘yes’ and I think my daughter would have voted ‘yes’, but she-, well, all th is would be discussed as we were washing up and so on, he would wash and I would dry.Q: It felt like it was something that people were debating. People were talking about it.A: Yes, inevitably. Q: Oh yes, yes. What did you think about the level of engagement, the turnout? A: I thought it was very impressive. 84%? 85, was it?Q: Why do think it was so high and so good?A: Well, because I think the whole campaign generally was an interesting stimulus to thought. I think maybe because it was a long campaign it did make people think. Had it been a shorter campaign, I think the turnout would have been much less. I think also people felt about the issue and felt they needed, because maybe also because it looked as though the vote was going to be so close according to the polls that they must vote in order to guarantee what they wanted and to help it to come into effect what they felt about one or the other side.Q: Okay. I think that’s everything actually. That’s great. Thank you.[Transcript Ends 00:41:09]

# Alistair.docx

Q: Hi, so the referendum ?A: Yes.Q: Were you involved in it at all, in the campaigning or anything like that ?A: No.Q: So, do you remember when you first heard that there was going to be a referendum?A: Yes, the SNP got, after they come to power, they put something to the Clerk. They said they were going to do it and they put something to parliament, so I knew that it was happening and then I knew when they announced it, Salmond announced it.Q: When it first came about, did you think that it was going to have any legs? Did you think it was going to be likely? A: I don’t know. I’ve been supporting independence since I was 14, so I thought that we probably wouldn’t get it but initially, I thought there would be a third option on the ballot. There would be a vote for devo-max and I thought we would get devo-max.Q: Were you disappointed that devo-max didn’t get on there?A: Yes, I think that would’ve been one that easily passed and that would have been a settled vote but people in the commission, probably of independence, might not have come up for quite a while. A lot of people wanted devo-max, I think.Q: Why do you think that devo-max didn’t get on the ballot paper in the end? A: Because Cameron didn’t want it. He’d done a sort of major gamble on his part but I think the main reason is that it definitely would have got through, and Westminster politicians and England didn’t really want a Scotland that had its own financial powers, that that level of free autonomy would, based on the oil revenue, I think it comes down to that they want to control that money from England. They don’t want that money to be controlled from Scotland. Q: Yes.A: So, I think that that’s the major reason why, one of the reasons why that would have gone through but it wasn’t offered.Q: I mean, obviously we don’t know what happened in those negotiations but do you think that there was a gamble on the part of the SNP as well?A: No I don’t think -,Q: Do you think they wanted devo-max?A: They wanted devo-max on the table, yes, definitely, because the SNP’s policy, their consistent policy ha s been to increase the powers of Scotland. The more powers that Scotland gets, the more financial autonomy that Scotland has then more people want independence so they think that it will be a gradual move towards independence. Q: RightA: That’s their-, and if it doesn’t then you end up with the next best option anyway so that’s always been their strategy, I think, ever since I’ ve followed them and Salmond’s been the leader. A: Yes, and do you think that is still the strategy now? A: Yes.Q: It feels like it’s still kind of going that way, you know, slightly more powers?A: That’s exactly their strategy. I think they are still doing that. I think they will still go for that and I think there will be a vote inside ten years, maybe ten years, ten years is a good number, maybe with a campaign two years before that.Q: Yes. So, could you tell us what the feeling in the city in Edinburgh was like leading up to the referendum?A: I think it got a little tense but I think that generally it wasn’t that tense. I mean, I think generally what it was, was people started commenting on either side and some people took it quite seriously. Some people were like, “Right, okay. Well, what are they going to do about this? What do people think?” Are we acting as a group because I want to find out what the people that I love, the interests of people and people had reasons that really affect them and if I think are genuine then maybe I ’d vote differently. So, I think there was a lot of communication about it but it was- , well, Edinburgh is kind of low key so I think it was a kind of low level debate. It’s a low level debate and low level intensity, but communicating about how people thought it was going to actually affect their lives rather than sort of the bigger political concern of, “Oh, we should be independent because of the idea of independence.” Q: So, did you get involved in any of those discussions and debates yourself?A: Yes, there was quite a lot of talking just amongst my circle of friends, so people would actually talk to them about it and that two people, close friends that I had some conversations with, and then a lot of family, talking with family about what they wanted. I mean, my family was pretty already set for what they wanted. Everyone was really voting for independence anyway.Q: Are most of your family SNP voters as well?A: Yes, so two of my family have joined, applied for the first time since the referendum to join the SNP. Q: Right, right. Do you get any sense why they didn’t join before and why they joined now?A: Well, I think they joined now to give the idea of support that, you know, they think just because we lost the referendum, the SNP shouldn’t disappear, so they are still supporting what we want now, whereas before hand, it didn’t seem -, well, yes, I think that’s why they’ve joined now while it was prompted for them to join, whereas before I think they were willing to help but not really that gung-ho about joining a political party. Q: Do you think that was a really well ran campaign?A: Yes. So, I think there was two things. There was a ground campaign and there was an air campaign. The ground campaign of the SNP massacred them, absolutely, and discussions in groups and just amongst social media and stuff, the union party got absolutely hammered. I mean, basically , I think the independence increased their percentage of the vote by about 15%, 12-15%, something like that from just the start to the end of the campaign and also it seems that that’s not disappeared either. So, they did really well.Q: So, you said there is like the ground campaign and the air campaign?A: Yes, so the air campaign is just media. It’s media based.Q: Okay.A: I mean, there was no way they were ever going to win that one because all the media in Britain comes out, the British broadcasting coverage, so it includes on the net.Q: Yes, yes. What about the media in Scotland, like the newspapers and things like that?A: Well, there- I mean, what is there? There’s the Herald and there’s the-,Q: Scotsman.A: The Scotsman’s dead. That was killed 10 years ago, 20 years ago by Murdoch , so that’s not really an independent voice. That just kind of reports other people’s news, I think. The Herald is, yes, was kind of Glasgow. I think the Herald was quite pro-independence in the end, which wa s surprising because Glasgow’s always been more leaning towards Great Britain.Q: But in the end, Glasgow voted Yes.A: Yes, so that was a massive turnaround there. I mean, I put a lot of it down to the realisation now in Scotland that their traditional party are Conservative. So, Blair just destroyed what was left of the Labour Party and made it a centralist based, slightly left side centralist based party and it’s kind of the fallout of that that Miliband is suffering from. So, Brown had a bit more of old Labour about him and he’s Scottish, so I think h e connected with that old kind of voting. In the end, they used that card well and that might’ve swung it for them, the way they u sed Brown in the last two weeks.Q: I mean, he certainly hung out until the end. Do you think that was a deliberate strategy?A: No, I think it was mass panic. Q: Right.A: It just grew [laughter] absolutely. It’s when that poll got published, I think they just threw absolutely everything they had in to make sure that it didn’t happen. Q: Right. I mean, I guess from a work sense, I can kind of understand it , but I mean why do you think Scottish Labour wasn’t in favour of independence? A: Well, because they are unionists. They believe in Britain. I mean I’ve got a couple of very close friends who are Socialists, who don’t believe in divided countries really. They believe in Socialism. They believe in old fashioned socialism. If you believe in old fashioned socialism t hen you don’t believe that we should split up in that case. If you come from that kind of back ground then you’re like “Well, we are a union of hope,” so why split our power as a collective. Q: Yes.A: Also I think-, so, the Labour party is about targeting the whole of Britain, not about gaining from Scotland , so what you ’re doing is breaking off a bit of your support, which is key to you -, well, it’s a help for you holding onto the whole lot again.Q: Now, I mean in the polls at the moment, it looks like the SNP are going to wipe the floor with Labour?A: Well, Scottish Labour, yes, I think they suffer from the major problem that, you know, in ’97, there was a lot of genuine hope. The return of the Labour government after 15 years of Conservatism would restack the books. We would change, we would get back with-, and actually they just totally led the country into a mountain. Fair enough, they did invest money in schools and they did invest money in hospitals, but it’s really a kind of betrayal. I mean, is that really what we waited, people waited and held on for that long to be served up that from Tony Blair. Q: Yes.A: So, a lot of people think “Well, okay, so the option for that ’s gone now , so there is no point in supporting-, it doesn’t matter what I think, there is no party for me to vote for in Westminster,” s o therefore one way of looking at it is to say “Well, I’ll use my vote elsewhere. I’ll look for-,” There is enough power in Scotland to move towards the left. There is party that could do something so why not vote for them ? So, I think that’s how my thinking goes and I think it’s a lot of people. I mean, I thinks that’s why Labour is now in real trouble because they’ve identified with what they did in power for 14 years or however long it was.Q: Do you think that, I mean, how the referendum went had any impact of how people saw the SNP? A: I think so. The referendum does one thing, it focuses you on a single issue whether you think you should be an independent country or not, and a lot of people up until that point hadn’t probably not even have really considered the thought. So, then you’ve got a lot of people actually saying , trying to make a convincing case for it, and there is a convincing case for it and a lot of people bought into that. I think a lot of people just fancied something new as well. You hear something new that you can do that actually has the potential to work that has a chance of us having better lives, and let’s do it, you know, so that kind of positive argument, I think, has worked. It’s led to an increase in the SNP voting, sort of genuine optimism around that. I’m not sure how long it will last. I mean, it’s difficult to know that. Q: Do you think it will survive to the actual general election?A: Definitely, and I think it will definitely survive until the next Scottish Parliament. I think the SNP will probably get returned with a majority quite easily in the next parliament and also I think Labour has got a real problem. They’ve got no real talented people with them, not really a strong party of people, so I’m not sure whether they are going to get it or not. I mean, Johann Lamont is terrible. She was one of the worst political leaders that I have ever seen. I mean, she might have been good behind the scenes or something, she might have had good policies but actually, as a front man, she was the worst political person that I have ever seen. She was almost [laughter] almost non-existent. She did have a party speech when she was walking away, you know the leaders after their speech, they go round and they shake hands with people and they’re kind of confirming their alliance ? Well, people were hugging her and trying to give her the strength, shall we say, shuddering about saying, “Who is this?” and she got through her speech anyway but she needed support, and that’s not a political leader. Q: Do you think the public are onto that kind of thing? They want to see everything, like strength and function?A: Yes, I think they want an image of someone who is capable and who fits the image of what they think a Prime Minister should look like or a leader should look like . Q: Yes, and what about Salmond stepping down?A: Yes, I think that’s a good move. I mean, he’s getting older now anyway and he’s quite a decisive figure, although I’m not sure that Sturgeon is any less decisive, but he’s quite a divisive figure and he’s a true politician, but it allows him to creep sideways a little bit on some things that were said as well . Salmond said, “ Ah, you know, it’s a generational thing . It’s 10 years. It’s maybe once in a life time, once in a generation.” He said that so he can’t really turn around and say, “In six years’ time, our generation is up,” you know.Q: Yes.A: It’s just going to get round again. So, it’s not about moving on, so there’s not going to be something for now for a while, so you get your leader in place, you get people liking them, get people identifying with them, and then in 10 years’ time switching someone in or in six years’ time, switching someone in that might not work out, so you’ve got time to live or die.Q: Do you think Nicola Sturgeon is going to have that longevity?A: She’s good. I mean, she’s good. She’s a good politician. I mean , I’m not sure she is very likeable. I’m not sure if she is that nice a person but she’s a strong politician. She’s good. She doesn’t get knocked about too much. She doesn’t get knocked off that policy too much. She’s strong, she communicates reasonably well, and I mean , I think that’s about as good as she can do. I mean, she’s not got like charisma of like Blair or somebody. She’s not like that but she’s miles better than someone like Lamont, or Miliband who is basically just an electoral.Q: Yes, and do you think that charisma is important to get-? A: Charisma is very valuable in a politician somewhere. A bit of charisma is very valuable. I don’t think it’s necessary. I think what’s necessary is-, I would think a capable leader would have a face that people think, I can vote for you. I think, you look like you’re strong enough to deliver what you say you’re going to deliver and you present an image in which people don’t feel opposed to it, or people aren’t thinking something is wrong with it and then if you’ve got that, it’s enough.Q: What about the level of individual MSP’s in Scotland?A: I think they’re alright. I don’t think they’re great but I don’t think the MP’s in London are great either. I think it’s about the same. I don’t think there is a big drop down of level there, but I do think at the higher level-, you see, I think there is a problem with British politics about the level of candidates as well. So, I think it’s much worse than what I tell you and I think a lot of it has to do with the fact that power has moved away from Westminster and to large corporations in globalisation. So, what does that matter, you’re the Prime Minister of Great Britain but, you know, when Google comes calling, you get down on your knees, what ’s the point of that? Q: But the same thing’s not true of Holyrood here?A: No, it is true of Holyrood. The same problem exists in Holyrood that exists in Westminster so there’s a problem that the level’s got because power structures have moved and the tal ented and ambitious people who want power have gone into business. They haven’t gone into government now, they have gone into corporations. So, you’ve not got Scottish people in those things, but I think you’ve got talented enough people. I think, it’s okay. The level’s alright but I think Labour’s got a problem because it draws off its best people to Westminster. So, Douglas Alexander who is a pretty good politician. I don’t like him but again, he’s like Sturgeon. You can ask him a question on anything and he can give you a politician’s answer to that question and he can sound alright. He can get out of it, right. I suppose maybe there are some politicians, I couldn’t really name one but again, every time you see him, he will get out of that question and then he’ll get in there, he will change it around and give you the point and you’ll be like, you know, he’s good. He can do that. There’s another guy, a Labour guy, guy with a funny name. I can’t remember. Anyway, he’s really good as well. He’s like party chairman or something. There’s a couple of guys in Labour that are quite good and Balls is quite good. He’s a bit like Salmond who’s just punchy. He’s like, you know, just give him a line and he’ll just punch it through and stuff it, you know, “Okay, I’ll get that line in.” I don’t know how they ended up with Miliband and his disasters. There was a great thing about that he is the only person who is fidgety in a still photo [laughter]. It’s like a photo of whatever he does, he still looks like he’s fidgeting. It’s amazing.Q: So, what’s you predictions for basically Scotland and Britain now? The general election is going to come up-,A: Right, so I think there’s two things that might happen relatively quickly. There might be a complete re-settlement of fixed sort of federalism over the next 10 years. That’ s kind of what’s been talked about and the Lib Dem’s pulled in the whole thing about the House of Lords and all that so in other words, it’s very long grass kind of stuff, but if someone did come up with a good settlement for that, the Scottish people would probably vote for it.Q: But everybody come to power saying they were going to reform the House of Lords. I mean, not just-, A: Yes, reforming the House of Lords as part of this the whole federalism of power, so it’s a proper settlement for Northern Ireland, a settlement for Wales, a settlement for England. So, that’s so difficult but if it did come about, and I don’t think it will come around because it’s too difficult, but I think probably what will happen is that there will be a long grassed area where nothing is really happening and then a gain, a push by the SNP if they get elected, not this time but in five years after that, again for a thing within their parliament. So, it would be five years, 10 and then five years they would be in power, four years they would be in power so they’ve got nine years and then they can say, “Okay, well, it’s going to be nine years , and we’ll push again for it now,” and then I think Westminster will put some form of devo-max on the table and Scotland will vote for that.Q: What about in the meantime? Do you think the SNP will engage with Labour? A: They won’t need to. Q: Do you think they will stick it out themselves? A: They won’t need to. They will get a majority. They’ve got a majority now, so they will get a majority next time. I think, as I say, Labour will be in trouble. I mean, they might get wiped. They’ve made an interesting move with this guy-, what’s his name? He’s really prominent for the ‘No’ campaign, the new leader of Scottish Labour. What’s he called?Q: Oh yes, yes.A: I’m really bad with names. I think he will really solidify the ‘Yes’ vote and a core ‘Yes’ vote will really come out against him because they hate him, and the ‘No’ vote will get some of the traditional Labo ur ‘No’ vote. He’s doing a lot of stuff like going round, you know, ‘man of the people’ stuff like food b anks and all that kind of thing, you know, putting out stretched hands and all that crap. I think he will get a lot of the Labour core out, so that might hold them a bit. They might not completely collapse but they’ll not get in, I don’t think, and I think the SNP will get a clear majority, but not with the mandates that do anything more than haggle with Westminster about the powers that they’ve been given and I think that’s actually-, I think they’re best not to even bother with that, just concentrate on being in power, doing a good job-,Q: In Scotland, yes?A: Yes, with the powers in Scotland, do a good job with that until the next parliament, solidify their thing and get ready for-, yes, I think the real poll of the SNP next time will not-, securing independence will be keeping devo-max off the shelf.Q: Right.A: Or maybe not even devo-max, but a better offer like, you know, a second offer. So, the union ist parties have got time to put something in place that looks like devo-max, but isn’t really devo-max. They were shouting devo-max when Brown came out with his thing. George Galloway described it as devo-max plus, which is quite interesting how you can have maximum devolution plus anything else, but even the title gives it away that it’s just total nonsense or something, but it wasn’t even anywhere like devo-max they were offering and wh at they ended up giving was almost nothing. So, I mean it’s ridiculous. So, I think they might come up with a decent devo-max plan and say, “Look, these are your options, three options that reflects the votes,” Scotland’s quite cautious so they will always go for the middle vote.Q: So, did it feel disappointing after the referendum?A: Oh, yes. People were gutted. A couple of people told me it was like someone had died. It felt like that. It felt like a lot of hope and a lot of love had died there. I think that’s actually not the case. I think, it’s not died and I think people will get over that. It’s very disappointing. I think the major thing that people felt disappointed about was not the negative campaigning or the difficult way of the media in the two weeks before but the fact that the Scottish people didn’t go for it. A lot of people thought they would go for it.Q: It got really close. It could have gone either way on the day, I think. Did it feel like that?A: No, I think it felt on the day like it wasn’t going to happen. In Edinburgh, you could feel that it was quite a strong ‘No’ vote, but I think that a vote of kind of fear and of uncertainty and not really about wan ting to stay in the union. I think some people had wanted that but I don’t really think it was about that. I think it was just about that it was too difficult to work out whether this was the best option or not. It was a leap of faith in a sense. As I say, this could be good. This could be optimistic. Let’s do that and people were like, “Yes, but we don’t know.” We don’t know.Q: Do you think that’s because you think Labour’s been kind of scaring people or did the SNP not present what would be the consequences of independence? A: I think the problem is that it is not quantifiable. I mean, it’s easy to say that Scotland would be a successful country on a certain level but it ’s hard to say that you would be better or worse off under this system because it’s hard to work out where you’re going to be first of all on one side and on the other side, it’s hard to know exactly how all this stuff would work out. So, I don’t think anybody’s suggested that they could actually give you a definite answer to that question and there were lots of other things that were just like -, it made things more uncertain with a lot of things, queries about passports and things like that , which was just nonsense. I mean, you were born a British Citizen so you’re going to remain a British Citizen if you want to. They can’t take your citizenship away from you. So, there were lots of things that were silly but that just added to the overall, but I think the main problem was that that central question about whether this will be a better or w orse place is not quantifiable. The more you think about it, the more you are like, “Well, what do you fall back on?” You fall back on whether you have a positive outlook and you think of how these things could be or you fall back on the concerns you have about them, and a lot of that comes do wn to how much you have to lose and that comes down to how much you have to gain, and a lot of it comes down to the fact of your basic psychology, whether you think that things will work, pursuing, per chance, or whether you think that, “No, we just stay where we are.” I think the only certainty was that it would have been a more Socialist country and so the people who were drawn to that, I think supported ‘Yes’ on that basis. A t least a lot of people that think in those kind of letter terms, they were drawn to it on that basis. I think a lot of people just weren’t able to figure out for themselves the question of how they would be in 10 years’ time or whatever, and so they were just cautious. They were too cautious. They said-, well, they were just cautious. They said “Well, we don’t know, so we’ll just stick with what we’ve got.” It was an interesting thing about the regions. The strong ‘Yes’ regions were the ones where the turnout was lower.Q: Right.A: So, I think that was people who wanted to vote ‘Yes’ but at the end of the day got worried about it, didn’t want to vote ‘No’, so just didn’t turn up. So, Dundee and Glasgow, I think those were the low turnouts. I think that’s why there was a drop off in the figures, or one of the reasons why there was a drop off in the figures between the week before and the actual poll. Q: Yes, yes.A: They say that was always going to happen.Q: I mean, even so, the turnout was amazingly high.A: The modern politics is nonsense. You’ve got a vote between two parties which are practically identical and you wonder why nobody turns out to vote. The genuine choice is not there.Q: Okay, so why did everyone come out to vote for the referendum?A: Because it was a genuine choice. It was a definite-, it’s like why people vote on TV panels for this guy or this guy because your vote actually makes a different and that’s going to count for a start. Q: Yes.A: So, in most Scottish things, it’s always going up, so you don’t need to vote. Most places in Britain are like that , so tu rnout is always going to be lower, but just genuinely, it just directly affects like-, the question is, the things that would affect it were much more than anything that’s going to happen in a general election, right.Q: Do you think turn out will be as high for the general election in Scotland? A: No, because you’ve got big seats who have never voted anything but Labour.Q: But some of them are predicted to swing to the SNP?A: Yes, but still I don’t think that’s going to-, yes, turnout might be the same. I think that if you had independent issues, if you put independent issues to the electorate then the turn out would be high, the turn out would be higher, which is one of the important issues.Q: I mean, is it time to switch to that kind of system?A: Well, I would.Q: Should we be voting not for parties but for policies?A: Well, it’s in this system?Q: Yes. I think some might turn out for those things, wouldn’t they?A: I think it should, and I think it should be virtual. I think maybe they should have a half- way house, a party in government that’s like doing one thing but then have a sort of virtual House of Lords which people vote in and you could bring that in over like 20 years and then have a virtual Chamber, so the politicians put forward issues and if they start a manifesto, they would have to get it passed by the people. It then means we get proper manifestos being put forward rather than the nonsense that we actually get to vote on. So, I think if we are going to change the British system, that’s what I would do. It would probably take 20 years to warm it up. I mean, in 20 years’ time, we are going to be able to do electronic voting properly something like that, with just photo ID, so that would work.Q: Awesome, cool.[Transcript Ends 00:32:08]

# Eila.docx

Q: So, do you remember when you first heard that there was going to be a referendum?A: I don’t think I can remember a specific point because it was such a long run up to it that I’d forgotten when it started.Q: Do you remember any of the stuff about what the wording was going to be or what was going to be on the ballot paper?A: I do remember them having big arguments about whether there was going to be a ‘maybe’ on the ballot paper and I also remember some discussion about whether or not the question itself was a leading question or whether it was unbiased enough. It seems so long ago, but it was so long ago, but no, I can’t pinpoint when they actually were like, “Yes, we are definitely going to have it and it’s going to be this date”. Q: Do you remember at any point beginning to get excited about the prospect of it or interested in what was going on?A: I was always quite interested in it. I would never say excited because I didn’t want it to be a yes vote. So, I was quite interested in the arguments for and against. Having some friends that were for and could argue quite well for it. I knew some people who were against just for terrible reasons. So, it was quite interesting hearing their sides of it even though I’d decided well before. So, it wasn’t that they were going to change my mind and equally the other way round.Q: So, what were these convincing yes arguments or these disappointing ones?A: It seemed to be the NHS side of things in particular. I do remember something on the news years ago about how the care for the elderly is better in Scotland and how Berwick upon Tweed wants to come back into the border because of-, but I think some of the arguments were concentrating on the NHS and care for everyone. Whereas in England, it seems to be going very much down there, “Lets farm it out and privatise”, and all of this. That was quite attractive. They seemed to also be talking the arts quite a lot. Obviously it’s something that generally interests me. Q: Like the music industry?A: I think arts in general. Although it could be because one of my friends who was a very firm yes is a musician. So, it might be that I was getting a slightly biased view, people saying this that and the other. But I was never entirely convinced by the financial thing based on oil revenue and it’s probably just as well, but there are other things like what they were going to do with the money seemed to be a really good thing, rather than where they were going to get it from. I think they do just-, they seem to give this impression about caring, to whatever degree of truth there was, caring about the people rather than just some kind of…Q: Do you think that the campaigns were generally well run?A: I get the impression that the political campaign was certainly quite well run initially from the yes. I think towards the end it got a bit, on both sides it got a bit, “Let’s have an argument and lets promise things”, and just in the last few weeks it seemed to be getting a bit silly. There seemed to be a lot of people that I came across that weren’t really bothered by the politics, were just “Oh, we’re Scottish. We’re voting yes”, or, “Yes, we are Scottish, but we want to remain part of the UK”. So, it didn’t seem-, a lot of the people I came across, particularly at work seemed to just make the decision on gut feeling rather than really looking into it and then would have great arguments about why they were right without actually having proper basis to it. So, that got a little annoying, but that was more the people that the campaign was aimed at rather than the politics itself.Q: That’s interesting. Were people open to talking about it at work?A: We certainly had a lot of people talking about it. We get a lot of taxi drivers through who are quite opinionated anyway, and a quite a few builders, and because we have papers in the shop, they’d read the latest thing from one side or the other and they would start off some kind of debate. The last few months were a bit cloudy for me because I was worrying about funding in the run up to it. So, it was kind of-, I’m interested in this but I’m rather scared it’s going to go yes, but for funding reasons. Q: Okay. So, you’ve had your own reasons?A: Yeah.Q: Right, right.A: Well before then I decided I was going to vote no for staying in the EU and-, I think if there had been a maybe or a devolution max option, I would have gone for that and I know quite a few people who voted yes who would have gone for devo-max. O ne person who was actually hoping it was going to go no, but was voting yes to try and get devo- max because you’ve got so many people who voted yes that you’ve got to consider it. Actually, I think that’s one of the-, I was glad it was tight just because of that reason. It needs to force more devolution, but when people started talking about having another referendum in three years’ time, it was just a little but ridiculous. They spent so much money on it the first time that we need to leave it for a few years [Laughter].Q: Do you think it did help that it was so close, for extra powers and so on? A: It’s quite difficult to tell because you-, without thinking well-, if it had gone a definitive no. Even if it had been 20%, I think Westminster would have had much more of a reason to rein in on all the promises they made. They are not exactly sticking to the timeline they had said, but they would have gone, “Well, maybe you don’t really want it”. I suppose they would have had to have done something having promised, but then maybe if it hadn’t been running so close in the weeks running up to it, they never would anyway.Q: Do you think people are still paying attention to that now?A: I don’t know. My opinion is slightly skewed by my other friends who are still quite interested in it themselves and bring the topic up quite a lot and try an almost turn it into an argument because there are people on either side, but because of that it’s in my mind a bit more. The taxi drivers have certainly stopped talking about it. The Daily Record has stopped printing about it. So, I think it does seem to have disappeared into the ether a bit, at least in the general stories that they deal with, but with my friends it seems to be more…Q: You mentioned the Daily Record. How do you think in general the media coverage was?A: Certainly with the papers like the Record and stuff that we get in the shop, it was ridiculous because one day they would be pro and then the next day they’d be against. That’s not really the point of a balanced view is it? To be one side one day and one side the other. You’re supposed to present them at the same time. It’s a bit difficult to tell because when I read the news myself, I tend to go to the BBC and then I-, but everyone is going to be biased slightly, but I didn’t notice the bias everyone was going on about afterwards. The whole BBC doing this and that and the other. Perhaps also because I read the BBC website, but I also waken to the Today Programme. So, you get slightly different spreads of things.Q: How is it different on the Today Programme?A: I think because they’ve got more time than a short article on a website and also because they are trying to fill in time. You get a lot more interviews from either side, whereas you just get a small quotation on the website from either side, you would get the whole thing in the morning. So, you’ve then-, you’ve not got the editor bias of someone going, “ Right, I’m going to pick out that quotation”, like they used to do with CD reviews. “This CD was the greatest travesty ever”, “ This CD was the greatest…” I know no one does it that extremely, but say with the live interviews in the morning, you do get the editing that you get on a website and in the written form.Q: Do you think that-, did you watch any of the TV debates?A: I didn’t actually. I think by the time we got to the TV debates I was slightly sick of the whole thing going on for so long.Q: Did you see any of the highlights or anything like that?A: I don’t think I even did that. It was not just that I just didn’t want to, I think I was actively at that point. I had just had enough. There is only so much of something you can take before you start getting fed up with it.Q: So, you’d been feeling media saturation?A: Yeah. Especially in the last couple of months. It was just everything was about the referendum.Q: So, in Edinburgh, on the streets and stuff, what was the mood? What did it look like?A: From where I am, I thought it was going to go yes because there were so many yes posters in windows. I think there were quite a lot of yes posters around Merchiston as well. One of the things I’ve been wondering, a lot of people had posters for yes, but not that many people had posters f or no. So, are all the blank windows no? In which case it’s going to go no, or are they a mixture of yes or no? Are people avoiding putting no in their windows to avoid getting eggs thrown at it or something? Equally, in highly no areas, the yes was the same thing.Q: So, you thought it was quite regional?A: It certainly seemed that different areas of Edinburgh seemed to have different-, at least from the spread of the yes posters. Q: Do you think people were really afraid to advertise themselves as being no?A: I don’t get the impression in Edinburgh, but I’m pretty sure they were-, there were some-, I know there was at least one example in Glasgow where a shop got-, certainly egged, I don’t remember if they got their windows smashed afterwards. They certainly had a lot of ball though because they had a no poster in their window. I mean there are going to be isolated things of that wherever you are. I don’t think it was particularly a Scottish referendum thing, but it was a bit of a shame. Q: How about now? What is the mood in Edinburgh like now, do you think? A: I don’t know. I mean, there are still places around me that have yes posters or-, one flat has got an E poster, because they had Y, E and S before. I think the S dropped off first and then the Y, so now they’ve just got the E. It’s like, Yorkshire independence, E.Q: Maybe one day we’ll see that [laughter]! So, do you think that the SNP have done well out of the independence debate? A: I don’t think-, they’ve certainly become a lot more prominent. They seem to have been become more known about down in England and its quite-, it was quite interesting hearing from my parents how their friends were reacting to all the media coverage of the referendum. I think they seem quite reactionary against it and were like, “Oh well, if they’re that desperate to go then they should just go”. What was the question again?Q: About how the SNP did out of it. A: Yeah. So, I was actually-, I was surprised Alex Salmond stood down because I don’t know if there was any need for him to do so. It’s great that we now have a female leader and everything. We nearly had all three major parties having female leaders, except the Labour woman resigned the week Nicola took over. So-, and I think they-, because of the focus on what they wanted for Scotland and all of the things like the NHS and stuff, I think they brought themselves across in a very good light and now that the referendum is out the way I would consider voting for them on that basis. They do seem so concerned about how people are living, whereas the other parties seem so secure that they, I don’t know-, but there are other-, the more nationalist side of the SNP I find harder to deal with, not being Scottish.Q: Do you think that they will do well generally out-, in the general election? Do you think with the independence on the back of the rest of it all?A: I think it’s possible, yeah… They now seem to be going for the lets fight for devo-max. So, I would think that that would push them forward a bit more, but I always find it very difficult to tell how these things are going to go.Q: What about Labour? What is the fallout for Labour of the referendum?A: I don’t know. Labour seem to have become such a non-party in a way since Tony Blair. It’s hard to see them really being forgiven by the electorate for all of the stuff they did for them. So, I don’t feel like Scottish independence or not is going to make a huge amount of difference in their-.Q: So, what kind of things are they not being forgiven for?A: I don’t-, well, things like the Iraq war and partly the crash, although I know that’s mostly America, but the booming economy or the inflated economy over here didn’t help either. I always think that their party doesn’t seem that cohesive with-, no one seems to like their leader. Q: Is Ed Milliband a major problem, do you think, in Labour?A: I guess so. In the same way that in the end Gordon Brown was a great problem for Labour, despite the fact that actually it-, those last few weeks before the independence run, he really showed me what an intelligent person he is. He became such an object of derision really up to the last general election and I think Milliband seems to be going the same way.Q: Why?A: I don’t-, the impression I get from clips of him speaking is that he doesn’t really seem to be as open minded to that much, never mind what his party’s policies are. I mean, the latest one, talking about-, yesterday I think, was in Prime Ministers Question Time or something, making some comment about-, it might have been Afternoon in Parliament, but he was talking about how Labour are supporting business and how he was having some fancy meal with business leaders and he couldn’t remember their names. He was like, “ Oh yes, Darren somebody, he used to be the CEO of such and such”. I was like, well, I do that occasionally, but I’m not on TV-, and also, I’m not in the Houses of Parliament trying to run the country. He could at least have-, if he was going to make a point of it, he could at least have written something down. The fact that, okay, he delivered his party conference speech from memory, but then he forgot part of it. So, actually he didn’t deliver it from memory and he would have been better using the autocue as a safety net. So, its silly things like that that are not necessarily anything to do-, in fact, are nothing to do with his policies most of the time, but because he is making such a hash of other things, it makes it difficult to get past that to find out what their policies actually are. It’s just part of their general media I think. Q: They are focusing on those blunders?A: Yeah.Q: Right, and the Tories?A: I don’t-, I mean-.Q: How did David Cameron come out through the independence debate?A: I don’t know. I didn’t get the impression that he really did that much apart from the last week when he say, “Oh, actually no. We’ll give you this and we’ll give you that and we’ll give you-“. I think I remember more about Boris talking about stuff. I can remember anything particularly specific, but I remember he was talking about how Scotland should stay with the UK and the advantages of the EU, and then he was the one who seemed to actually be making proper argument rather than just going, “Oh yeah, well the queen doesn’t want this and blah, blah, blah”. Just like Gordon Brown was making some very good arguments as to why all those-, devo- max should be great, but we’ll just stay in the union. It seems to be some of these people that are on the side lines, at least the cabinet ministers and so on. They were actually making valid arguments and then the actual leaders were playing up a bit more to the media.Q: Right, right. Do you think Nicola Sturgeon is going to do alright?A: I hope so. She seems-, she comes across as very capable and very intelligent. Hopefully that will stand her in good stead and she won’t just turn into another pauper and start making silly mistakes, but she seems to be doing well. I think the thing that she was talking about recently about lifting the ban on SNP MP’s voting in English debates when there is something that will affect Scotland in the long run, I think it’s a very good idea. It’s a great principle to say, “Okay, no. We’re only going to vote on Scottish stuff”, but actually, there are some things that if they happen in England they will affect Scotland.Q: What about the new Labour leader in Scotland and that process.A: I don’t know. It kind of passed me by slightly. I think as it was in the middle of the hype about the changeover between Alex Salmond and Nicola Sturgeon and then-, I knew that the previous leader was resigning, but I missed the new person coming in. So, it hasn’t really come across my radar that much, which perhaps is telling in its own right.Q: Yeah, maybe you’re right. Okay. I think that’s pretty much everything. A: Awesome.Q: Thank you very much. [Transcript Ends 00:25:22]

# Helen.docx

Q: So, when exactly did you move to Edinburgh?A: I moved last year.Q: Oh, okay.A: So, just over two months now.Q: Were you following all the stuff about the referendum?A: Only at the last minute. I started to take an interest at the last minute because it just seemed to go on and on, and it was sort of changing scenarios and I thought I’d wait until the last minute and then-, because I knew I was going to be coming here, I was starting to feel a bit anxious about what the result might be.Q: Right, right.A: So, it might affect my being able to come to Scotland.Q: How come?A: When I was living in England, I had a small fear that there might be some sort of restriction on immigration although when I did hear, I looked up online about the Scottish National Party’s attitude for immigration and they actually encourage it, so that’s okay.Q: Yes, so you were going to be safe in that event?A: Yes. I thought I’d have to cultivate a Scottish accent [laughter].Q: Yes [laughter].A: Although I do have Scottish parentage.Q: Oh, okay. A: I’ve worked here. I’ve lived here before actually. I’ve lived and worked here but I wouldn’t really call myself Scottish.Q: Right, and do you think that apart from the immigration issue, were you worried about Scotland becoming independent and the impact that that might have had?A: I was in two minds. Do you want to know whether I wanted them to become independent or not?Q: Sure.A: Well, having listened to some of the arguments, I felt that emotionally, I think I felt towards the end, it could be quite-, I didn’t agree with the ‘No’ arguments. I didn’t agree with whatever they called themselves, the ‘No’ people, because I thought it was a very negative campaign. Q: Right.A: They didn’t give any good reason for remaining in Britain.Q: Right.A: For my own personal reasons, why I thought Scotland shouldn’t have gone independent is because I’m not in favour of nationalism.Q: Right.A: I see separatism as a very negative thing. They’re dissociating. I mean, I’m in favour of being a member of the European Union. I’m in favour of more cooperation, not less. I just thought, I can understand the historic reasons why Scots feel a bit weak and they might want to boost their own identity but I just thought it’s a negative step and it shouldn’t-, the aftermath’s been all this talk of British, English regionalism and I think especially it’s pandering to nationalists in a bad way and that are pandering to UKIP. I think that’s horrendous and there’s an element of racism to it. So, on the day the vote was announced, when they said that it was a narrow ‘No’ that it wasn’t going to be independence, I actually felt emotionally quite upset.Q: Right.A: My head said I was relieved but my heart was like, hmm, a bit upset. I think I would’ve been swept up in favour if I was here. Logically, I think it was a bad thing to go independent.Q: Well, what was the emotive argument then?A: The emotion was because I feel quite Scottish, so yes, it’s the Scottish people speaking up for themselves and deciding their own future.Q: Yes.A: I just felt-, I didn’t feel economically it was going to be a bad thing for independence. All that talk of, “Oh, you’ll be worse off.” Who knows? Nobody knows. No economics can predict, and I felt some of the motive of going independent was anti-English, so I thought that was a bad thing.Q: Right. You said that you didn’t-, you thought that the ‘No’ campaign was pretty negative. A: Yes.Q: I mean, can you remember any particular messages in the campaign or anything like that?A: Well, the one outstanding example and this is really not pertinent in any way is John Major appearing on the radio or Today programme that week before the vote and he was the main interviewee after the ten past eight and he was asked to give his opinion of why Scotland should vote ‘No’. All he did was, he kept repeating, “It would be extraordinary if Scotland became independent. It will just be so extraordinary,” and he couldn’t actually come out with any-, I mean, extraordinary is an adjective or an adverb, it’s not an actual argument against going independent. He just kept speaking that word and I thought, he’s just blowing himself up as having no fundamental rationale for opposing it. He was just opposing it because the Conservative party did.Q: Yes.A: So, also a little bit of me-, I wouldn’t vote Conservative in England, so a little bit of me was glad that David Cameron as a Conservative was being made to look a bit stupid.Q: Right.A: A bit of me was pro-independence for that reason. Also, if I might’ve voted Labour in the past and I knew Labour had opposed independence and I knew if Scotland got independence then that would be bad for the Labour party. It might make it harder for them to get into power in England, so I was a bit sad about that [laughter].Q: Do you think the Tory party came out looking bad?A: No, I think up to the election, they looked pretty bad but the day after the result was announced, they started to turn it to their own advantage by using it to say, “We want regionalism” and this is the devolution of power from Westminster. So, I think the Tories managed to twist it round and make themselves look like they’d won somehow.Q: Okay.A: So, I wasn’t pleased about that.Q: Yes.A: I must admit, I really am quite anti the Tory party if I brought my heart into it.Q: Yes, and what about Labour?A: I think they were just in a bit of a muddle because a lot of the SNP’s policies are quite left wing, I think, and Labour ought to be, that should be their ground so the SNP were sort of stealing Labour’s voters. Not stealing in a bad way but taking over Labour ground, so the Labour party have lost out on support because they’ve tried to go a bit more middle to counteract the Conservatives. I think Labour will have done quite badly out of it.Q: Right.A: They’re a bit rudderless because Ed Miliband, the nice chap though he is, I don’t think he’s a very strong leader. Q: Right, right. You don’t think much of their chances in the general election?A: No, I don’t think they’ve got any chance of winning, in my view.Q: How come?A: I think Ed Miliband is-, he doesn’t appeal to most people. He’s a bit too intellectual and not capable of putting his argument across, and these days when a lot people decide to vote based on what they see on the television, he doesn’t come across at all well on the television.Q: Right, right.A: I think what happened to me during the referendum campaign, I became much more in favour of the Scottish National Party, and Alex Salmond and Nicola Sturgeon. I just don’t like this idea of nationalism. As I say, I don’t like this-, it’s harking back to the Second World War and the Nazis [laughter]. The ultimate expression of nationalism.Q: Yes, but do you think that-, I don’t know. Do you think Nicola Sturgeon, for example, comes across better on TV and interviews?A: I have to admit, I don’t actually have a television at the moment.Q: Oh, right. Okay, okay.A: So, I hear her on the radio. I think she comes across very well.Q: Okay, okay. A: She’s very clear. She seems intelligent. She’s very good at arguing, discussing, and thinking on her feet.Q: Right.A: So, I like Nicola Sturgeon. I like Alex Salmond as well. I think if I’d have been living here though, I might’ve voted ‘No’ but I do like those two. I like those two better than any other party leaders at the time [laughter].Q: Right. Any idea why? I mean, as individuals rather than-?A: As individuals, I thought they seemed more positive.Q: Right.A: They seem more genuinely to have a conviction and believed in what they were saying, when I think with a lot of the other leaders, I don’t really trust them.Q: Right. Did you watch any of the debates?A: No, I didn’t, again because I don’t have a television, and I thought, “I can’t be bothered to watch that online.”Q: Yes.A: I listened to the analysis bit on the radio.Q: Oh, yes.A: Radio Four, and I can’t really remember what was said about-, was it the TV debates?Q: Yes, yes. A: I think the first one-, was it the first one Alex Salmond did very badly and the second one he did well, or the other way around?Q: Yes, I think that’s it. It was a bit of a surprise, I think.A: Yes. I don’t know how much that influenced people’s votes. It might reinforce people’s preconceptions but I don’t think it necessarily changes people.Q: Right.A: I could be wrong.Q: Yes.A: I think it’s a great thing to have a TV debate though.Q: Do you think it’s going to happen for the general election?A: I think so, yes. I was once at an edition of Newsnight, and I was filmed at Newsnight. Q: Oh, yes.A: One of the invited panel was Farage.Q: Oh, right.A: 'Niggle Farridge' as they call him, and I didn’t know much about him at the time. This is 2010.Q: Yes.A: In real life, in person, he came across as incredibly convincing although I knew what his policies were so I wouldn’t have agreed with that at the time. I just found him-, I can see why people would be taken in by him. He’s quite charismatic, I suppose. There was another guest, the union leader guy, was it Bob something?Q: Oh, yes. The RMT guy?A: Yes, the chap who died was there and I agreed with what he was saying but he came across as too frightened and he wouldn’t have-, he didn’t look like a nice-, as an appealing and attractive person politically but I preferred him to Farage just b ecause I agreed with his views, that’s all. That shows your preconceptions, you know, aren’t necessarily changed by having a live debate. I do like the fact that you can see people in the profession and get to know-, judge whether they’re being genuine. Q: I mean, did you ever have any contact like that with your local MP or MSP or anyone like that, councillors or something like that?A: I have actually, yes. When I was living in a very rock solid Labour constituency, an industrial town. The MP, he’s a local chap. He took over from the other guy who was there at the same time, so he got in and he was just a local lad who’d done well for himself. So, I didn’t have any opinion of him but there was a couple of things I got involved with in the town and I met him personally and then he helped out with an issue, pursued an issue, and he helped me. He wrote several letters and I thought he was quite good actually, personally. What it was, they did some renovation work in a public park and they removed one of the footpaths.Q: Oh, right.A: It was so illogical when we seen the ground plan so I kept writing to the council asking them to reinstate the path and I didn’t spend a lot of time on it, I just kept sending more letters and emails, and Iain Wright got involved, and he helped. Q: Okay.A: I got a good impression of him. Now, I know a lot of people can’t stand him.Q: Oh, right, okay. How come?A: Well, I think because they don’t like Labour really.Q: Oh, right.A: I think it’s politics, it’s nothing personal. Q: Even round in there now?A: Yes, yes. I mean, even if it’s the safe Labour seats, there’s still quite a lot of people vote Conservative. I don’t know what the percentage is. Q: Right, yes.A: Basically, people are quite set in their opinions, aren’t they?Q: Yes.A: I mean, my brother, he’s a complete Tory. We try not to talk about politics at all because it can get quite nasty [laughter].Q: I mean, I know you weren’t in Scotland but did you talk to anyone about the referendum and politics, like your family or at work or anything like that?A: I knew from what I’d heard that my family were dead against independence and they’re all quite right wing so I thought it best not to engage with them because then my views will emerge but there’s a nice woman who played violin at our orchestra events.Q: Oh, yes. Oh, right.A: And she’s Scottish. This was about two weeks before the referendum. She didn’t know I was going to move to Scotland at the time so I didn’t bother mentioning that, but I said, “Oh, Sarah,” I said, “how do you feel about the referendum?” and she suddenly became alive and she became very animated. Now, she’s been living in England for quite a while because her husband is English and her children are English. So, she just got very emotional and she said, “Oh, I do wish I could vote in it. I would love to one day move back to Scotland but I don’t think I can because of my children.”Q: Right.A: And she says, “Logically, I should vote ‘No’ but I think if I had a vote, I would vote ‘Yes’” and she got quite emotional. It was this Scottish identity thing. I asked her after the referendum how she felt about the result and she said, “Well, it’s probably for the best,” and she thinks she got carried away.Q: Oh, right. Oh, that’s interesting.A: Yes, so I think Denise Mina, the novelist from Glasgow, she summed it up really well. She said it was like a big party and if you voted ‘No’, you felt like a party pooper.Q: Yes. Well, I guess the ‘No’ campaign were advertising the status quo to a certain extent so it’s always difficult to be cool and radical, I guess, if you’re campaigning for the status quo.A: Yes. I suppose that comes down just to the wording of the referendum.Q: Well, yes. Yes.A: If the wording of it somehow went, ‘Would you like to remain part of Britain?’ ‘Yes’, or, ‘Would you like to remain part of’-, if you ended up saying ‘No’, there’d have been an even stronger vote against independence. Q: Yes, maybe. A: It’s very key with the wording.Q: It’s interesting because it sounds to me like you’re talking about quite a lot of people you’d spoken to who’d got an emotional view in one way or another, and then there’s the kind of policy aspects.A: Yes.Q: On top of that as well, so the head and the heart aspect.A: Yes, definitely.Q: Is that right?A: Definitely. For a lot of people-, I think a lot of English people have a romantic attachment to Scotland. They like to come here for holidays. They like the thought of tartan and haggis, and it’s the same way they have that romantic attachment with Ireland. England don’t have Scottish or Irish ancestry but I think they have a real fondness for it, and I think those people felt that they were going to lose something if Scotland voted ‘Yes’.Q: Right, right.A: I, myself being somehow Scottish, I didn’t feel that way. I thought, I knew I could always have a new Scotland. I knew I’d still be half Scottish.Q: Do you feel that the media was very balanced on the issue?A: The media I listened to was mostly Radio Four and particularly the Today programme. I think James Naughtie, I know he was trying to be balanced but I couldn’t help feeling he was a little bit pro-, I think pro-Scottish and also therefore pro-independence but unfortunately, that’s what it boiled down to. If you were against independence, it began to become that you were against Scotland.Q: Right.A: I thought that was coming across in the-,Q: From the media?A: No, just the whole campaign. Those people, or possibly by clever PR by the SNP that if you were going to vote ‘No’, you were voting against Scotland and so that’s Scottish people voting against themselves.Q: Oh, I see.A: Of course obviously the-, I know that the perception was it was the rich people in the establishment who were against independence and less well-off people were for independence. As I wasn’t here, I wouldn’t really be able to judge that.Q: Yes, sure. Sure.A: I kind of regretted not being here for the referendum because I decided to-, I set the date I was going to move here quite a long time in advance and then two years before that, I thought, “Oh, this referendum is not going to amount to anything” and I was quite surprised by how it took off.Q: Do you remember the first time you heard about the referendum, that there was going to be one?A: I remember hearing a discussion about it in 2011. At that time, it was devo-max or what the wording was going to be.Q: Yes.A: So, at that point, I was looking up online, possibly in ‘The Scotsman’ and ‘Glasgow Herald’, to find out what it meant. So, I did know about it before it was fixed, yes.Q: Do you think that what actually ended up on the ballot paper with devo-max removed was kind of significant in how things played out?A: Yes, I think so. I think it made many more people progress to thinking they could go independent. I think the outcome for the SNP is good either way because the SNP seem to have created this huge desire for something different, what’s the word? Offer it, build it and they will come.Q: Yes, yes.A: So, a lot of people who wouldn’t have thought they wanted independence got swept up and they do now.Q: Right, and do you think those people might have voted for devo-max otherwise?A: I think so, yes, but that would’ve been equally good. It would’ve been a step towards independence.Q: Yes.A: I don’t know how I feel about it at the moment and I don’t know if those people who were going to vote for independence, who did vote independence, will vote the same way.Q: Mm, so maybe just knowing the outcomes after the referendum?A: I don’t know. I’m not sure how that would-, how people would vote the same or if they would change.Q: Right, right.A: I’m not sure what the after effect has been. I’m quite surprised how little I’ve heard about it since I’ve been here.Q: Right. Have you been following any of the stuff about extra devolved powers and things like that?A: Up to a point, but I find that-, because I don’t like the English side and I’m quite distressed by what they’re suggesting. I think going down that road is a bad move and it’ll be hard to come back from it, for England for English regionalism. To me, it’s also-, somehow in my head, I associate it with things like what they’re doing to the health service with this semi-privatisation where they’re getting local health authorities, GP’s to run their own services, and also what they’re doing with the education system with the so-called academies. I don’t like any of that and I feel it’s all part of the same trend. It seems to be ill thought out. It is nothing more than a trend. If it’s part of some political ideology, I don’t understand the rationale. I don’t believe it’s going to make things better. It just seems to be the Conservative party seeing how far they can push us. Q: I mean, do you think there is any policy beyond this political ideology?A: I think it comes down to old fashioned story of people like the individual at the expense of cooperative society and communities help getting together, so privatisation of the railways, for example, I’m still very much against that that happened and the only party that seems to be speaking of re-nationalisation is the Green party and I prefer that ethos to the privatisation ethos and the every man for himself. I almost think the nationalism, unfortunately to me is in that party. It’s in that group of policies.Q: Yes, yes. Have you looked at the Green party at all?A: I just heard the committee-, I think she might be the MP for Brighton on the radio at lunchtime and there were some of the things she mentioned.Q: About re-nationalisation of the railways?A: They want to encourage the Labour party to consider that.Q: Oh, okay. Okay. Where do you think the SNP sits on those kinds of issues?A: I don’t know. It is a funny thing though. I got a leaflet through the door from my local MP and I turned it over. I read both sides and I couldn’t find anywhere the mention of what party he was in, so I looked up online on his website and I couldn’t find it on there either, so I went to Wikipedia and it says he’s in the SNP so I thought, “Why isn’t he advertising that fact?”Q: Oh, right. That’s unusual.A: I don’t know. I just thought, “Why is he not playing that up?” Is it something he’s trying to hide? I don’t really know much about it, I guess. In all honesty, I’ve been a bit pre-occupied with house hunting since I got here, so I haven’t had-, and I also haven’t started to listen to the Scottish radio station yet, BBC Scotland, so I must start tuning into that. I intended to read the local news when I got here and I haven’t got around to it.Q: Oh, okay. Do you read any of the Scottish newspapers or anything like that?A: No, I haven’t done that yet [laughter]. I’m still acclimatising. Q: Yes. You don’t want to have culture shock by immediately kind of-,A: Well, I did mean to but somehow, I haven’t gotten around to it and I really do like to be up to date with the current affairs. I mean, I am interested. You can probably tell from the way I’m talking.Q: Yes, yes. Sure.A: I feel it’s one’s duty and I’ve already registered to vote so I’m ready to cast my vote and I’ll have to look into it as homework [laughter].Q: I mean, do you think, because we were talking about local MSP’s and MP’s and stuff like that. I mean, at a local level, do you think people generally vote for the politician or the party?A: At the local level?Q: Yes.A: I think for the party, yes.Q: So, it’s kind of their policies that-?A: I believe so. I believe people vote for the party they always voted for.Q: Yes.A: I think it goes a long way back. I mean, I lived in Ireland for quite a while and the extreme example there was you would vote for the party that your great grandfathers fought for in the civil war, allegedly.Q: Right.A: Those divisions-, it’s not a division so much, it’s just a, sort of, family trend.Q: Yes.A: Maybe nowadays, a lot of people grow up and they leave home or move to another area and get more independent, with thought, maybe that’s the same.Q: Maybe, maybe. It seems interesting because at the moment, the polls have seen quite a strong shift from Labour to the SNP in Scotland.A: Yes.Q: So, I’m just kind of interested in-, for a lot of the cases, I mean with Labour MP’s in Westminster who have actually been there for a long time.A: Yes.Q: Serving their constituency for a long period of time.A: Yes.Q: I think in some cases, it’s a case of decades or it could be a swing away from that.A: Yes.Q: It’s interesting to try and unpack those issues.A: I feel that it might be because Labour’s policies have drifted away from what they used to be.Q: Right.A: To become more centre and it’s sometimes harder to distinguish the Labour policies from the Conservative policies and I think that was under Tony Blair that drift to the right happened so I can understand why that has been a vacuum created and the SNP has managed to fill it. I have to say, I used to think of the SNP as a right wing party and they’re not. They’re a very left wing party, aren’t they?Q: Yes.A: So, it’s a bit like UKIP. I mean, what do UKIP stand for? They used to stand for one thing; get out of Europe. They’re even trying now to find their own identity. Their policies change on a daily basis. I think they’re always going to be Conservative rather than-, a new party seems to grow into its clothing really. The Green party in my mind has always been a left wing party to those issues but historically seem to be more left wing.Q: Yes, definitely. I mean, do you ever look at societies in the continent, in Europe comparatively? I know, for example, the Green party are much stronger in places like Germany. I think even in Scandinavia and things like that.A: Yes. Yes, possibly. I don’t know much about those policies. I suppose, those things are a bit more advanced in some respects, yes. We actually class ourselves to be so important but we’re just an island, aren’t we? [Laughter]Q: Do you mean kind of like more socially advanced in a way?A: Yes. I mean, Sweden is socially advanced, intellectually advanced possibly as well.Q: Maybe.A: I do worry about France as I think they’ve always been maverick, haven’t they.Q: Yes.A: Promote a national front.Q: Yes. It seems to be a lot more-, I don’t know. I don’t mean what they were, but the French political system seems a bit more turbulent, I guess.A: Yes, maybe it’s because they have proportional representation.Q: Yes, yes.A: So, it’s more volatile. That’s another thing of having to-, I’m not really sure how I feel about proportional representation. I think I’d vote for it in a referendum.Q: Yes, yes.A: But I’ve never really heard a convincing argument which is a better system.Q: Right, right.A: You can get down to number crunching then, wouldn’t you?Q: Yes.A: I don’t know.Q: Do you have any kind of feelings on the Lib Dem’s at the moment?A: I have voted Lib Dem in the past, but I wouldn’t do again since they went into alliance with the Conservative party.Q: Right, okay.A: Another thing, I don’t really know-, I’m going to have to agree that before the next election, which is of course coming up very soon, I’m going to have to do my homework about how to use my vote now that I am living in Scotland and the effect that’ll have in whether I’m voting for a Westminster MP or an MSP.Q: Yes.A: So, I seem to have more votes here than I would’ve had in England.Q: Yes, I think so.A: [Laughter]. It seems wrong somehow.Q: And presumably the outcome is quite complicated because I think the MSP’s are proportionately elected, aren’t they?A: I don’t know. Q: And the MP’s won’t be, so the votes could go different ways in each of the elections.A: Yes, exactly. So, you’ve got your MSP for where you live and then there’s another one covering several areas including your area. Again, when I was in Ireland, we were voting proportional representation there so I’m quite used to the single transferable vote thing and all that stuff.Q: Okay.A: It might be the same system here.Q: Yes.A: But it does give scope for endless discussion.Q: Yes, that is true. Q: But maybe the referendum could show that people could still really engage with issues when they’re feeling disorientated with political parties in general, why they did turn out so low in general elections?A: I don’t know. Maybe it’s to do with how much time the media devotes to it.Q: Yes.A: People spend a lot of time watching television and it reflects what they’ve seen on the TV, the perception agenda.Q: Yes. Well, I mean they’re thinking about the general election on the TV in the run up to the general election.A: People have seen it all before, there’s no novelty.Q: Yes, maybe that’s true.A: When I first moved to Ireland though, I was very struck by how people there seemed to discuss politics over there.Q: Oh, right.A: People who you wouldn’t regard as being very well or very much educated, seem to be able to express an opinion and they seem to be better involved.Q: Oh, right.A: Than people in Britain and I think that’s a bit of a generalisation but I was really struck by it for several years-,Q: Right.A: It seemed to be more of a custom in Ireland to discuss current affairs than here and it seems to me that’s what happened in Scotland just before the referendum, that more people were drawn into discussing it who wouldn’t normally and it would be lovely if that could have happened more.Q: Yes. I mean, do you generally feel, now being in Scotland, that you think people talk about politics more?A: I have to say, I haven’t really had the chance to find out because I haven’t really focused on that. In fact, I think there’s been a deadly silence. I think they’ve written about it afterwards and there’s still quite a few ‘Yes’ signs in the windows. I didn’t see any ‘No’ signs up. There’s still a few die-hards in the village.Q: Did you hear about the 45+ movement?A: The what, sorry?Q: The 45+ movement?A: I did actually. That’s-, well, they’re the ‘Yes’ voters, aren’t they?Q: Well, I think it’s at least 45%, and more reportedly.A: I did hear about it. I heard something on the radio but then I thought is that also the 1745, it’s a bit of a coincidence.Q: Yes, maybe that’s it too, yes.A: It’s harking back to a long time ago though.Q: Yes.A: I think I’m not really mixing enough with Scottish people yet to be able to judge the side by side. I haven’t been here long enough to develop a network with people yet but I’ll get there.Q: Yes. I mean, do you think that going forward, there’s a sense now that people have shifted allegiances in Scotland, do you think, as a result of the independence debate?A: I don’t know but I can somehow feel that people haven’t, that they might’ve gone back to their position before they were swept up in the emotion of the referendum. There may have been a slight shift. I do know that a lot of people joined the Scottish National Party and they had a massive increase in membership but I’m not sure if it’ll last until renewal. I don’t know if those people will renew those subscriptions. I think we’ll see a slight increase.Q: Do you think Labour generally did a good job with their campaigning?A: No, I don’t think so. I think they failed to convince, me anyway. They didn’t seem to know what the message they were trying to get across was.Q: Right. Why do you think that was, because Labour’s quite strong in Scotland so you kind of feel that they should have had their finger on the pulse?A: I think there were too many issues. It’s one question but it comes down to so many different issues. It’s hard to encapsulate it, and also there was the thorny problem with Labour and Conservatives both wanting the same result, so finding there were two of them combined [laughter], that was always going to be difficult and they had different reasons for wanting the same result, didn’t they? I mean, I think Labour just didn’t want to lose all of those seats in Scotland and lose the voting. The vote for Labour in Scotland is a large percentage of the Labour party’s support into Westminster.Q: Yes.A: They kept saying oh, if the referendum is a ‘Yes’, the Labour party won’t get in again. That would’ve been a massive-, they would’ve had to reform the party.Q: Do you think for the same reasons that-, I mean, do you think the Conservatives did a good job campaigning for ‘No’?A: Well, no. I think they made a hash of it actually. David Cameron looked like an idiot [laughter] I’m so prejudiced against David Cameron and when he came-, because I’m told with Cameron, his advisors told him not to come to Scotland because he might make things worse and in the last week, he thought, “Well, I’d better go after all,” and probably looked like a wally really.Q: Because he just came last minute?A: Yes, in a panic. They were obviously panicking and there was a tape recording of his phone call. He thought his microphone was switched off and he was speaking to another leader of some country. They recorded him, he thought he wasn’t on the mic and he was heard saying just after the referendum what a close shave it had been and how they were all panicking.Q: Oh, right, okay.A: Yes. It was one of these-, they were filming these two leaders and they thought their mic were switched off.Q: But do you think it would’ve been in the Conservative’s interests in some ways if Scotland had got independence, because as you said, they would’ve had a lock hold on England, I guess?A: I think the reason the Conservatives did not want Scotland to leave was because it would make them look bad. They are the new leading party and it would make Cameron look like he’d lost so I think it was just as much about pride. I know there must be more controversial reasons than that but I think at the time, Cameron could lose leadership of the party because he’d have lost Scotland.Q: Right, right. A: I think that was the reason. I think he’s starting to feel a bit hated.Q: Yes.A: [laughter].Q: Yes. Well, I think that’s pretty much covered everything actually.A: Do you know something? I don’t know if this is relevant but when I’m discussing politics, I’m not talking about discussing it with you because you’re just asking me and I’m spouting an opinion, but if I’m talking to a friend and we’re discussing politics, I always enjoy it more if we agree and we have similar views. I do not enjoy talking to somebody who has an opposing view from me because I don’t enjoy conflict so that might be a reason why I don’t discuss politics that often.Q: Right. That’s probably normal, isn’t it? I mean, most people like people to agree with them, eh, and don’t really like conflict.A: Some people enjoy it [laughter].Q: Yes, but I think they’re probably the minority though, yes. Anyway, thank you.A: Okay.[Transcript Ends 00:43:39]

# James.docx

Q: So, I don’t know about from your point of view but if you remember when you first heard that there was going to be a referendum?A: Well, at least two years in advance.Q: Right.A: But it was pretty obvious that there was going to be one the moment the election happened and the SNP got into power as the majority because then they could go ahead with their manifesto plans to hold a referendum. So, it was obvious it was going to happen, it was just a matter of when, and then there was this delay for two years. Everyone thought they were going to have it quite quickly but then they decided to have it in two years hence to try and gather support, I think.Q: Right.A: And of course the opposition parties complained about that because it was two years of debate and distraction from the real issues of Scottish politics.Q: Oh, I see. So, Scottish Parliament is a distraction?A: Yes, because it overwhelmed every other issue. Everything depended on the referendum, like the run up to a general election, all issues are plugged into that issue, that one issue, that one important thing right from the start, so a two year long campaign actually. So, I knew about it at least two years before.Q: And what about all the debates about what was going to go on the ballot paper?A: Oh, yes. Yes, that was exciting. ‘Do you want Scotland to be an independent country?’ Was that the wording, I can’t remember, ‘Do you want Scotland to be an independent country?’Q: Was it, ‘Do you think that Scotland should be?’A: ‘Should Scotland be an independent country?’ was the thing they arrived at eventually but the SNP had got an extra few words in which made it a more positive light, ‘Do you think Scotland should be’ or, ‘Would you like Scotland to be’. I can’t remember what it was but one or two words at the beginning which gave it a slightly more positive spin than that flat statement, ‘Should Scotland’.Q: Right.A: Or, ‘Do you agree’, ‘Do you agree that Scotland should be a’, yes, so that word agree was too positive because everyone, if you’re asked to agree to something, you usually say ‘yes’, so the opposition parties complained about that. The Electoral Commission decided in the end that yes, that word ‘agree’ was a little dangerous so they cut it out and it was a vote for, ‘Should Scotland be’, but that debate went on for about six months, and of course the Westminster parties all got involved in that and the Westminster government, I think at certain times, they wanted to form the question itself, not let Scottish Parliament form the question but they retracted that eventually along with the other retractions about voting age and spending and other things. Q: Yes, yes.A: And the date, yes, they gave away the date.Q: I mean, do you think that that longer campaign did benefit the ‘Yes’ campaign?A: Yes, because in my view, it was all about the bad handling of the economy by the Westminster government and the cuts. So, the longer the cuts went on, the more people became opposed to the Westminster system and therefore they voted for SNP, so yes, it was a successful tactic and it almost succeeded, almost won.Q: Yes, very close, and what about the devo-max option on more power?A: Yes, yes. How long did that debate last? Again, about another six months or something like that but yes, Alex Salmond did offer a second question. In a way, it was slightly rapscallions because he knew the opposition parties could not agree on what the second question should be precisely but on the other hand, it was tempting to them to have that second option because then everyone would get what they wanted in the end, which was more home rule for Scotland. The ironic thing is that, in the end, democracy has shone through because that’s what we’re going to get, even though we voted ‘No, we’re going to get much of the powers of devo-max. That’s not the full powers of devo-max but we’re going to get an awful lot of them, so in the end, the process has been bizarrely contrary but it has worked out as what the people wanted in the end.Q: Do you think that those powers are significant enough? I mean, because there was a lot of concessions and discussions before the referendum on what extra powers might be offered.A: Yes, they’re quite complex and can seem a bit hard to work out. You get all of income tax but you’re not allowed to set the starting rate.Q: That’s right.A: I think you’re allowed to set the thresholds within the starting rate but not the starting rate. Q: Okay, so the base rate is still 20%, so it could come in later?A: Yes, it could come in later. I think that’s right. It’s all rather complicated. That’s just on income tax and then there are these welfare powers which are still being negotiated now, and then there are other powers like aggregates tax and stamp duty and other things which are coming, all of which are quite complicated. So, in a way, I suppose that allows both parties to claim victory, doesn’t it, you know, that you could interpret them as massive powers or you could interpret them as minimal powers. Of course, they’re still arguing over whether it’s 20% of the spend in Scotland or whether it’s 40% or 60% or whatever. So, the answer to your question is, yes, we have achieved a lot of roll out as a result of this process, yes.Q: As you were talking about during those negotiation process the opposition parties, you mean the opposition parties in Holyrood?A: Yes. Yes, absolutely.Q: So, kind of, Labour and the Lib Dems and a couple of Tories?A: Yes, yes.Q: So, how do you feel that Edinburgh, as a city, was kind of feeling in the run up to the referendum?A: Well, I thought Edinburgh, you would imagine, would have been against it because there are so many English people here and were so lowland and were so anti-SNP until quite recently, but then what happened was that the poorer parts of the town began to debate, “Well, we want to escape from Westminster posterity and we also want to give Westminster a bloody nose because of what they’re doing to our welfare and our wages,” and all the other complaints that they have and so they joined a, sort of, popular campaign to raise the blue saltire and so if you walked through Craigmillar, for instance, during the referendum campaign, it was astonishing. Saltires were out everywhere. There was a great feeling of public participation and not quite anti-English feeling but certainly a strong Scottish, patriotic feeling, you know. So, I think the city did change quite a lot during the last nine months, I suppose, in the run up to it.Q: But you think it was quite regional?A: Within Edinburgh?Q: Yes, regional variations.A: Yes. Yes, because I mean as a campaigner during this campaign and, you know, if you stand on Morningside Road, you get a third of people who are SNP but quite quietly SNP and two thirds of people who are violently against independence and, you know, offer to take your hand and say “Well Done” and, “We mustn’t allow Salmond to separate us from the rest.” I thought it was very divisive actually.Q: I mean, when you say it was divisive, were there very many people that changed their mind, do you think, or swing voters?A: Well, there must’ve been. A lot of people changed their mind at the last minute, wasn’t there, to get that 45% result but I was campaigning about a year before and most people had made up their minds at that point but presuming there were a lot of people who did change their mind at the last minute, they say women changed their minds or hadn’t made up their minds until the last minute, and then a lot of them swung in behind ‘Yes’ because of austerity, I think.Q: Did you talk to people who, when you were campaigning, who you felt could have been persuaded either way?A: No, probably not, but on the other hand, they were persuaded, weren’t they? When you ask people, they had a definite view one way or the other all the way through that two year period, yes.Q: Right.A: It was hard to argue someone round, you just ended up annoying them, yes.Q: Okay. What were the main issues that people were bringing up for or against, do you think?A: Well, I suppose, the health service was one, certainly the SNP fighting people about the health service and I think that worked. I think people were worried. They were worried about-, this is people who wanted independence in the end because they thought that the Westminster government was destroying the health service down South and they would privatise it up here as well and they didn’t want that. What else frightened people about Westminster? More Tory rule, more austerity, I suppose. They’re frightened about the public services and I suppose they became less frightened about things like pensions and so on. They thought that in the end, that could be worked out some way or another and they kind of believed Alex Salmond’s assurances that these things can be worked out. Q: So, do you think that those economic issues, I mean not just pensions but also-?A: I think so, yes.Q: That was a big deal for people?A: I think, yes, it was. I think the economic issue was quite strong. Funnily enough, because everybody thought at the beginning of the campaign, it’s going to be decided on emotional issues, isn’t it, and Alex Salmond kept saying, “No, it’ll be about economics,” and in the end, I think he was right.Q: Right.A: Yes, until perhaps maybe the last week when Gordon Brown got up and started talking about British investment and he did worry people about pensions and about leaving a large economy, and then I think at the very last minute, say the last week, people thought back on the economy, but interesting, wasn’t it?Q: Yes. A: Which factors played against time, yes. There must be academics writing about all that now. I’d be interested to read that also.Q: Do you think that speech by Gordon Brown was quite a watermark moment?A: Yes, it was, yes, and I suppose the way the press handled it as well. They gave him a very positive spin and built him up or something. Alex Salmond says, you know, Gordon Brown did swing it quite a lot. Q: Why do you feel he waited so long to get involved?A: Yes, it’s puzzling. I’m not sure he knew entirely what he was doing, you know. I’d like to know what persuaded him to come out of hiding in the last week. I just don’t know.Q: Do you think he was personally conflicted?A: No.Q: Okay.A: I think this British thing got to him, certainly when he was Prime Minster, you know, the British link was important right through his years in office. I suppose, at the last minute, he must feel that he had to contribute to the campaign and then he got on the stomp and just gruel and gruel and gruel as you do in those roles, and then ended up manufacturing this vow, which has turned out to be quite successful. Q: Yes, yes.A: I was quite surprised but it did work, you know, and now it’s being delivered, yes.Q: Yes, yes. How do you feel that the Labour party in general did out of the campaign against independence?A: I think they messed it up completely, and so did the Liberal Democrats and the Tories. I think they misjudged the mood of Scotland right from the start, you know, by opposing the whole idea of the referendum that, “You can’t have a referendum. It’s going to be illegal, ” they said to start with, “You can’t have young people voting,” “The question has to be vetoed by us,” and then they started coming up with, “You’ll lose every defence contract you’ve ever thought about ,” “Your pensions will be in danger,” “The Scottish economy will be ruined,” “Your oil revenues are nothing like what you thought they were,” and all of these very negative things, I think were a disaster.Q: Right.A: Every time these ministers flew up from London, Alex Salmond gained each time from these warnings it was extraordinary.Q: Was it like scaremongering, would you say?A: Yes, it was scaremongering and I think until the last week, they completely misjudged that and I think they should have had a much more positive spin and said, “What can you gain out of being part of the union? We’re going to defend the health service and since the Second World War, you’ve built up this welfare state, the Beveridge state,” and so on, “It’s something that Britain should be proud of. Look at the Olympic Games which we staged and we helped to do the Commonwealth Games, it wasn’t just an Alex Salmond project.” All of those things, I think, should’ve been pushed much more and they failed to do it until the very last minute, you know. Q: So, you’re saying that you don’t-, because you said earlier it didn’t feel like it was a very emotional decision in the end but it sounds like some of those things actually when they’re put like that become quite emotional, that they should be positive about something rather than being negative about something.A: Yes, they were. It was emotional, except for that-, perhaps the one exception is people who got frightened about the economy at the last minute. So, do you remember there was that poll of 52% in favour of and that was a Sunday Times spectacular. That was a terrific finding, you know, what a piece of news, and that sparked Westminster to wake up and it also perhaps worried people, “Oh, this might actually happen now,” you know, “Are we sure about our pensions and leaving the larger economy?” and I think perhaps some people who were part of that 52% perhaps fell back in the end.Q: Did you realise how many of them there actually were?A: Yes, I wondered how many there were. I don’t know.Q: Do you think the campaign has worked out, in terms of legacy and things like that, well for the SNP?A: Yes, I do because they showed that they could get far more than their usual third of the vote. They nearly won and they got all these new members, community enthusiasm. They did reinvent the town hall meeting. I went to a couple of them and they were always full the ones I went to, even in my part of town which is quite a rural part of town. They seemed to do nothing wrong during the referendum and now you get to hear that they’ve redeveloped it, they’re riding really high polls, they’re getting almost devo-max, devo-plus anyway, and they’re able to argue it’s a step on the road to independence to put quite a positive spin on it all. Now, moving into this election, they’re way ahead of Labour. I know the gap’s closing but they’re still way ahead of Labour. They’ll do very well. Q: I mean, to a certain extent, to an outsider that may seem surprising considering you could say that the SNP actually lost that referendum-,A: Yes, I know.Q: But it doesn’t seem to have affected confidence?A: No, it doesn’t, yes, yes.Q: Why do you think that is? Why do you think that Labour is feeling seemingly punished or less favoured?A: Yes. It had clearly lost a lot of its original support to get to that 45%. Some people decided they’d had enough of Labour and Labour wasn’t the old Labour we used to know.Q: Right.A: And all these left winged policies had been ditched and they want to go back to that so they thought, “Let’s give Labour a bloody nose and let’s vote the SNP,” and they seem to have taken over that ground and I’m not sure they can win that back, you know.Q: Right.A: I just think they’ll be quite mature voters, I would guess, those who have decided to leave Labour and back the SNP. I’m not sure about that but I would guess that old style Labour voters who were just fed up with Labour-,Q: Yes, the new Labour.A: And therefore they won’t change their minds at the last minute.Q: Right, right.A: You see.Q: Yes. I mean, what about the prospect of the Liberal Democrats coming into the general election?A: Well, I think they’re dreadful myself. I’m a Liberal Democrat myself but I think they’re the people to vote for. First of all, they should never have gone in with the Tories in my view. Q: Right.A: That panic after the last general election, ten days of panic, and a lot of people in Scotland didn’t want it to happe n but of course the party down south decided that it would go ahead with it, and then they reneged on their tuition fees thing which was dreadful. It didn’t affect us directly in Scotland but it affects us morally. It’s still on our doorsteps and that’s what people say, “Oh, you gave in on tuition fees. You went in with the Tories, you’re just we-Tories,” and I think that’s unforgiveable, and then also we went ahead with the austerity programme and that’s been devastating in Scotland. So, I think we’ re in for a really great punishment and in my view, quite rightly. We just made the wrong decisions. Q: Right.A: I think the party’s got to take it on the chin this time and rebuild after the election, again as people begin to forget what we’ve done.Q: I mean, is there a story that you have about what the Liberal Democrats were able to contribute as part of the coalition?A: Yes, there is. I mean, there’s a hierarchy in there. The Liberal Democrats keep emphasising this, you know, that we raised the tax threshold, we got identity cards done away with, we put more money into schools in England and it’s up to the Scottish government to follow suit in Scotland and all the rest of it, and all of these achievements that actually in my view, they could’ve got the same if not more by remaining out of government, being in the Commons and linking up with the other parties to achieve these things. They could’ve voted with Labour over the schools programme. I think the Tories kind of came round to the idea of raising the tax threshold so it would’ve been a Tory idea which they could’ve supported in parliament so I think they would’ve won at least all of those things outside government as in it, and yet without being tarnished by joining it, the Tory government. I think it was a big mistake. Q: Is it tempting for you at all to kind of switch allegiances?A: To switch? Well, I’ve been in the party as a quiet member for about 25 years or something, more than 20 years anyway, an old Liberal actually 40 years ago was the Liberal Party before the Democrats came along, so I don’t think you should desert parties, you see. Q: Okay.A: I’m one of those people who believe that you should just stick with one party and argue within that party for what you want.Q: Okay.A: At a conference time or whenever there’s an election in sight, the priority vote for the candidate you want to try to get the policies that you want, and stay within one party throughout. It’s very tempting to leave the Liberal Democrats at this time when they’re going to crash, you know, and join the Greens probably in my case. Also, the Liberals have great long tradition which is hard to turn your back on, isn’t it, because your forefathers have been in it and they’ve had this fine tradition of home rule and all the rest of it, and probably a large established party just keeps rolling on. I’ve been to two conferences in the last few years and it’s astonishing how the conference seems unaffected by the ratings in the polls or by the disastrous results in the elections but the party just rolls on and on.Q: Right, right.A: The detailed policies are discussed, people bring out policy papers, elections and the bandwagon keeps rolling. It’s not a bandwagon. The machine keeps rolling forward. The tradition keeps rolling forward. It’s quite nice in a way, like a very big tanker at sea. You don’t want it to swing about too much, do you? Q: No.A: You want it to just cruise ahead and move sort of more left and right as the generations pass, you know.Q: Like the winds.A: Yes.Q: Ties a little bit on the same course.A: Yes, and if you can influence it slightly here and there then fine. You get to know people inside the parties, you know, you’d hate to feel you were letting them down.Q: Yes.A: So, yes, you stick with it through thick and thin unfortunately.Q: So, on a slightly separate note, I mean, how important do you think, like individual leaders, the profile of individual leaders was in the independence? I mean, David Cameron but especially I guess Alex Salmond and-, A: Yes. He was brilliant. I don’t think he made a mistake in the whole campaign. His strategy was excellent and then his presentation was excellent, and he’s always been able to give the Scottish people hope and I think that’s key to any election campaign to give people hope when things can be about austerity needn’t happen and all that, “Scotland can make it on its own.” I think he had a very positive message and he’s been brilliant at spelling it out. Nicola Sturgeon is equally brilliant and the rest of the party hung together. There was no di vision among them or anything, or disputes and so on, like getting the Labour party or even the Liberal democrats so, yes, they’ve been the leaders. So, Alex Salmond was strong. David Cameron, well I think he did misjudge it. He thought he could just ignore it and it would all go away and then gradually that panic at the last week, he really came up. I think that 52% in the Sunday Times shocked it for the week. They thought, “Goodness, I’m going to be presiding over a nation which is going to split. We’re going to lose a third of our nation under my premiership,” you know, “this is a disaster.” So, he was absolutely shocked and I think each visit he came north, it was a negative result. I think normal people did vote against him because he was seen as a posh boy who was pushing the interests of rich people in the South of England. Who else have we got? Ed Miliband.Q: Darling?A: Well, Darling. I’ve known Alistair Darling for a long time actually. Q: Oh, right, okay.A: He’s never changed. He did slightly when he was a left wing member of the Edinburgh Administration as a Counsellor but apart from those few exciting years in the 70’s or whatever it was, he’s remained very much Alistair Darling. He was on a campaign at the university he did get elected actually.Q: Oh, right.A: As I say, he hasn’t changed a bit apart from the colour of his hair. His eyebrows have remained the same colour.Q: Yes, they have.A: He’s a lovely man and he’s very competent and thoughtful and all the rest of it, but he does lack charisma and he admits that himself, I think. A friend of mine once said, “Politicians should be dull because that makes them responsible and they make the right decisions and so on,” and so he complies with that rule that politicians should be dull.Q: Do you think that was deliberate that he was chosen to kind of be the face of the ‘No’ campaign in a way?A: Yes, I think in a way looking back on it, that was probably the wrong decision. I think perhaps they did need someone who was more emotional and more charismatic and I think in a way, Jim Murphy has kind of got that role in his hundred city tour. What was it? A hundred day tour when he went round all the various towns and then he did galvanise the ‘No’ campaign quite a bit which Alistair Darling didn’t.Q: That didn’t receive quite as much media attention as just the TV debates did, I suppose?A: Yes. Well, the he did get-, the egg throwing incident really raised it, didn’t it, and it was lucky that he was struck by that egg because then it made everybody think, “Oh, well that’s a shame, they shouldn’t be doing that,” and so they kind of warmed to him after that, I thought. He took it very well, you know. He didn’t retreat into a café and so on, like some others have done before. In a way, he’s benefited from that and he’s the Labour leader.Q: Yes.A: As for the Lib Dems, well, I thought Michael Moore was very good and he was calm, quiet and a sensible rugby player type, you know, who could put across the ‘No’ campaign quite well and our need to be British and he was playing soft ball with Scotland which is, I think, the way to go. London made the wrong decision to replace him with Alistair Carmichael because they thought just because Michael Moore lost the debate with Nicola Sturgeon on television was no reason, I don’t think, to change him. Nicola Sturgeon made mincemeat of anybody.Q: Yes.A: Alistair come out as put in as the sort of hard man and I think that was just a role approach. I think that eliminated people actually, so I don’t think he came out of it very well.Q: I mean, it sounds like a similar thing from the Labour party and the Lib Dems as basically that there’s been a leadership change in Scotland that’s kind of been pushed on them from Westminster. Is that fair to say?A: Yes, it was in the Lib Dems case, I think so. I think most of the people in Scotland were quite happy with Michael Moore and then Alistair Carmichael was appointed, not in the Labour party. I think Ed Miliband, I don’t think he opposed Jim Murphy. I think Jim Murphy, kind of, emerged by himself as, in a way, the obvious leader, the next leader for Labour. Johann Lamont was awful during the campaign. I mean, she just faded into the background and for a woman especially that was dreadful because women had yet to make up their minds and Labour women could’ve been persuading much more either to stick with the Unionist party but she never really came out. I don’t know why. Margaret Curran, I thought she should’ve been Labour leader actually. I thought she was much more spirited and a more charismatic person but again, she didn’t play a bit role in the election, I don’t think, in the referendum, so I don’t know why that was.Q: Yes.A: Yes, so Labour let themselves down, I think, yes. Q: Did you feel that the media coverage, at least locally in Scotland, was fairly balanced? Did it have-?A: Yes, I suppose it was. I think perhaps they did give Salmond the edge actually. Q: Okay.A: I think so. The Herald and the Scotland on Sunday and so on certainly did and the record was always banging it way against him but I think the TV coverage was pretty sympathetic to Salmond.Q: Oh, okay.A: I thought so. They gave him a good run and I think they questioned the Westminster really quite a lot, both BBC and ITV, that’s what my feeling was. Q: In the sort of BBC Scotland?A: And I think it was covered in London as well, yes, whenever they came North, which is just occasionally until that last week when suddenly even the BBC in London woke up to the fact that, “Goodness me, this could go independence way,” and they sent everybody north in that last week.Q: Yes. What were your feelings on the morning of the result?A: Gosh, it caught me by surprise actually because I was manning a polling station in a No part of Edinburgh and there seemed to be an awful lot of ‘Yes’ votes rolling in. People were sort of putting up their thumbs to the SNP man standing beside them on the P side as it were. I thought, “Gosh, a lot of people are voting ‘Yes’, even in this part of town,” so I was fairly sure that the ‘Yes’ had won actually. Q: Right.A: So, I tuned in at ten o’clock and until 11, I still thought, “Yes, it seems they’re going to squeeze in,” and then I had to go to bed early because I was working the next morning and when I woke up the next morning at six and tuned in, the whole picture completely changed but meantime, people had been watching Glasgow voting ‘Yes’, Dundee voting ‘Yes’ so it was quite tempting to think, “Goodness me, it’s a ‘Yes’ result.” Also, I was very surprised by how much the ‘No’ campaign won, you know, by 10%. It was quite astonishing, I thought. I thought it would’ve been much narrower than that, and then I didn’t expect Salmond to resign either. I’d gone out to work and I’d came back in the evening to find that Alex Salmond had resigned. It was astonishing.Q: Yes. Do you think he needed to do that?A: No, he didn’t need to do it. I think it was a personal thing. I’m not quite sure what was behind it. I think it was a personal thing. I think he just had been the leader for ten years, he’d been First Minister for seven. That’s quite a go. I think he just maybe wanted a change, needed a change , and then he saw that this was perhaps a good junction at which to go and that Nicola Sturgeon would take over, you know, and then the vista opened out to him that perhaps he could lead the SNP at Westminster, especially with that tight election and that’s quite a tempting thing to do as well. The area’s been quite grey because Gordon is an SNP country, is a Liberal Democrats country. It’s held by the Liberal Democrats, so he’s got to win there to retain his credibility. I think he will but it’s still a bit of a risk. Q: Yes, he’s not parachuting himself into a safe scene.A: No, exactly, and he’s always done that. He’s always taken the risk.Q: Do you think that’s a calculated risk because he has so much media presence that, you know, he knows that he can pull a swing of so many percent?A: Maybe. I still think it’s quite courageous. I admire him for doing it.Q: It’ll be interesting to see what happens.A: Yes.Q: Great. I think that’s everything actually.A: Is that all you want to do?Q: Yes.[Transcript Ends 00:33:35]

# Julie.docx

Q: So, anyway, yes. Have you got any idea when you first heard that there was going to be a referendum about independence?A: I would have said it was possibly a couple of years before or eighteen months before the actual referendum. Q: Right, because it was it in the media, or-? A: It must have been, yes. Q: Do you remember the debate that was going on about what was going to be on the ballot? A: Yes. Sort of, yes.Q: I mean, did you have an inkling about that? A: I thought what the SNP first proposed was totally wrong because it was skewed to people voting ‘Yes’. Q: Do you mean the wording of the question?A: The wording of the question, yes. Q: Right, right.A: I thought it was skewed to you giving a ‘Yes’ answer, that wording. I can’t quite remember it but it was very much, sort of, slanted I thought. Q: Because they did change it in the end, didn’t they? A: Yes, yes.Q: What about the devo-max option? A: I didn’t agree with that because if it had that as well as the independence , that would have split the vote into three, you know, people that were saying ‘No’ to independence , the ballot would have split down, I think.Q: Right, right.A: That was my impression anyway.Q: So generally I guess you were happy with the wording of the-?A: The eventual wording, yes. Q: How did you feel-, I mean, did you get a sense of how Edinburgh and the surrounds kind of felt in the run up? A: Yes. I mean, I felt that the ‘Yes’ group, the people that were voting ‘Yes’ were very , very, sort of , in your face and vocal and, sort of, loud about it and you knew all the people that were voting ‘Yes’ whereas the ‘No’ voters were all keeping quiet .Q: Right, why do you think that was? Why didn’t they speak out? A: Well, because they were frightened of a backlash from the ‘Yes’ people because it happened to some people that were being backlashed. Q: In Edinburgh? A: I think so, yes. Q: Did you get a sense that there was a lot of different areas in Edinburgh. A: I don’t think I can answer that in a way because I don’t-, I thought in the certain areas that I would be in, I could say, yes.Q: Yes, sure. I mean, kind of, round where you were living, did it feel like a ‘Yes’ area or a ‘No’ area? A: It was hard to tell. I mean, there was certainly ‘Yes’ banners and things in people ’s windows and on car windows, yes, but there wasn’t a lot of them, but there wasn’t any ‘No’ banners or posters or anything.Q: Right, right, and was it something that people were openly discussing, do you think? A: I mean, it’s possibly obvious to you that I’m a ‘No’ voter . I found that you were scared to say anything to people until you actually discovered through so mething that they were maybe a ‘No’ voter as well and th en you’d sort of speak to them, but I didn’t feel I could openly say I was a ‘No’ to people. I mean, I’ve got friends for a long time that are very anti- English, sort of, very pro-Scotland and so, you know, I didn’t feel I could express my opinion freely.Q: Right, okay, but did they try and start discussions ever?A: I suppose not discussions but it would be obvious what they were doing. Q: Right. Is this something you have talked about within your family circle? A: Well, I’ve only really got my brother now and he felt the same as me.Q: He lives in Scotland as well? A: Yes. Q: Oh, right, okay. Was it something you ever talked about?A: To him, yes, yes. I mean, I think we talked a lot about the worries about what would happen if Scotland did become independent and what would happen to us as British people in Scotland at that point.Q: Yes, yes. What particularly were your worries about that? A: Well, the financial worries, you know, I didn’t actually think Scotland had enough money to support itself really , and also just the general border issues and things like what currency we were going to have. Well, we weren’t going to be in the EU, not initially anyway, and things like that and we’d need a passport to cross to England and all this sort of thing. I’ve kind of forgotten a lot of the things that I thought at the time and also thin gs like my banks are British banks, and also just would I have to become a Scottish citizen to remain here or could I still keep my British citizenship and things like that.Q: How long have you lived in Scotland? A: Since 1979. Q: Oh right, okay, but you still identify yourself as being British? A: Yes.Q: Right, but do you think those messages were something that was coming up in the campaigns? A: Not greatly, no. I mean, I think the ‘No’ campaign was voicing the problem with the money situation; what would be the Scottish currency and the EU and all this type of thing, but then the SNP were just sort of pooh-poohing it and not actually answering the questions really. Q: Right. Did you watch any of the TV debates?A: Not really, not many. I watched more on the news rather than-,Q: How did you feel the media were portraying things at the time? A: I thought they were fair but afterwards the ‘Yes’ campaign felt like people like the BBC were being very ‘No’ oriented but I haven’t noticed that , but then perhaps I wouldn’t have noticed that because I was ‘No’ orientated anyway. I suppose I was always going to vote ‘No’. Nobody’s ever going to sway me to vote ‘Yes’ so it was the only election that I’ve ever been 100% sure of what I was going to vote well in advance. Q: Right, right. Were there any messages at all that were if not tempting but that you would agree with coming from the ‘Yes’ campaign? A: No, not for me anyway. Q: Fair enough, and did you read any of the newspapers, the national or the Scottish ones? A: Not particularly. I’m not a great newspaper reader. Q: Okay.A: I mean, I always felt that we were better as part of a bigger country and I feel that with most counties, it would sort of-, if Scotland had broken North, it would have been too small to actually cope on its own. Q: Do you think that the campaign was fairly run on both sides, the ‘No’ campaign and the ‘Yes’ campaign? Did they do a good job? A: Well, I thought the ‘Yes’ campaign was much more impressive really. I thought that they were much stronger at arguing and I thought the ‘No’ campaig n really didn’t take off at all. For a long time, I felt that the ‘No’ politicians weren’t putting forward their case very well, and I felt that the one person that came in and either saved the day or not was Gordon Brown because he suddenly did this very impassioned speech for the ‘No’ and he was really the first politician in the ‘No’ campaign that I felt really came over well. Q: That was quite late in the day, wasn’t it? A: It was very late in the day, yes. Q: Why do you think he waited so long? A: I have no idea. I don’t know. I think, you know, there is some anti-English, especially anti-southern English, so David Cameron , you know, being the big person to think about might have turned people the other way to vote ‘Yes’ , so I think that was a danger . Q: Because he kept himself quite quiet. A: Yes, I think that was needed, yes.Q: Do you think that the Labour party in general did a good job in the ‘No’ campaign? A: Probably not. I think , as I say , Gordon Brown was very good. I suppose Alistair Darling, my understanding was he never wanted the job as being the sort of coordinator of the ‘No’ campaign. He did as well as he could in a way but there wasn’t anybody in Labour that was very strong in the opinion or it didn’t come over as that tone of Gordon Brown. I thought Ruth Davidson of the Conservatives argued better than a lot of the Labour leaders. Q: Do you think that’s going to hurt Labour going into the general election? A: Possibly, but I think there’s other things that are possibly going to hurt them more. I don’t know. Q: Such as? A: Ed Miliband. I don’t think he comes over well. Q: Right, do you think in terms of how he carries himself? A: Just the way he speaks, I suppose. In my view, I thought that David Miliband , his brother, would have been a much better leader. I thought it was kind of wrong that Ed stood against him.Q: Sibling rivalry. A: Yes, yes.Q: Do you get an impression of how it’s gone for the SNP after the-?A: Well, they seem to have done better since the referendum, which is surprisingly, but yes. I mean, according to them, a lot more people have joined the party and things like that. Q: Yes, and do you get a sense of why that might be? A: No.Q: Okay.A: I find it slightly odd. I mean, I do think they’re still arguing for independence. I tend to think that they should just be accepting that people have voted against it and they’re coming across as bad losers that they’re still going on and on about independence. Q: Yes, yes. I mean, do you think-, do you have any kind of an opinion on Nicola Sturgeon now she’s taken the reigns? A: Yes, I can’t say I particularly like her but I mean, she comes over as a good speaker, really, and quite a strong personality whereas the other party leaders in Scotland are still just kind of non-descript in a way.Q: Even Alex Salmond? A: Oh, no. He was quite a powerful leader, but I meant the other parties in Scotland are really just quite non-descript. Q: I mean, do you know anything about the Labour leader in Scotland at all? A: Jim Murphy. Q: Yes.A: He’s quite new.Q: Because he is quite new , isn’t he? A: Yes, yes. It was only last year, wasn’t it, that he got in so he’s not made an impression yet, I don’t think. Q: Yes, yes. Do you think it’s, I guess, had a lasting impact on politics in Scotland , or might have?A: It might have but I really don’t know. I don’t know. Q: Do you get the impression that the SNP is kind of-, I mean, a lot of people were saying at the time that it feels that they-, I mean just looking at the polls for example , like it started pretty low in support for the ‘Yes’ vote , but then it seemed to be getting closer and closer. Do you think that was down to the SNP or just the ‘Yes’ campaign in general? A: I think the ‘No’ campaign was so underwhelming for quite a long time in a way that people were drifting because the SNP was quite strong and perseveres in a way and more in your face. I don’t know how accurate the polls were when it came to the vote. They weren’t right, were they? Q: I mean, are you getting worried in the run up to the election ? A: Yes, yes very.Q: What do you think you would have done if it had been a ‘Yes’ vote? A: I would have given it a lot of thought and I would decide whether I wanted to stay in Scotland and if I had to become a Scottish citizen then I had to become a Scottish citizen, but inside I was not going to be Scottish, but yes. Whereas, quite a few friends were talking about going back to England if it got independence.Q: Were they also English friends? A: Yes, yes. I suppose friends that have still got relatives in England are talking of moving away f rom Scotland in the event of a ‘Yes’ and would go and stay with relatives in England. So, it was a huge relief for me and I know lots of friends had slee pless nights worrying about it.Q: Did you get up early and watch the count or anything like that?A: Four o’clock in the morning, yes and it was very close at that point. The ‘No’ had got it by about two percentage points and that was all. Q: Have you ever had any contact with your local MP or your MSP?A: No. Q: You’ve never gone to them with a letter or issue ? A: No. Q: Do you have any kind of opinion of them? Are they any good? A: I’d be struggling to name them, to be honest. That’s awful, isn’t it? Q: Well, I mean you can never have an occasion to get in contact with them. Okay, that’s great. That’s actually pretty much everything. Was that alright? A: Yes. [Transcript Ends 00:18:42]

# June.docx

Q: Okay. Can you remember the first time that you heard that there was going to be a referendum?A: I think I was in Scotland. I moved here in 2011 in the summer. I think I was in Scotland when it was announced but I couldn’t tell you the exact date that I thought it was going to happen. I just remember friends and family starting to ask about it because they knew I’d just moved here and whether I’d get a vote, and I wasn’t sure if I’d get a vote yet. So, I feel like it was maybe late 2011 but there’d been muttering in the media before then. I mean, I definitely read about possibilities when I was still in England but when they actually set a date, I think I was in Scotland.Q: I mean, when you found out that you were going to get a vote, what was your reaction to that?A: I was quite excited, and then I felt a bit fraudulent because I thought, “Well, I’ve only lived here for a little while and I don’t know how long I’ll be here,” because I was on ly on a temporary contract then so I wasn’t sure, a) whether I’d be here to vote and b) how long I’d be in Scotland for. So, it felt a bit unfair that I’d be voting on these issues and then possibly leaving again, and then also because I’m English, like yes, I did feel like an imposter to begin with anyway. I felt like I didn’t have a right to vote on this. I didn’t have any roots in Scotland but then the longer I’ve stayed here and particularly it’s become clear that I’m going to be here a while, I got more and more excited at the prospect of being able to vote.Q: Do you think that the criteria for who gets to vote should have been different then?A: Well, I know lots of Scots who live in England who were really upset that they couldn’t vote and I know that was really hard, particularly some of my friends who are a bit older than me who were students in Scotland and spent a really long time campaigning and particularly campaigning against the Thatcher government, being really angry about Tory Britain, and then, you know, getting jobs and moving down to England and then they couldn’t vote. They were really upset and I know lots of people just came up to Scotland to be with their parents for the actual vote even if they didn’t have a vote themselves because they just wanted to be here because they’d been campaigning since they were 14 or 15 some people, and then this is their dream and they weren’t in Scotland to vote. I think that’s a little heart-breaking for them really. Q: Do you think generally there were probably more people who couldn’t vote that wanted to support independence rather than the other way around? A: I guess so. Of the people I’ve spoken to that’s the way it would’ve gone , but I don’t know more generally what it was like. Q: What kinds of people did you talk to about independence?A: Well, I talked to some of my colleagues who are Scottish to see how they felt and then I spoke to one of my best friends. She lives in Belfast and we had loads of discussions about it because, you know, Belfast has kind of been through, although not a vote, a similar kind of splitting off from the rest of the country, so we talked a lot about that, and then I guess if it came up in conversation, I’d talk about it but I didn’t really bring it up with my friends outside of work or people that I just had passing acquaintance with because it seemed a bit intrusive to say, “Hey, you’re Scottish. Tell me how you’re going to vote because I’m English and I don’t really know what’s going on.” Q: So, you were only interested in talking to Scottish people about the issues?A: I think so, because I felt that they were the people who’d lived here for a decade or grown up here. I don’t know, I feel like they had more roots or a more genuine contribution to make almost and all of the English people I spoke to had just said the same thing. They were all ‘No’ voters and it was different because all they get as a perspective of here is what they read in the newspapers and that’s really biased. I mean, I felt it was really biased towards ‘No’ and they kind of portrayed Salmond as this slightly mad-, Q: Newspapers up here?A: Sorry, the newspapers down South that my English friends were reading.Q: I see.A: Hence I didn’t really want to talk to them because I kind of thought, “Well, what do you know about it? You’re not really-,” I know they said, “Oh, we’ll be affected if Scotland breaks up,” but not half as much as the people in Scotland would be.Q: It’s interesting that you said that you sought out a lot of people who are Scottish for their opinion. Did you feel an obligation to kind of represent their voice?A: I felt an obligation to hear their voice, not necessarily to represent it because I’m English so I feel like I have a better sense of what it’s like as an outsider looking in but I don’t have any sense of what it’s like to be inside looking out, and so I felt that was the perspective I needed to know more about.Q: And did that influence the way you voted?A: I think it did because it pushed me closer to a ‘Yes’. I voted ‘No’ in the end but I was quite close to voting ‘Yes’ I admit, because of talking particularly to those friends who campaigned in the 80’s and seeing sort of how they had such a strong vision for Scotland and how it could be di fferent, so it definitely did. When I moved up here, I was firmly a ‘No’ and it did make me waiver more towards ‘Yes’.Q: Okay, and were there any particular aspects of the campaign on either side that were persuasive to you or engaging for you?A: I got really frustrated with the campaign to be honest because it was never clear what would change because you’re not voting for a party, you’re not voting for a political party, you’re not voting for the SNP or for Labour, so even though there’s all these claims about, “Oh, we won’t have nuclear weapons in Scotland if we go independent,” I guess that one’s a bit more nationalistic but maybe, like we’ll have better taxes and we won’t have the bedroom tax. You can’t really say those things because what happened if Scotland went independent and then everyone voted Tory. I mean, it could happen. There’s a logical space for that to happen, so I felt frustrated because it became unclear what we were voting on and what the powers actually would be of the new Scotland. If you’re not voting for a political party then what are you voting for, and I just got a bit frustrated with these claims being thrown around about what would definitely happen should Scotland get independence and you, kind of , feel you don’t have a right to make those claims. Q: Claims from both campaigns, from both sides?A: Mainly from the SNP, I guess, but the ‘No’ campaign was just so negative and it was really depressing as well. I mean, I’m not sure if you’ve seen the trams, they have this sign at the moment that says, “Careful Now for the Trams” and I felt like that summed up the ‘no vote’ campaign. It was just be grey, be boring, be safe because we know it works, and who wants to vote for a party that says that? It’s just really demoralising and even if your head is telling you, you know, “I think ‘No’ would be better for Scotland,” but your heart is saying, “But you’re just going to be grey and boring if you do that.”Q: Do you think that there was a better kind of approach they could’ve had?A: I think there’s more positive spins they could’ve put on things, like what being in the UK could offer Scotland more and instead of saying-, I mean, it’s about spin really, isn’t it, so instead of saying, “Scotland will have no money if it goes independent,” what you could say is, “Scotland will be more financially strong if they voted ‘No’,” and then say why. So, there wasn’t very much reasoning about why Scotland would be better off being ‘No’ or being ‘Yes’ and that was another frustrating thing about the arguments is that there were lots of claims about enough support. Particularly, the ‘no vote’ you’re right, maybe they couldn’t have done-, no, I think they could’ve spun it more positively rather than just sounding like an angry school teacher telling off the other pupils and that’s how it felt. That really pushes your heart against voting ‘No’.Q: Do you think other people probably felt the same way about those messages?A: Yes, like informal chats with people, again people who were voting ‘No’, people who I knew would vote ‘No’, even Scottish people who I knew would vote ‘No’ and were rolling their eyes with every kind of newspaper story that came out with more doom and gloom rather than saying, “Hey, Scotland. We’d like you to stay.” Did you see that British comedian who went to America and he does the daily show?Q: Oh, yes.A: He gave such a good spin on it when he said, “Look, if I was English, I’d be begging Scotland to stay. I’d be pulling on their emotional heart strings and just saying, please, please stay, we’re better with you,” and the ‘No’ campaign was not like that. No one was saying, “Please stay. We would like you to stay.” They were just saying, “You’d be very naughty if you left.” There’s different ways of getting the same message across.Q: Do you feel that the messages from the ‘Yes’ campaign were more persuasive then, or that they had a better tack? A: I think they just had more positive-, it was more positive and people like positive things. When we’re coming out of a recession, people need more positive messages in their lives. It’s hard for me to judge whether that’s better because I didn’t necessarily agree or think that some of the promises we made would come through, however, it’s always nice to be on the side of change, I think. Yes. Q: So, you said that there was quite a difference between, kind of, the media down South to the nationwide media, but what was the media like up here? What was the local media like in comparison?A: I guess they had more Scottish people talking about it. There were more talking heads from people in and around Scotland. It felt more ‘Yes’ up here than it did down South and I know that lots of the papers were ‘No’ voting, however, it just felt like they gave more voice to the ‘Yes’, or they weren’t just interviewing the people who were extreme ‘Yes’s’ and it felt like down South, all the quotes that you saw in the papers-, I don’t have any evidence of this, it’s just what I felt but down South, you just got, you know, very extreme views and they didn’t really portray middle ground. It felt like they never put forward the story of a normal person with a normal job, a normal family, normal commitments who wants to vote ‘Yes’ and there were thousands of people like that in Scotland, thousands of people who weren’t foaming at the mouth and/or going out campaigning every single day. They were just living their lives and thinking, “Yes, I think I would like to be independent.” They didn’t get a voice in the Southern media, at least that’s how it felt to me. They did get a voice up here. You did get more people on the streets and yes, I felt like you got a bit more coverage of those people whereas in the South, they just wanted to see those really extreme views and they weren’t interested in what everyday mums and dads and teenagers had to think.Q: Do you think it was still a big deal for most people, you know, if you didn’t have a particularly strong view one way or the other?A: I think it was a big deal for people even if they didn’t have a strong view because if it was a ‘Yes’ vote, it would be a really big change. It would be a big change to life up there. Well, maybe some people felt, “Well, I don’t think things will be different one way or the other,” but I bet those people still went out and voted one way or the other even if they didn’t feel there was going to be a change.Q: What do you think the biggest changes would’ve been?A: Well, I’d like to think that the NHS would’ve become more independent if Scotland voted ‘Yes’. That was certainly something people were campaigning for and there seems to be a lot more pride in the NHS up here. There’s free prescriptions and I wonder whether-, Scotland’s always had slightly different priorities to England, and the education system seems to be more valued up here. People don’t seem to mess with it as much as they-, in England, it feels like the syllabus changes every other year, whereas in Scotland, it feels a bit more stable. Yes, it still changes. I’m not saying it’s stagnant, I’m saying that it’s stable. I wonder whether those would be the things that we would see the main differences in. You’re right. I mean, there already was a bit of a divide but I wonder if that would’ve become more pronounced.Q: But you voted no in the end, what do you think would’ve been the negative things that would’ve outweighed those?A: I think I was really worried about the finances and I know it’s hard to make a call as to how it would’ve been but the thought of the kind of voice Scotland would have, say in the EU-, yes, so I guess politics and finances. So, if you think of a country like Greece which gets very little say in big decisions in the EU, has very little money and has very little say and I was just worried that Scotland would become-, one of my friends said it would be like Greece with haggis. We’d have no influence in European politics, no one’s going to listen to a country with no money, you get pushed around a lot more and then end up being more dependent on those kind of more powerful countries for money. Whereas, it feels like if you’re part of Britain, you’ve just got a bit more clout in those kind of international domains. I guess a combination of the politics and that kind of face of Scotland within international politics and how that’s kind of intrinsically tied to how much money Scotland has made me vote ‘No’ in the end. I think I was closer to coming to ‘Yes’ than I would admit and on the day, I was a bit sad I didn’t vote ‘Yes’.Q: So, how did things feel in the run up to the vote? What was your impression of the kind of mood?A: It seemed really happy until about two days before and then it just felt a bit aggressive, which is weird. I mean, Edinburgh is not aggressive. It’s not an aggressive place but that Orange march really flipped me. I mean, I know the Orange march was for ‘No’ but it was almost really scary having all those people march through our streets with banners and some of them-, I don’t know, it didn’t feel like my city anymore. It didn’t feel like Edinburgh and I thought, if Scotland becomes independent, will we see more of this? Will we see more sectarian marching? The atmosphere was horrible. It was a really unpleasant atmosphere that day and it didn’t feel like the city that I know and love. That was one of the turning points for me. I think for me realising what if this does open the door to more upset, and then I guess, like at work, there was more banter about it and although it was always jolly, nearly always jolly banter, there was one guy who was a ‘No’ voter that was a little bit noisy about it, and it got a bit annoying. You’d try and make sure you didn’t see him in the corridor, so stuff like that. Q: Did the atmosphere also change in work in the run up?A: Not so much in my particular department because we only have three Scots in it but in other departments which are in the same building, I think there definitely was a change, just talking to colleagues, they reported that it was a bit different, but I think our department was unusual because we had so few-, I mean, English people are in the minority let alone Scots. I think we have a few more English people than Scottish people but really not. Everywhere else is from the rest of the world.Q: Okay, and do you have some sense of, like how it would have affected your work or your career?A: The University voted-, we got a flyer, like an email thing that said, “As a university,” whatever that means, but we, the university, are in favour of a ‘No’ vote and they cited research funding as one of the main issues of that. How it would’ve affected funding for research, I’m not entirely sure and again, it was just one of those unknowns that you wouldn’t know until it happened. I think there would’ve been a lot more paperwork. I know there would’ve been a lot more paperwork. Imagine if you wanted to put forward a collaboration with colleagues in Sussex or something and then you’re spread across two countries, what does that mean? Are you then eligible for a grant that counts as having two countries or not and just jumping through all of those hoops would’ve been tedious, and I know that’s a terrible reason to say I didn’t want to vote because there’d be more paperwork, but there hadn’t been a lot more paperwork.Q: And did that actually influence you, do you think?A: It did actually because it’s my career that’s on the line ultimately. I do a job that I love and it’s tough enough for women doing what I do. I don’t need any more hurdles right now.Q: Do you think gender was a particular issue in the debates? Was there a gender bias between one campaign and the other? A: I think Nicola Sturgeon did a lot for the SNP and is still doing a lot for the SNP. I mean, regardless of what you think about the SNP’s policies, I know she wasn’t-, I know Alex Salmond led it but she was so prominent and she was on all the papers and she just seemed a much more level headed, sympathetic figure than any of the women in Westminster right now. If you had to choose who you wanted to have a cup of tea with, I’d easily choose Nicola Sturgeon over Yvette Cooper or Theresa May or any of those people. So, I guess from that perspective, like having a woman that people can relate to and empathise with is important. I certainly felt like I could relate more to Nicola Sturgeon than I could to Cooper or May. In terms of bias, I mean did you see that terrible ‘No’ campaign advert which basically portrayed women as brainless. It was really frustrating. It was on the tele. I’m fairly sure-, you’ve got me thinking now. I’m fairly sure it was for the ‘No’ campaign and it was this woman and she sits down with a cup of tea looking more flustered and says, “Oh, I’ve just sent my children to school,” so obviously she’s a stay at home mum and, “I just don’t know how to vote, it’s so difficult to decide,” and it was one of the most patronising pieces I’ve ever seen for women and I think it was the ‘No’ campaign. You’re just rolling your eyes thinking, “Good lord, is this really how they perceive women in England?” It was really depressing, so at least within the ‘Yes’ campaign, women were portrayed-, there were competent women involved and I couldn’t name a single competent woman who was tied to the ‘No’ campaign. I still can’t think of a single competent woman tied to the ‘No’ campaign.Q: Post the referendum, has that changed how you think about politics and voting for the general election coming up? I mean, with Nicola Sturgeon now in charge of the SNP, you know, you’re saying you can relate to her, have a cup of tea with her, but does that kind of filtrate up to SNP in general?A: It has a little bit actually because I feel like the SNP-, I don’t know whether this is new or not but I feel like the SNP has become a bit less extreme and a bit more manageable now that the hubbub from the independence election has died down. Now that’s not their only-, it’s not their raison d'etre, like they have other things that they can contribute. I guess I’m sitting on the fence and then waiting to see what will happen and then waiting to see whether-, I’m curious to see what the SNP will be like under Nicola Sturgeon because I do have time for her. I do like her claim that she’s going to get more women into politics and try and help-, it doesn’t seem to be an empty claim either. I mean she’s talking about things like childcare and she’s talking about things like making sure women have those opportunities really early on, like at primary school and high school level when you know it really matters.Q: What kind of opportunities?A: Well, I think just letting them know that they don’t have to be the primary carer, and I also like that she doesn’t seem to be an idealist, so she’s kind of saying, “What we have now isn’t working and it’s totally disadvantaging women and I’m not entirely sure what policies need to be in place.” Just reading interviews with her and hearing her on the radio and she’s saying, you know, “Women are primary carers,” and she’s not saying, “Women, stop being primary carers,” but more saying, “We need more opportunities for people, or we need to make sure that there’s alternatives to having just the women in the family being the primary carer, and what do we need to put in place to make those opportunities available. Whether she makes good on those promises, I don’t know, but I’m much happier that she’s leader of the SNP than Alex Salmond. I don’t even know who the leader of Scottish Labour is or who’s doing very much for Scottish Labour right now.Q: Did the representation of labour change post the referendum or during the referendum?A: No. I think the Labour party has lost its way at the moment and it lost its way during the referendum too. I mean, I know people say it was Labour that won it and that it was Gordon Brown and Alistair Darling who actually pulled it through for the ‘No’ vote but I don’t really associate Gordon Brown and Alistair Darling with the current Labour party. I’m not saying they’re old Labour because they’re not, they’re new, old-, old, new Labour, and Miliband is new, new Labour but I just see such a disjoint between Gordon Brown and Darling. I know Brown’s left politics altogether now but between them and who we’ve got now in Westminster.Q: What about any of the other parties?A: I’m interested to see where the Green’s will go. I’ve never voted Tory, I don’t think I could do it, so I can’t say it’s particularly changed my view of the Tory party. If anything, it’s made it more negative which is quite impressive given how negative I was to the Tory’s before the referendum.Q: Why is that? Why did your opinion get worse?A: I think because of the blasé attitude that Cameron had of, “Oh, it’ll all be alright in the end.” In a way, I was almost-, again, it was one of those heart versus head things in that you wanted to kick Cameron and say, “Pay attention, like something’s happening and I know you think that it’s happening in a part of the country that you don’t care about and that you think is just full of sheep and oil, small amounts of oil and you’re just eyeing it up for fracking purposes,” because that’s very much how-, I’m from the North of England so I feel like that’s how David Cameron views my family’s constituency and it kind of extends to the entirety of Scotland as well. He was just so dismissive of the whole idea, like “Your opinions don’t count. Why should I even listen to you? Don’t be silly,” that it made me feel even more negative towards the Conservatives. I mean, I’ve said I’ve never voted Conservative but say if you compare someone like John Major to David Cameron, I never thought I’d say this but John Major almost comes out as a more empathetic human person in contrast to Cameron. I think it’s hard to make that happen. Q: Yes, that is quite something. So, what do you think will happen with the general election in Scotland?A: I think the SNP will get stronger because they’re widening out their vote now. So, before SNP were synonymous with ‘Yes’ and now it’s not synonymous with ‘Yes’ or at least people who voted ‘No’, I think can still say, “Well, I voted ‘No’ but I do like the SNP and I would rather have the SNP running Scotland than Labour or the Greens,” for example. So, I think that they’re broadening their voter base now and that’s the right thing for them to be doing. Whether they succeed or not, I don’t know. I don’t know whether they burnt too many bridges during the ‘Yes’ campaign to get those people back. We’ll see.Q: So, how did the mood in the city change after the vote?A: Oh, it’s Edinburgh. Nothing changed. People just carried on going to work at RBS and Scottish Widows and Standard Life.Q: I mean, you said that you felt a little bit disappointed. A: Yes.Q: Have you spoken to other people who have felt the same way?A: I had one friend who I didn’t want to talk to the day after because I knew he would be really hung-over and miserable because he was such a staunch ‘Yes’ campaigner. I think that’s some kind of soothing of troubled waters. So, I go to Church and there were, like prayers for making sure people could still get on with their friends and neighbours even though they voted differently, and some people said that wasn’t necessary and I think I would rather that was in place and it not be necessary than no one thinking about it at all. I actually saw three of my friends wearing kilts the Sunday after the referendum because they voted ‘No’ but they were still proud to be Scottish and they wanted people to know that they were still proud to be Scottish even though they voted ‘No’, so they were wearing their national dress and I thought that was kind of cool. I mean, Edinburgh feels like its 90% tourist most of the time and there are still people crowding round Holyrood. It just felt like life was normal.Q: Yes. I mean, were you aware of people falling out, or arguments, or frictions?A: I knew someone at work who voted differently to his wife and I know that he had to do his victory dance outside out of sight of his wife because he voted ‘No’ and he really felt he couldn’t do a victory dance in front of her. He got it all out of his system and then went back inside to comfort his wife after he’d gone to get the daily paper. So, I think there was a little bit of that. There was light hearted teasing at work about people that voted ‘No’ but it’s just banter. W ell, I don’t know, I wasn’t the subject of it. It didn’t look like it was causing bad feeling. I think people were just glad of the party.Q: Do you think people have moved on now?A: Yes. Yes, I think they have and maybe in 10 or 20 years, we’ll have another vote, and maybe those 16 year olds who voted will be back on the news as 36 year olds with families saying how they’ll vote differently now. I don’t think a lot has changed.Q: Okay, thank you.[Transcript Ends 00:33:35]

# Mark.docx

A: In the 70’s actually when I lived up in the highlands but kind of a bit lapsed since then. Once you have children, get married and have a family and whatever, other priorities take over a bit.Q: Right. So, what kind of things were you involved with in the 70’s? A: Well, I was working in the SNP in the 70’s in a small rural town.Q: Oh, right, okay. Were the SNP very active in there at the time? A: They were active. They were very active in the region particularly. I mean, they’ve always been quite successful in that part of the world. I mean, that’s where originally most of that surrounding success was around there but they had-, when I was a member, they had something like fourteen or fifteen branches in the constituency. Q: Just around there? A: That’s right. There were two; there was Perth City and East Perthshire with the east of the city and then there was Kinross and West Perthshire was the other constituency, which was a more rural constituency. At one time, they had both the city MP’s were both SNP MP’s.Q: Oh, right.A: But I mean that constituency has been carved up now like they all have, so it’s not exactly the same boundaries. I’m not even sure exactly what it is, but they’ve always had at least one area. They’ve certainly got MSP’s. I’m not sure how they vary now but they’ve still got an MP there. It’s not exactly the same geography as it was before.Q: Right.A: It was basically a two way fight between the SNP and the Tories. I mean, the Labour party and the Lib Dem’s were pretty insignificant.Q: Oh, okay.A: It’s interesting.Q: It’s interesting that the Tories have quite a strong-,A: They’ve always-, well, yes, I mean, they did then. I was interested in statistics and in those days, the Tories still had about, certainly about twenty five percent of the vote in Scotland.Q: Oh, right.A: And even though that had crashed from quite a high, early back in the 50’s, there was still a not a derisory share of the vote, which meant that-, I can’t remember but they had quite a few MP’s anyway but certainly not the boost or their low number of MP’s that they’ve got now. At that time, and there were two elections in the 70’s and the vote was split, not completely equally but the three main parties were the Labour party, the SNP and the Conservative’s in terms of the vote. The Labour party was still the highest score and it wasn’t like there was like thirty five, forty percent ‘Yes’ appearing, but they got up to thirty percent in the second election and the Tories only got twenty four or twenty five. So, it was quite insular and the Lib Dems were still around so I think probably better than they’ve quoted now of course because we’re chatting but their vote was concentrated and because, as you’ll know with the first past the post system that they have, the best way of getting more numbers of MP’s is if the votes concentrate in those areas, if it’s just spread across the whole of Scotland then that area will tend to lose out, and that was the problem. I think the SNP like to run because they tend to get more of the working class urban areas, but there wasn’t enough to dislodge Labour so they kind of-, but I was quite interested in the statistics then anyway, as I was saying, before I got married and had children and any other kind of priorities.Q: Did you stay involved with the SNP very much?A: Well, actually I rejoined after the referendum again. I was swithering whether to join them or the Green party because I’ve got quite a few-, I share quite a few views with the Green party but I decided, on balance, tactically that it was probably more important to vote in the SNP until such time as we have another referendum. I mean, to be honest, I feel a bit guilty because I’m not going to do be able to take part, I just don’t feel like, you know, I’m going to be able to. It’s probably just old age, I suppose. Q: Well, and family and other commitments. A: Well, my children are grown up though they still, you know-, you don’t spend the same amount of time with them, partly because my son lives in-, where does he live now? Up north. He’s in his last year at university so he’s really got to decide, he’s got to get his degree this time around.Q: Right, okay. Do you remember when you first heard that there was going to be a referendum? A: I think, from what I can remember, it was about two years. Certainly, it was between eighteen months and two years before but I do remember there was a lot of fuss made at the back of the referendum, why are we giving two years’ notice and why don’t they bring it forward. I thought it was quite amusing the reaction, I thought, to the whole thing because you’re going to get blamed if you call something, “Oh, we’re going to have a referendum next month to few months,” and in some respects, I think it’s fairer to give everyone plenty of time down the line to think about the whole issue. I seem to remember it was about two years before it happened. Q: Do you remember there being a lot of discussion about what was going to go on the ballot paper?A: Yes. I seem to recall it was-, it wasn’t a key issue at first but it soon became one of the crucial sort of things, you know, how to word the question because obviously how you word the question has quite a strong influence in how people vote, and obviously they were going to make two different camps, two views as to how to frame it. I think it was inevitable but what they came up with was going to be something pretty like that because if Scotland had voted neutral, they don’t have a neutral question, then you know. It makes the whole thing-, it does discredit the process a bit. Q: Yes, yes.A: But I don’t think there was any way that either side of the debate were going to allow a question that wasn’t pretty balanced.Q: Yes, and what about the devo-max option?A: Well, I always thought that that should have been an option. I know it makes it more complicated but I mean, people in other countries have far more complex voting systems, what’s the difficulty in voting for three questions on the paper and the way the vote is split must decide the issue and finally you might have a vote again after that with just two questions.Q: Yes.A: It wasn’t insurmountable. They could’ve had three questions.Q: It’s not really that confusing if you go through the papers and you’ve got like, 20 candidates on it.A: I think it’s a bit insulting to the intelligence of voters to think that they couldn’t somehow get their heads around having a three question referendum. Q: Do you think that was the issue or was it more of a political motivation? So, was that the reason that the ballot was going to be too complicated? Did you think they were kind of political with their motivation?A: No, no, very strong political motivations. The reason was nothing to do with the fact that it was complicated, I don’t think. The government coalition didn’t want to surrender any more powers to the Scottish parliament and I think they knew that they would definitely would’ve ended up with a majority of people that would have voted for some extra powers and I think that would have done too. What they were hoping for was the result they got but probably with an even bigger and more decisive majority than fifty five, forty five, but then I’m coming from a slightly-, I mean, I’m sure you’ll take that into account.Q: Oh, yes.A: I’m coming from a slightly biased perspective. Q: I mean, would you have-, personally, do you think you think you would have preferred the devo-max option to-?A: Personally, I’ve always been-, I don’t like the word nationalist but I mean that’s what’s-, I’ve always been in favour of independence anyway, but I mean I’d be happy to vote for something significant, people power, but I think probably the opinion now has kind of swung in that direction. There are so many things have changed. It’s quite drastic because the landscape is changed and the Conservatives are really a tiny party now in terms of even voting on the number of seats, and the Labour party, I’ve seen a big change since the general election in 2010 but I think the opinion poll’s certainly are not looking very good for them at the moment at all.Q: I mean, why do you think that is? A: I think what’s happened is that a lot of-, I think the referendum in what they class as ‘urban areas’, I think a lot of people who didn’t vote Labour are just-, I’ve spoken to just too many people and read too many comments not to believe that there’s a significant number of working class people who have voted Labour all the way but some of them will not vote Labour again because they didn’t like the idea that the Labour party was associated with the Tories in the campaign, albeit that it was an umbrella campaign, but nevertheless, you know, they were seen to be sitting at the same table and saying the same thing on this. I think that was the kind of final straw. Q: So, do you actually think it was more important that they were side to side with the Tories rather than they were against independence? A: Yes, I think that was seen-, yes, I don’t think it was necessarily about independence. That’s the kind of paradox, you know, and I think a lot of-, I mean, I think a lot of working class people in Scotland have been very conservative with a small ‘c’ for a long time and that’s why they voted Labour for so long because they’d seen the kind of-, I don’t know what you call it, the class struggle and the things that Labour party stood for, especially after the war. They’ve seen all of that develop and it’s just in their blood, so they can’t really think of voting any other way, and it’s the first time they’ve been close to questioning something. When they see them all as side by side with the Conservative party which is… I think that was a step too far. Q: Right. I mean, do you think-,A: I don’t think the Labour party calculated it. I don’t think they even played a part of that into their thinking. I don’t know whether they considered that would work against them but that’s the thing nobody knew. When you lose a referendum, you kind of assume the loser loses and that’s it, but what seems to happen is the losing side have actually been reborn out of all the parties that have supported the ‘Yes’ vote have actually, their memberships have trebled, I think, more or less, even the tiny SSP, which is pretty well a fringe party even they did. It tells you something, you know, the Labour party’s membership, it’s very difficult to establish what it is. I think in Scotland, it’s probably pretty tight and I think they’re trying to offer out discount memberships to people now [laughter].Q: Do you think that there are wider issues that people have not got-, losing faith in the Labour party? A: I think there’s other wider issues as well, yes. I mean, a big one in UK terms is this whole programme of austerity and how it’s been dealt with. Perhaps not so many people have seen through that now, but anyone who really probes the policies, you’ll find that the Labour party’s policy isn’t that much different, even in a matter of degrees or billions of pounds or whatever it is, but actually fundamentally, they’re still supporting austerity as well, and that makes them a bit dishonest again because they’re trying to claim they’re opposing the coalition government. It’s not really because of austerity, it’s just a different degree of austerity. That’s right.Q: Kind of like very similar ideology behind it still, do you think? They both have a very similar ideology behind it?A: Essentially, yes. I mean, there are so many things in the British state which are-, I mean, I think probably another one is, might not have been for the sort of people up here and the referendum, but I think the Iraq war and all of the consequences of that has actually started to go completely against them. I mean, we’ve seen what happened with what was a Labour government, you know, took Britain into a war which has turned out to be-, and I don’t know, there’s plenty of people still going to defend the decision but I think a lot more people now, I think, think it turned into an absolute disaster and I can’t see how it’s actually stabilised that whole vision. Q: I think, it’s like kind of the hoo-ha that went on quite recently after the referendum with changing around the head of the Scottish Labour party.A: That was a good example, I think, of the turmoil they were in because she was, I think, what you would call ‘old Labour’ to be using the term politically, quite conservative with a small ‘c’, and quite loyal but obviously trying to put the Scottish stamp on the Labour party, but I think realising the consequence of the decision to come from one place and I think that’s the problem. I think the issue came to a head and… But at least I’ve got more respect for her than I do for Jim Murphy. I just think he’s a con man [laughter]. Honestly, I really do. He’s done so many somersaults in his position of supporting the poor but I don’t seem to be convinced. Q: How do you think people see Ed Miliband at the moment? A: I don’t know. Sometimes I feel a bit sorry for him because I don’t think he’s differentiated himself sufficiently from David Cameron. He seems to have, even though it was the trade union support that got him in rather than his brother if I remember. David Miliband was a favourite of parliamentarians under grass roots, remember. It was the trade union that supported him and I assume that’s because of his background because he doesn’t strike me as being a left wing socialist.Q: He doesn’t come across as being a very vocal trade union supporter.A: No, he’s not really. He doesn’t at all. I don’t think he’s been effective enough in standing out and I think the problem that Labour have got in this coming election is that I know a lot of people don’t trust them to manage the economy and after what happened in 2000, you probably can’t blame them. What I find really very surprising is it’s not just through the referendum, there’s the presence of Gordon Brown but the fact that it looks like he might be sticking his head up above the parapet and getting involved again. Q: Were you surprised to see that? A: Well, in some ways I am, but then again for some bizarre reason, he’s still quite popular and certainly in parts of Scotland but I think more people are looking at all the silly things that he did in office. I think more and more people are realising that he wasn’t really a very good Prime Minister or Chancellor. I don’t think he’ll do the cause that much good. He won’t make any difference in England anyway because I don’t think he’s very popular in England and I don’t think he was as a Prime Minister. I don’t think it’s necessarily because he’s Scottish, I just think that he just didn’t come across-, I mean, you’ve got to have some charisma when you’re-, maybe Tony Blair had too much but I think any Prime Minister or leader of the country has got to have a little bit of relationship to…Q: How do you think Ed Miliband scores on the charisma then? A: I think he’s got some but I don’t think it’s enough. Q: Do you think that’s something that does sway people? A: They do, no question about it. A lot of workers do respect, almost admire, a strong leader even if it’s not necessarily all the strong characteristics you want. I mean, I think that’s partly why Tony Blair was re-elected another time, The same as poor Margaret Thatcher, I mean, two totally diametrically opposite people but they were both strong leaders in their own way. I think that does earn you quite a lot of respect among people, quite a lot of people actually if you know what they stand for. As I said, the trouble with Tony Blair was that he didn’t know what he stood for. I don’t think Miliband has got enough of that if I’m honest. I think he will struggle to be-, having said that, I don’t think Cameron is that-, he’s certainly not in the way that Margaret Thatcher was. Q: In terms of his kind of leadership or with her or-?A: Well, both, both of his party and of the country, but I think he’s probably got more of a problem with the leadership of his own party actually.Q: Oh, right.A: Because there’s always that very, the surplus right wing, you know, that sort of neo-liberal, party they’ve got. I think they’re comfortable and the anti-European will be as well of course. I think he’s trying to hold all of them on board as well and I don’t think-, he’s constantly having to put his eyes on them all the time and finding out what they’re up to, because when it comes to ruthlessness, there’s no one more ruthless than a Tory party when it comes to getting-, just look at the way they dealt with Margaret Thatcher. They didn’t waste any time on her and they don’t do it all in public either. They just do it. They do it behind closed doors and stick the knife in their own leaders back if they think she’s going to be a liability. I mean, I think for example, just as speculation, the next election, if either of the two main parties win the majority, but if Labour ended up the bigger party or they were able to come to some kind of a deal with minority parties, either the Lib Dem’s or even the SNP. I think then Cameron’s position would be on a tight rope.Q: Do you think it’s likely that there might be an alliance between Labour and the SNP, in Westminster at least? A: There won’t be. There won’t be anything in Scotland like the coalition we’ve got just now. There might be an agreement to support them on key issues. From what I know of the SNP, they won’t-, there’s no way they will go into a coalition with any of the Westminster parties. They’re more likely to band together with the Green’s and Plaid Cymru, because they’ve probably got more in common with those two parties. They might support Labour on maybe a limited programme or something like that. I think that’s as far as it would go but they’ll never-, they won’t support the Tories under any circumstances. I think if it is a new parliament, I think the Tories are going to be struggling because I don’t think the Lib Dem’s, assuming they get any kind of-, if they do get a reasonable recovery, it’s a dodged bullet. I don’t think they’ll be so keen to get back in with the Tories a second time. I think it’s probably a most fascinating time in terms of election.Q: I mean, how do you think the outcome of the general election is going to look in Scotland?A: Well, I’m a bit reluctant to broadcast a complete turnaround but I think the Labour party will lose quite a lot of seats, yes.Q: Yes, because we were saying, I mean it looks from the polls that SNP are going to do very well this time.A: Well, I think they’re going to do well. I think it’s a bit rash to expect them to completely wipe out Labour. I think, there’s always going to be-, and I think partly, I’m a bit apprehensive because I think we’re going to see quite a dirty campaign. I might be wrong. I hope I’m wrong but I don’t think I am. I think with the power of the media, I think we’re going to see a lot of propaganda over the next, you know, won’t start for a while yet but,Q: Do you mean propaganda from both sides?A: Well, at least there is one newspaper now which prints an alternative view to otherwise a pro-independence paper which there wasn’t before the referendum so I suppose that’s another welcome development the process has turned out is that there’s one paper which is-, I mean, the Sunday Herald was, I think, as well but that’s only a Sunday paper so you can’t have the same impact as a daily.Q: I mean, what do you think about media coverage in general of the referendum?A: Well, the other thing I was completely disenchanted with was the BBC actually and to a lesser extent, ITV. I just found their coverage was quite biased but then when I thought about it afterwards, I suppose it’s logical because the BBC kind of is almost part of the British state in a sense. It’s almost the fabric of British as much as anything, as much as our Monarch in some ways.Q: Yes.A: It’s probably not so bad. They can probably see a future threat, you know, if Scotland had broken away and become independent, you could see where they would have to be broken and I think they would’ve been broadcasting. It’s interesting, that’s one of the powers that was never devolved and still isn’t on the table about being devolved again because the control of the media is fairly important to any political system. I mean, propaganda is one of the most powerful tools you’ve got so I can understand why they were reluctant to evolve broadcasting and I can understand why the BBC took the line but nevertheless, I was disappointed with the coverage of it, yes.Q: Do you think people were biased of the BBC or do you think-?A: Yes, I think quite a few and actually when you look into some of the people working at the BBC, the presenters, they’re connected with the Labour party anyway so it’s not surprising that John Smith’s daughter-, do you remember John Smith, the MP?Q: Yes.A: He would’ve been Prime Minister, you know, if he hadn’t died prematurely. Sarah Smith, actually who is a presenter.Q: Oh, okay. I didn’t realise the connection.A: She’s John Smith’s daughter and she’s actually quite good but I don’t think-, if it’s going to be an influence, I don’t think she’s suddenly, you know, jumped camp and switched the opposite-, Q: What about the newspapers at the time?A: Well, in fact most of the newspapers in Scotland have been rubbish for decades anyway. I mean, there’s one or two quality papers. I was a bit disappointed with some bits of The Guardian but The Herald, thankfully, the Sunday Herald came out of it sort of a few months before the referendum, and the Glasgow Herald I think was still a reasonably good quality paper. Most of the time, The Guardian was pretty good as well but the other papers-, one of the tabloids, like the Mail and The Express and The Record are just rubbish. The other papers at the other end, the highbrow and like The Telegraph are just dreadful [laughter]. I mean, they come across as being intelligent. They dress it up in flowery language but their message is very right wing and I don’t like it. I think the fact that you probably want an unbiased view so you’re probably better going to the Financial Times because at least it’s kind of they tend to quote facts but it’s more a financial paper. Q: Yes.A: So, I think the newspapers were predictable in the way they quoted things but most of them printed either inaccuracies or even downright lies. That’s what I felt anyway, that’s my view.Q: Do you think that the SNP ran a good campaign?A: I think they made one or two mistakes and I think they never-, I mean, it’s not entirely their fault but they never sufficiently, clearly, if you like, separated the issue of independence and the ‘Yes’ campaign from their own political party. In a sense a few things are wrapped up totally because the SNP’s been the only party that’s always, you know, that’s been its prime objective and of course it’s had to develop lots of other policies but I suppose it was inevitable. I mean, a lot of people saw it, “Well, if we vote ‘Yes’, we’re going to be saddled with an SNP government for the next…”, you know, if they’d thought about it logically, they’d realise that wasn’t the case. I think there was still that-, it tended to be dominated a bit and the ‘Yes’ campaign in some respects, it wasn’t sufficiently affected and didn’t make it clear that it was a-, but on the other hand, it must’ve been fairly effective because they recruited a lot of people, especially younger people who had never been involved in politics before. To me, that was one of the most encouraging aspects of things. Whereas, I saw that my generation were actually quite almost reactionally conservative at voting and they were worried about what was going to happen to their pensions and mortgages which I felt was very-, a little bit selfish of them. The younger people actually, I was quite encouraged by their optimism and positive message that they took out of it.Q: Do you think the ‘Yes’ campaign targeted itself well towards younger people?A: I think it did. I don’t know how effectively it targeted them but whatever it did, it was obviously more successful in recruiting them, I think, than the ‘Better Together’ campaign was. The fact that it’s continued, you know, with the support, although you can almost say it’s always easier and it would then be simplistic levels but it’s always easier to have a campaign about something positive than it is about-, because everywhere you looked at the ‘Better Together’ campaign, they never made a big thing about Britain or being British. I’m not quite sure why because it’s the one area where I would’ve respected them, you know, if they’d actually played their traditional values. I could’ve respected that. There were people I know that voted ‘No’ and the reason they did was this emotional connection of being British and I could respect that, but it was the only element I could respect because I thought all the other arguments put forward were largely negative and scaremongering. It was not about what we could have but about what damage will we do if we vote ‘Yes’, you know. It deposits an unknown, you’re going into the unknown. The currency was a perfect example of how-, I mean, to be honest, it doesn’t essentially ultimately matter what currency. Okay, there might be a few hiccups somewhere but ultimately, the markets, the money markets will decide and look at the position of the whole country and economy, and they’ll decide in the medium term how viable it is. Any country that’s become independent, it’s always set now anyway, unless they’re a banana republic or unless they’ve really got nothing to-, so, I found nearly all the arguments against were quite negative and pernicious almost. They didn’t make anything of the concept of being British. A little bit was thrown in but it was never-, but then perhaps they didn’t feel the need to do that.Q: Well, I mean, what do you think? Do you think people-, like it was a big thing for people who voted for independence was that sense of Scottish identity?A: Yes, I think some of it was but I think more of it increasingly throughout the campaign, some of that became associated with posing austerity or voting for something which meant we could have a different economic path rather than just being about a Scottish identity, and I think more and more it became-, I think it’s become more about that now. I mean, I think the Scottish identity thing has been developed, you know, has increased over the last few decades anyway. I know when I was in the SNP, it’s a completely different landscape altogether because the SNP was seen as basically a sort of fringe, almost comical, not comical but it wasn’t taken entirely seriously. There have been areas where it was quite strong linked, mainly where I live, it was actually a respectable proposition. By that, I mean the working class, central belt and other big parts of Scotland, they didn’t do terribly well.Q: Do you think that’s because it was seen as being a one issue party?A: Yes, partly that side but it wasn’t seeming to identify with enough working class people and that’s just historical, I think, inevitably because it goes back to the-, I think the SNP was founded not long after the war but it was still a tiny percentage was supporting and it was considered totally almost lunacy for Scotland to be independent, but it wasn’t taken seriously as an initiative, so it was kind of restricted to-, and I think it probably got more votes from people who had been Tory or right wing. It did originally and also as it got more votes from Conservatives who kind of maybe had the luxury of looking at other options but that’s why they never made any great feat because Tory would get a vote from the majority of the working class folks. It was never going to, you know, turn things upside down and of course, I think that’s what’s spoilt the pudding because that’s what’s been happening over the last few months. That’s where the danger to Labour party, I think, because if they lose that vote, and I think they have lost some of that, it’s just depending on how much.Q: Do you think, I guess going forward, that now that idea isn’t so crazy anymore, the idea about independence and-?A: Well, I personally always thought it was quite a viable option anyway but yes, it’s becoming more credible to a lot more people now and I don’t think it’s just a negative reaction to, you know, “We don’t want any more austerity”, you know, and we’re turned off. I think it has to be a positive view behind it. I still think people are more likely to be persuaded by a positive argument than a negative one ultimately. I think that’s been shown in the political campaign is bringing up a constantly negative argument then it does turn people off eventually.Q: Yes, and do you think people are disappointed with the discussions about extra powers going on at the moment and the vow and this sort of thing?A: I think they’re just a confidence trick to be quite honest. I think some people are taken in but I think a lot of people are beginning to see that they’re not even going to have delivered what they supposedly promised, albeit it was written on the back of a fag paper, almost. The eleventh hour was conjured up. I think even they are not going to be delivered so people are a bit cynical about that, yes.Q: What about the SNP under Nicola Sturgeon?A: I think it’s been almost a seamless transfer of power. I think it’s done the party and caused no harm at all. I think as far as I can see, she’s more popular than any other leader in Scotland anyway.Q: Do you think more popular than Alex Salmond was/is?A: I think she does appeal-, Alex Salmond wasn’t that popular with quite a lot of women, I’ve gathered.Q: Right, okay.A: I don’t think Nicola Sturgeon could be seen to be unpopular by any section particularly so I think that’s an unexpected consequence but I think it was inevitable that she was going to take over if he ever did stand down but I think, again, it was just something that wasn’t seen by the other parties or opponents so it might actually work in their favour. So, although he was seen as a casualty initially, he’s actually not such a casualty now because he’s still going to stand in Westminster, so it’s quite-, it’s funny the way that things worked out but no, I think Nicola Sturgeon is very effective and she’ll be a very effective leader. So far, she hasn’t done anything. Q: Do you think she’s going to have the support kind of internally in the party?A: Yes, I think so, yes.Q: I mean, she’s a lifer really, isn’t she? I mean, she’s been involved for decades with the SNP.A: Yes, I think nearly as long as Alex Salmond. Yes, I think she has actually. Yes, she’s got quite a long history, yes.Q: Great. Well, I think that’s pretty much everything actually.A: Good.Q: Thank you so much.[Transcript Ends 00:37:19]

# Simon.docx

Q: Do you remember when you first heard that there was going to be a referendum? A: I think it was actually when-, was it in 2010 when the SNP won the majority? Q: Yes, yes.A: We’re all quite interested in politics, but I was actually-, my youngest son, it was just after he was born so I had to spend that day with him [laughter]. We’d been out in the car and he was falling asleep in the car, so I was just sitting in the car. It was a couple of hours at least. It was actually after playgroup and I was just listening to all of the results come in and they were talking about the implications of a majority in Scottish parliament and that was one of the things they talked about. Obviously they were included in the manifesto, so probably there. Q: Yes. That’s kind of cool you remember even listening to the results coming in. A: Yes. I mean, I’ve always been SNP inclined because I’ve always felt that Scotland shou ld be an independent country so it was quite an exciting day just getting that in . I think, even if you weren’t an SNP supporter, you know, the way the Scottish parliament is set up, we didn’t really expect anybody to have a strong majority and a real proportional representation. Q: Yes.A: It was quite a momentous thing at that point and I don’t know, I certainly didn’t know, you know, the implications at that time of what would come from that were huge, so I suppose it was quite an exciting day for anyone interested in politics although it might not be your flavour [laughter].Q: No, no, you’re right. It’s interesting anyway. I mean, were you involved in the campaigning or anything like that for SNP at the time? A: Not at all. I’ve never, up until the referendum , I’ve never really been involved in that. I’ve always had my views and I’ve always shared my views with people, but I’ve also been from a position where I think people should develop their own views.Q: Yes.A: So, I’ve never felt like I’ve ever really wanted to influence other people’s views unless they came to me. So, I wasn’t involved in that but I was an SNP supporter and I voted for them, you know, because I remember that was a b ig, like yes, yes, not yes, yes but it was the two votes and they really played on that, I think, in that campaign because there was the whole second vote Green thing from the G reen side but they were very strong on that that, you know, if you want SNP in then it’s two votes for SNP , which I suppose is some of the nuances of the Scottish Parliament .Q: Yes. A: That was kind of the first point and I wasn’t as active as I was certainly in the referendum. Q: So, what made you feel that you wanted to get more involved when the referendum started ? A: I think I’ve always had this inclination towards independence, so that was an initial thing. It’s one issue and I think the implications of this will be far reaching, so there’s a sense of urgency and a sense of importance that I don’t think we generally have around the general election. I think that was a marked difference in that, you know, that felt really important and the fact that it was something that was important to me anyway. Q: Yes, yes.A: Was compounded by that.Q: Do you think people are more interested in things like a referendum compared to a general election? A: I think there’s an immediacy of, you know-, so, you get promises from a general election campaign and I think there’s almost a sense of these might happen or they might not happen. There is some Sinicism around a lot of politics as well, you know, when you get these promises before an elect ion but I think the definite of this is a vote and this will happen, although would it? I don’t know. I think that made it very different and bear in mind constitutional change, which is not often very fashionable in politics and I’m not 100% sure why but it seems really important to change the rules of the game [laughter].Q: Yes, yes.A: That’s really important and, you know, that you never really hear anything that seems to be-, maybe because the scale of it is never that great, it’s not as important and something else where it’s a complete change of the landscape then it becomes very important. I mean , I think the first political system that we have is-, I mean, it’s archaic and it’s so open to abuse , I think , with the way regi ons can be changed and you end up that you have a huge body of people voting one way but have limited representation. So, I think that was something, you know, ask now in a referendum, I’d be like, “Yes, definitely ,” but no , I actually cannot remember. That’s probably part of the problem with being at home with two kids. I mean, I think that’s important and I think the context of what’s going on at the moment made an issue of constitutional change even more important because there is a lot of people that, I think feel dissatisfied with the political system. Q: You mean like Westminster rule in particular or -? A: I think so, and I think there’s a general feeling that-, I don’t think you can hide the fact that politicians are co ntrolled greatly by business.Q: Do you think that’s as true in the Scottish parliament? A: You see it’s interesting. I think Scottish parliament welcomes more third secular representation. T hey seem to bring in other groups, you know, so there’s a debate with interested parties whereas my understanding from Westminster is that that’s harder to break into but there is certainly donor situation where people are given a lot of money and have the ear of pol iticians and have influence. So, all the seats are different. My perception is that they’re different, so it’s not bad to have influence , it’s the type of influence, at least be able to influence and there seems a bigger scope for that in Scotland whereas Westminster , it doesn’t feel that way and I suppose proportional representation is a reflection of that as well where if we’re going to accept it-, I think if an amount of the population vote this way and they’re going to allocate seats according to that. It feels more lik e a closed shop at Westminster where it’s like, “We’re safe guarding,” you know, “We’ve got power and control here and we’re looking to safe guard it in various ways.” So, it’s a tough one but without knowing the ins and outs, but from little bits that I’ve picked up, it seems that there’s a different type of influence up here and people seem to be invited more in. Q: Yes, and have you had any other-, any kind of direct contact with your MSP or even your MP? A: Not direct. I mean, I’ve emailed off a couple of, if you like-, but it’s more questions like , “Why didn’t you vote on that issue?” you know, “You state that you’re this on this issue but yet you didn’t vote ,” or questions like, “Were you in parliament [laughter] today or not? ”Q: Did you ever get any replies? A: Yes. I mean, you get replies. You get a few, sort of, general replies and stuff . I think that comes more out of frustration at times and I suppose it’s where your allegiance is by but I think with being a Labour person, I think they’re in a very difficult position in Scotland at the moment. I think they’re kind of playing both sides, you know, they’re trying to promote that they’re a Scottish party looking after the interests of Scotland, but we’re also part of a bigger organisation that’s looking at the needs of the UK as a whole or a particular area. So, yes, I think I’m more critical of them at the moment because from an SNP point of view, I can see that they are there and they’re focusing on Scotland’s needs, so I suppose that’s an easier game to play. They have a more consistent message, I suppose, a more consistent stance on stuff. Q: Yes. I mean, how do you feel that Labour did out of the referendum? A: I think it was disastrous for them. I think it really was. I don’t understand their position. There’s only one argument that I’ve heard that I can reasonably understand about why Labour didn’t support independence in Scotland but the Scottish Labour party didn’t vote independence and that was from someone who asked them for their support in a big, kind of, I suppose a social aspect, felt that we needed to stay together in solidarity. It was like, “I don’t want to abandon issues that are important to me in certain areas, and I think we should stick toget her and deal with these issues. I think we should get excited about the whole of Britain and not just Scotland.” Q: Kind of like welfare reform and things like that ? A: Welfare reform, yes. It was almost-, I think he almost felt like he would be abandoning people that had supported him and would have supported but I think in Scotland and in England, I suppose, I think Labour, their positio n was really unclear. They stand for these values but will support a situation that doesn’t try and equalise out injustices in these areas and I think that was disastrous for them. Q: Right.A: I think the SNP were quite canny in taking up a position where it’s this kind of left of centre position because I think that was a move for them and I think there is this kind of feeling where Labour have , from even before Tony Blair, kind of abandoned this stance on being a party of the people. They will still say it and they will still use that angle but when you actually look at policies, I don’t think they have really got a defendable position. Q: Yes, and do you think they’re record in power as well has kind of worked against them in that kind of way? A: I think it was difficult in Scotland because since the Scottish parliament has come in, I think we’ve seen quite a shift in the context, you know, in the early days , there was quite reasonable times where there was quite a bit of money about but then with the financial crisis coming in and everything being cut then I think people look back and think, “What the hell happened there?” Blame’s kind of a scribe to that type. Q: Yes. A: So, I think they’ve t aken a hit on that but I just get a feeling with Labour in the referendum that it was highlighted that the values that people perceive them to be about , they’re not really about anymore, and I think they were found out. I think there was almost a lag in people really catching on to what Labour are about and I think that really kind of caught up with them in the referendum because people got involved and people were thinking, “Well, what does it mean to be Labour ?” and they’re like, “Wait a minute,” whereas you and there’s, you know, Ruth Davidson [laughter] and your, you know, they’re coming from the same line. People would look more in depth at policies and think, “Oh, you’re supporting austerity. Wait a minute, what’s that about? You’re supporting these things that we don’t think Labour are about.” So, I think things that have gone on in the past have really, really caught up with them, which is interesting. That’s interesting that, you know , I remember voting for Tony Blair and voting for Labour and being delighted that the Tories were out of power and then act ually when you look back at Tony Blair’s record , he’d done as much as Margaret Thatcher did to, you know, things like privatising the NHS, welfare reforms to sanction individuals rather than looking at structural problems within society. Q: I mean, even Scottish parliament came under Tony Blair’s watch , didn’t it? A: That’s right, yes. I mean, that was something we delivered and I can’t remember who it was picked up on that but it was like, “No, actually, it was the Scottish people because they voted for that.” Yes, it was Labour, but I think that’s tied into how it was set up and , you know, the proportional representation and the idea that you would never really have a clear voice in Scottish politics and maybe that’s cynical to think that it was set up in that way, but yes, I think it’s kind of grown arms and legs. I can’t remember who-, it was maybe Donald Dewar that said that at the time that it was like a kind of step process. I think that’s happened really quickly that people have gone from having a devolved parliament to wanting more than that. Q: Yes. Do you think that’s happened quicker than even the SNP anticipated? A: I think so. I mean, I think people looked on it that this would be a gradual thing but I think there’s just been an absolute rush and maybe that was the fact that people’s living conditions have really changed dramatically. Q: Do you mean recently, or like even over the lifetime of the parliament?A: Even since-, I mean , I would say the last ten years , I think people have seen a really big difference in just the spending the councils have, the money that’s about, jobs, not just for themselves but for their children, opportunities that are around . I think people feel a real contraction in it and I think the referendum really galvanized that in people and I think people were feeling it and then there was a powerlessness around us and it was like, “Oh, yes. it’s the credit crunch, we can’t do anything” and it’s almost like we just let it happen and like, “Well, we don’ t really have any power to do anything about that,” and then the referendum came along and people were offered an alternative to say, “We don’t need to spend money on this. We can prioritise that .” So, I think it really, you know, so Tory kind of saying there is an alternative. I think it opens people’s eyes that you might not get an alternative but the idea that an alternative is possible was almost re-ignited, you know, “Well, actually we can change this and if I go along and vote, and we get enough people, this will happen.”Q: Yes. Do you think that was the strongest message from the ‘Yes’ campaign, the sense of an alternative? A: I think so. I mean, I don’t really think they play on the whole national identity thing, you know, they were looking and i t wasn’t about being Scottish. It was like, if you live in Scotland. I didn’t feel like it was playing into national stereotypes or anything. I think it really played on the idea of different opportunities for redistribution of wealth and power. I think that came in at a time when people were really looking for the opportunity for change and I think the way they went about it, the kind of long played, grass root movement, beca use there is a kind of distrust, I think, of politicians and mainstream media, particularly with the younger generation. So, hearing people chatting about these issues and picking up bits of information from social media, I think people were more inclined to believe it because it was coming to them in that way , but then also more inclined because they had the means available for being able to share it and I think that was a-,Q: Did you have lots of discussions with people about the referendum at the time? A: Absolutely. I mean, obviously in the university but even-, I mean, I think towards the end, it got really picked up by the media , but yes, it was getting to the point where it was like, we should probably stop talking about this as much, but it just felt really important. Q: I mean, were discussions going on around the dinner table and with friends and at work? A: Yes, I think so. I mean, even just people you bumped into in the street. You’re maybe walking down the street and you see somebody with a ‘Yes’ badge on, you know, and th ere was a connection there. It might not necessarily be a chat about the referendum but it inclined you, you know, there was a solidarity there just to say , “Hello” to somebody or, “I like your badge,” and then you get talking and it might have been about the referendum or it might have been something else, but it kind of galvanised it. My wife worked in a cafe and so she had the little blue book and she put it out on the counter and people were coming in and chatting and there were stalls. That was a real hub. Although it was just a café, that was a real hub. It ended up becoming a real hub, an unofficial hub for people that were voting ‘Yes’ and they would come in and be like, “How are you doing ?” and [laughter], “Are you getting stressed out about it ? it’s getting close,” [laughter] so it really brought people together and even people who were inclined to vote the other way, you know, there was good humour in it. Q: Do you think the city felt-, what was the kind of feeling in the city in the run up ? A: Energised. I mean, I’ve never felt the place like it, I really haven’t. I mean, Edinburgh is quite a reserved place anyway and people don’t tend to go out but I mean, you just felt it. I think the visual presence of a lot of the ‘Yes’ hype were particularly up on this. I remember thinking to myself that I could walk into any street in Edinburgh at the moment or probably Scotland and if I look around I will see a ‘Yes’, particularly ‘Yes’. So, there was this visual thing that constantly reminded you that something was going on with people and b adges, on houses, on cars and it almost focused people, like it’s ‘Yes’ or ‘No’. There’s ‘don’t know’ I suppose but some people had a position. There was not like a myriad of loads of positions. So, I think you had the feeling that there was a lot of people in the city, do you know what I mean, even though you were just seeing it. I was amazed at the amount of ‘Yes’ stuff that was out there and I suppose when it’s a general election , there’s a bigger range. Q: Yes. I wouldn’t think there’s as much. I mean , you don’t see many posters in the windows. A: I mean I still see-,Q: Yes, that’s the other thing, people haven’t taken them down. A: No, it’s not going away and that’s something that’s interesting to me because my feeling abo ut it has never really changed. I’ve always been pro-independence and I still am, but the depth of feeling that I have about that now is stronger and part of that’s because I ’ve looked into it, I’ve researched it, and I’ve found out more information. When you’ve went through this process of wanting there to be this positive change and the emotion of it not happening, so that’s my depth of feeling of how important it is to me . It’s even stronger now.Q: Yes. I mean, were you surprised at how close it got, I mean at any stage of the campaign? A: I remember thinking in the early days, you know, there’s no chance. I mean, there was just no chance and that’s what people were talking about, and you g ot a lot of that from listening into the politic debate, you know, “There’s no chance.” The expectation was, sort of, 30% and I remember-, you know, like you kind of pick up sound bites and that and I suppose, maybe through that, I was like, “No, if people ask me, I don’t think we’re going to get it,” and then I went to a community education seminar around independence. There were people from all different third sector organisations and we went off to meet groups to talk about it and I was saying that I hope it is but I don’t think it is, and there was this one guy there who said, “You don’t?” He was a ‘Yes’ person as well an d he was like, “Alright then, so tell me, who’s voting ‘No’?” He was like, “Tell me somebody you know that’s voting ‘No’?” I was like, “I’m struggling. I’m really struggling” and then it was, “Well, I know this person” and he was like, “So, who do you know that’s voting ‘Yes’? Look around this room” and it was like, he was right. Everybody in that place, almost everybody was, and then there was a sense of actually, you know, I see it. When I look around I see it, when I talk to people I see it, like who is against it? Q: Yes.A: There’s an element of, you know, you move in circles of people who are like minded, I suppose, but I think that was the point for me when I actually thought, “This is up for grabs.” My sense of what I see around me is that people really want this and I don’t see. So, I don’t know if part of that was that people that were talking were from the ‘Yes’ side and there maybe was a quietness about people who didn’t want change , but the people that seemed active and motivate d and that were talking and showing visually what they wanted and it seemed to be all on the ‘Yes’ side and that was the point where I thought, “Actually, yes, this could happen,” to the point, I think, where actually, and social media had a lot to play in that because it picks up on what you post and what you look at, you know, as more ‘Yes’ stuff’s coming through, it’s like are you in a bubble here? You just become in a bubble of-, surrounded by people who want the same thing or posting similar information and it’s hard to break out of your bubble, I think, at times. Q: Were you following the polls or any of the TV debates or anything like that? A: I watched the TV debates, yes. I mean, actually as it got nearer, the last two months was like I’d watch pretty much anythi ng that was coming on about it. I would definitely be watching the debates, you know, I’d be listening in to the radio phone in’s or whatever. In fact, it got to the point at one point where I was actually annoyed b ecause they were talking about-, I can’t remember what they were talking about. It was some really trivial kind of thing on the phone in and I was like, “Why are we talking about this?” [Laughter] Why are we always talking about, you know , should Phillip Scofield dye his hair? There’s important stuff, like why is this getting played on the BBC radio. Q: What did you feel about the media coverage in general? A: The mainstream media, I think it was a bit caught out a little bit. I think it was a really different kind of process, and I think that social media has come along. For me, it’s the first time it’s really felt that that had a huge influence in a political campaign. So, the classic example of that would be when Alex Salmond and Nick Ross had the kind of stooshie at the conference centre and then Nick Ross said , “Well, Alex Salmond never answered my question on it ,” and there was a short clip on the BBC about, you know, and it was edited to look like he never answered the question , but I actually listened to that on the radio, the full thing, and I know that he did answer it and then t here was loads of posts after saying , “Well, actually , this is the full response,” and I think, was that a tactic from the BBC or did they just have 30 seconds they could put on and that’s what was edited ? People’s access to information has grown dramatically, so I think the influence of the mainstream media has waned considerably and I think they were a bit caught out on this and having this money and kind of top down campaign that’s worked in the past isn’t quite as effective. I think maybe, if you look at the breakdown of the vote and you had proportionally a lot older people who perhaps don’t access social media sites, who rely on the papers, the six o’clock news. There was heavy-, and there was obviously loads of other factors, but I think that was a big part. I think the mainstream media, you know, it’s the British Broadcasting Corporation, you know, [laughter] it’s in the name. They’re supposed to be public broadcasters and they’re supposed to be neutral but it’s really difficult to be neutral and I think I felt there was a bias towards a ‘No’ vote. Q: Even on BBC Scotland? A: Yes, even on BBC Scotland. I mean, and we only get what we get up here but you’d be watching-, I remember there was an academic , kind of, watched what he did and he had looked at the media coverage, mainstream media coverage, and there’s obviously guidelines about how it should be. You can’t have too positive stories for ‘No’ and so you’ve got to keep a balance but what he was saying is that it was a sequencing of stories.Q: Right.A: So, you might start on a positive note from the ‘No’ campaign or something around the ‘Yes’ campaign but then that might be sandwiched in between two messages from the ‘N o’ and he said when he looked at the sequencing of it and the message that you were left with at the end of that and the message you got upfront , there was more message-, so, somebody might want to catch the headlines for the year, you know, Alex Salmond’s not been able to answer questions and then there woul d be a more in-depth bit saying, “But he said this, that and the other,” because people rarely move away from and then it looks finished and to make it-, you’re balancing, you know, Jim Murphy says whatever and he said the sequence of it wa s very favourable towards the ‘No’. I was looking out for that after I heard it and I thought I can see that point of view. Now, my bias as a ‘Yes’ person might affect it, I don’t know, but again , it’s ano ther way that social media was giving people tools to think critically about what they were hearing and the message they were hearing, “Why are we hearing this message?” and I think a lot of ‘Yes’ supporters I talked to feel the same that there was a bias particularly in the last few weeks. Q: Once it started getting close? A: I mean, so the poll that put ‘Yes in front, I was extremely sceptical about. They’d only polled 800 people and all the polls were like 1,100 people, you know, and this was a poll of 800 people that put ‘Yes’ in front. So, why was this number reduced when all the other ones have been the same? Was that a manipulation? A good time to, you know, you’ve got to get your voters out. Q: Yes, okay. Yes. A: Why did that message come across? Is it just because that’s a controversial news story? You know, that’s better news perhaps? I don’t know. There was bits and pieces that came out at interesting times about how the vow was portrayed. The vow was portrayed as devo-max home rule but it was only portrayed that way by the media. It wasn’t portrayed that way to the same extent by the politicians. They were talking about, you know, there would be changes, substantial changes, something close to this or that. The BBC picked that up almost as, you know, devo-max has been offered, and it felt almost to me like, “We can’t see this. We can’t sell this as devo-max,” but th ey turn around now and say, well the politician can say, “Well, this is what we offered.” What did the mainstream media portray that as ? It was different and it was exaggerated. People will say, “Oh, the politicians,” but it wasn’t. It was the media that portrayed it in that way and tha t to me almost felt like collusion. It did, and it was quite concerning at the time. It’s like, is this actually being offered, and are they allowed to? A politician would not be allowed to offer something different at that time. That would go against the Referendum Scotland Act (Scottish Independence Referendum Act 2013), so what happened there, because the media certainly did, if you go back and look at how many times devo max was mentioned on those days after the vow, so that was the message people got. It was the safe way of getting, you know, the power you want without the dangers of believing the media. Q: Do you think that was influential to people? A: I think there was a lot of people who had a fixed point of view right from the start and they, like myself, it was never changing. I think a l ot of people for a lot of valid reasons, maybe a lot of invalid reasons, there was never going to be any movement. I think there is always fear around change. People’s natural default isn’t really-, like change is a bit scary and there was a lot of things thrown up that, you know, you could lose your job and Sainsbury’s put a letter out to staff that they were moving. So, there was a lot of fear and all of that around so to be offered a safe alternative that seemed to offer the same kind of things that you wanted would be appealing to a lot of people. Q: Do you think the Scottish parliament did get anything out of that process, out of the vow? A: Nothing has been delivered yet. You’ll get Labour. Labour are on that at the moment, “We’ve delivered this, we’ve delivered,” No, they ’ve had a consultation and there is proposals that are going to be looked at, so certainly they’ve not got anything hard at the moment. They might have a different negotiation position because of it , but they’ve certainly not-, to my knowledge, nothing has changed to the present date. That’s going to be debated after the next election as far as I’m concerned, so other than change in the political landscape , I don’t think they’ve got anything out of it at the moment. Q: Do you think the SNP have done well out of it? A: I think they’ve done well out of the referendum. I think they’re going to have problems keeping-, from last year, there was a broader ‘Yes’ movement and then after the referendum , people have looked around and said, “I still want this, what do I do?” I think a lot of people did join the SNP. Probably a lot of that has fallen back as the direct debits have come out, but I know people that have gone along to SNP branch meetings and have felt that the people that were there originally are looking to kind of maintain the little bit of power that they had as being part of the SNP and although they have been invited in, people are a bit concerned about new ideas, changing their party. So, I think it’s a double edged sword. I think they’ve definitely, you know, their popularity has increased, their membership has increased, but I think the SNP have always been quite a tight knit political party and I think that’s going to be challenged with the size of their membership and the involvement of how many people are going to come in. That’s going to change and it’s going to change the party, and how different branches are reacting to that is quite interesting. It’s very interesting. Q: So, some are more open than others do you think? A: Undoubtedly, but I know people that’ve gone along and said, “They have absolute resistance to new people coming into that branch,” and I think some people are-, you know, the SNP conference came up quite quickly after it and some of them weren’t allowed to vote to say what motions were going to be brought forward. Q: Because they were new members? A: Because they were new members. I don’t know if that happens-, I certainly know of a branch that that happened in, so what’s that all about? So, I think they’ve definitely, in terms of their vote share , I think they’ve benefited hugely, but I think with that comes a lot of different issues for them and they’ve also got a pressure now t o kind of-, people have got their hopes and their dreams that they want to come out of this and they have aligned themselves with a party that they believe is going to represent them. So, you’ve got to be able to do that at some point to keep somebody involved. I’m actually probably more aligned with the policies of the Greens. Q: Right, right.A: I kind of like their structure as well of how they run things , but that’s kind of-, I would like to have independence and then be able to vote for a party within Scotland. To me at the moment, voting for Green is not going to change the game, whereas I think voting for the SNP and supporting the SNP could change the game, but if it went on issue by issue-,Q: You’re taking a much more strategic approach, I guess? A: Yes, and I think the referendum has put that issue on the table and that’s an issue that’s brought everybody together and that’s always b een important for me. I think that’s something that the ‘Yes’ movement talked about. It’s not about voting for the SNP. This is about voting for constitutional change. Q: Do you feel that it’s a step closer now, or is it a step backwards? A: I worry that-, I think the establishment at Westminster had a real fright. I don’t think any of them thought that there was any chance that Scotland would go independent. I don’t know if you would get an agreement for a referendum, do you know what I mean? I mean, if you look at the economics of it and I’m not an economist but how does the UK finance its debt with out the projected earnings of the oil industry? What does that mean for the UK’s financial rating and the amount they pay on interest on loans ?Q: Yes.A: If it breaks up, and there was lot of talk that Scotland couldn’t survive, what happens to the UK as a whole? It’s not going to be good [laughter]. I think there was always going to be really difficult times ahead after a separation and I felt things would get worse, you know, times would probably get harder and there would be difficult decisions and difficult sacrifices to make but the idea being represented by your government, having more representation by your government, it was a worth while campaign to go through. So, I worry that -, getting back to your question, I worry that, politically , I’m not sure that you would get an agreement to have a referendum at the moment. If the SNP p ut it in their manifesto saying, “We’re going to propose a referendum if we get into power,” and they do, I don’t know if-, that would be interesting. David Cameron came under a lot of criticism for agreeing to it in the first place but then again , they were just-, the Scottish parliament sent them the question, re-elect this parliament and that’s part of their manifesto, the issue is part of their political process then that should be adhered to , but I worry that they’re frightened that the closeness of it would mean that there’s a lot of people who woul d try and stop that happening. Do I think that people want it in Scotland? I think, it’s probably 50/50. I really think it is. I think there’s as many people that feel strongly against it. I think something maybe further has to change for that to really click and that might be a generation where things continue like they are and the proportion of the generation that voted ‘No’ die off [laughter], but I think there has to be a much stronger desire for it across the board for it to happen. I don’t think 50/50 is enough to-, because I think when you’re trying to change something and there’s a political establishment , it almost has to be an irresistible force. You’ve got to be 20% ahead, you know, and it’s never close like that, I think, the power and the influence that the establishment has will always -, and you ’ve seen it come into play with things like the vow. My friend was on polling stations. He went round the polling stations one day chatting to folk. He was a ‘Yes’ supporter and he said people were bust up. There was people coming up from the Labour party from Liverpool. They were bussed up on the day and there was three or four of them had been involved at polling stations in Kilmarnock. There was three or four people. Another one for Scotland, it was all people brought in for the day to speak to people, you know , that last message is so important. If you’re undecided and you’re standing and what’s the last message you hear? There were people drafted in to deliver that message at that key time, so I think power is always going to, when it comes to the crunch, be able to be exerted to keep the status quo and unless you’ve got a really strong majority that wants that change, I can’t see it coming. Q: Do you think it would have been difficult for Alex Salmond if-, it passed very closely, if it was like 50/50, like 51/49 or something like that? A: I don’t think it would have happened in those circumstances. I don’t.Q: Really?A: I don’t. If it was going on that one vote, because he was asked that question, you know, “What kind of majority do you need?” He said, “Well, it’s a referendum. It’s essentially one vote.” I think it would have been difficult without the kind of majority that the ‘No’ vote got to actually-, I don’t know why. I just feel if it was that close, it would have went into a legal battle and there would have been ways of it not happening. I’ve just got a sense of that, you know, that it might not have been a help to it. It could be a way the votes could have been called into question or, you know, I just feel if it was really close that it wouldn’t have happened, just like I think if it was a lesser margin, there might have been scope to challenge it the other way. I think if it had been a really small ‘Yes’ th en we would have seen it going into a legal battle. It wouldn’t have just been, “Yes, okay. There you go, off you go. You won,” [laughter]. I think it would have got even dirtier than maybe it was, but I don’t know . I don’t know if that’s just my opinion [laughter]. I think it would have been interesting if that line was taken after it or if there was just a ‘Yes’, “It’s a ‘Yes’ vote so on you go.” I don’t know how that process would have unfolded. Q: And Nicola Sturgeon taking things forward? A: In terms of the SNP, I th ink it’s probably a good thing. I think she came across really well and the referendum-, yes, I think she’s really competent and I think that it’s a clever move as well. I think that Alex Salmond comes under a lot of criticism. He’s, I suppose, a stereotypical politician in some sense. He’s a middle aged, kind of middle classed, white male, so I think a woman First Minister, that’s appealing to a lot of people. A lot of things the SNP were criticised for, I think really hit on the fact that she’s competent and does a good job and people have a good opinion of her. It’s good. I think the fact that people that are in power, handing on that power and moving on after a certain period of time is a good thing. So, I think it’s a good thing and I think that’s all backed up by my feeling that she’s competent. She’s never appeared anything other than that. I can only say from what I’ve seen of her on the tele but I think for politics as a whole , that’s a good thing but I think for the SNP , it’s a good thing as well. It’s not often people give up a power that they have. I think also it frees up Alex Salmond if he wants to take it. It’s not worked for him as First Minister and the leader of a ‘Yes’ campaign. It didn’t work, so if you want to do this again, do something different, or you try the same thing and it almost takes the kind of shackles off him as well as First Minister. There’s certain things you can’t say and you can’t do, so for him, I think it frees him up to kind of take his own personal things forward , but I think it also moves the party on and kind of moves politics on as well. Q: Okay, I think that’s everything. [Transcript Ends 00:49:25]