



‘Taken for Granted’ Oral History Archive

(TFG)

Name of Creator: Bernie Grant Trust

Extent: 10 wav

Administrative/Biographical History: The Bernie Grant Trust was established by Sharon Grant in memory of her husband and former MP Bernie Grant following his death in 2000. The Trust has a board remit to address disadvantage arising from race and ethnicity. It has delivered community leadership programmes in several UK locations.

The project 'Taken for Granted' was conceived by the Bernie Grant Trust to encourage Black and ethnic minority (BME) youngsters to become more engaged with UK politics. Part-funded by the Big Lottery, the project allowed participants to explore the current role of BME people in British political life, with a focus on the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Following a brief meeting with BME MPs and Lords, a tour of the House of Commons, and an archive session exploring the life of Bernie Grant at Bishopsgate Institute, the participants selected 10 political figures to be interviewed. Specialist training in interview techniques was provided by BBC special correspondent Kurt Barling and Channel 4 journalist Darshna Soni.

Custodial History: Deposited at Bishopsgate Institute by Sharon Grant in 2012.

Scope and Content: Interviews conducted by Black and ethnic minority teenagers with Black and ethnic minority politicians in 2011 as part of the Bernie Grant Trust project, 'Taken for Granted', (2011).

System of Arrangement: The Taken for Granted Archive is arranged by interview.

Language/scripts of material: English

Access conditions: OPEN

Copying conditions: Photocopying, scanning and digital photography (without flash) is permitted for research purposes on completion of the Library's Copyright Declaration form and with respect to current UK copyright law.

Finding Aids: Copy of hand list available in Library Reading Room.

Rules and Conventions:

Compiled in compliance with General International Standard Archival Description, ISAD(G), second edition, 2000; National Council on Archives Rules for the Construction of Personal, Place and Corporate Names, 1997.

Archive Catalogue

TFG 'Taken for Granted' 2011

Interviews conducted by Black and ethnic minority teenagers with Black and ethnic minority politicians in 2011 as part of the Bernie Grant Trust project, 'Taken for Granted', (2011).

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OPEN

TFG/1 Rosalind Howells 2011

Interview with Baroness Rosalind Howells conducted as part of the Bernie Grant Trust project 'Taken for Granted', (October 2011).

Name: Rosalind Patricia-Anne Howells,
Baroness Howells of St Davids, OBE
Date of recording: October 2011
Length of recording: 01:07:41
Transcript: None available.
Summary: Rosalind Howells was born 10 January 1931 in Grenada. In 1994 she was made a life peer and sat as a Labour member of the House of Lords. Howells discusses the connection between the Caribbean and the British Isles, as well as her impressions on arriving in the UK – the class divide, discrimination, racism, and the reaction to her marriage to a white Welsh man. Howells also talks about her journey into politics through the trade union movement and the desire to improve the lives of ethnic minority peoples. She also

discusses her current position in the House of Lords, and her friendship with Bernie Grant MP (1944-2000) and the Black Sections movement. Howell also talks about her vision of the future and the importance of young people engaging in politics.

OPEN

TFG/2

Yasmin Qureshi

2011

Interview with Yasmin Qureshi MP conducted as part of the Bernie Grant Trust project 'Taken for Granted', (October 2011).

Name: Yasmin Qureshi

Date of recording: October 2011

Length of recording: 00:36:00

Transcript: None available

Summary: Yasmin Qureshi is a Labour MP for Bolton South East (elected May 2010) and a barrister practicing criminal law. Born in Pakistan in 1963, Qureshi immigrated to the UK aged nine. She discusses being brought up in the south of the UK and now representing a northern constituency. Qureshi also talks about her respect for the deceased MP Bernie Grant, and the responsibility of being a female Muslim in UK politics.

OPEN

TFG/3

Lola Young

2011

Interview with Baroness Lola Young conducted as part of the Bernie Grant Trust project 'Taken for Granted', (October 2011).

Name: Lola Young [nee Margaret Omolola Young], Baroness Young of Hornsey, OBE

Date of recording: October 2011

Length of recording: 00:40:22

Transcript: None available

Summary: Lola Young was born in 1951 in London. She had a successful career as an actor before becoming a Professor of cultural studies. In 2004 she became a Crossbench peer. Young discusses her work to help less economically developed countries before moving on to discuss the opportunities and handicaps facing young people in the UK today. She also talks about the deceased MP Bernie

Grant and his revolutionary zeal, and the challenges faced by people who look to change the status quo. Young encourages young people to engage in grassroots politics, working in other fields before they enter politics.

OPEN

TFG/4

David Lammy

2011

Interview with David Lammy MP conducted as part of the Bernie Grant Trust project 'Taken for Granted', (October 2011).

Name: David Lindon Lammy FRSA

Date of recording: October 2011

Length of recording: 0:20:57

Transcript: None available

Summary: David Lammy was born in London in 1972 to Guyanese parents. He was elected as Labour MP for Tottenham in 2000. Lammy discusses his inspirations – growing up in Tottenham, race inequality, the people he knows – as well as his values and desire to serve the public. He talks about his route into politics, working first for the Greater London Authority because he believed that he would struggle to get elected because of his race. He discussed the legacy of the Bernie Grant MP whose former constituency Lammy now represents. He believes people desire 'authentic politics' and that this is especially important for second and third generation immigrants (here, Lammy references the London Riots in August 2011 and the media coverage which focused on ethnicity). Lammy feels that political engagement is a journey and that young people might not care about political parties, but might well be engaged with political change.

OPEN

TFG/5

Diane Abbott

2011

Interview with Diane Abbott MP conducted as part of the Bernie Grant Trust project 'Taken for Granted', (October 2011).

Name: Diane Julie Abbott

Date of recording: October 2010

Length of recording: 0:13:45

Transcript: None available

Summary: Diane Abbott was born in London to Jamaican parents in 1953. She became the first black woman to have a seat in the House of Commons when she was elected as Member of Parliament for Hackney North and Stoke Newington in 1987. She was appointed Shadow Home Secretary for the Labour Party in October 2016. Abbott talks about being inspired by the black politics of the 1970s and the on-going feminist movement. She discusses the challenges she faced as a black women in politics and the work that still needs to be done with regards to minority representation. Abbott recalls that her proudest moment was running for leadership of the Labour Party whilst admitting that she's struggled to balance the needs of her constituents with the needs of her family. Abbott also discusses her memories of the deceased MP Bernie Grant, as well the need for all MPs to correctly represent their constituencies. She encourages young people to vote and engage in politics.

OPEN

TFG/6

Keith Vaz

2011

Interview with Keith Vaz MP conducted as part of the Bernie Grant Trust project 'Taken for Granted', (October 2011).

Name: Nigel Keith Anthony Standish Vaz

Date of recording: October 2011

Length of recording: 0:12:42

Transcript: None available

Summary: Keith Vaz was born in Aden [now Yemen] to Indian parents in 1956. He was elected as Member of Parliament for Leicester East in 1987 and served as Minister for Europe between October 1999 and June 2001. Vaz talks about his memories of the deceased MP Bernie Grant calling him an iconic leader, a good friend and an advocate for black peoples. He also discusses his own work in Parliament – the passing of the Race Relations Act 2000, the Succession to the Crown Act 2013, and the campaign for free university education. Vaz talks about the global reach of politicians through their constituents, as well as the need for young people to be more involved with politics. Vaz believes that everything is political, and it is up

to the public to take the initiative and set the political agenda.

OPEN

TFG/7

Oona King

2011

Interviews with Baroness Oona King conducted as part of the Bernie Grant Trust project 'Taken for Granted', (October 2011).

Name: Oona Tamsyn King, Baroness King of Bow

Date of recording: October 2011

Length of recording: 0:21:07

Transcript: None available

Summary: Oona King was born in Sheffield in 1967. Her father was of African-American decent, and her mother of Jewish decent. King was elected as Member of Parliament for Bethnal Green and Bow in 1997 and was made a peer in 2011. She discusses how her mother and the society she grew up in inspired her to become a politician and the values of empathy and co-operation that drive her. King also discusses the challenges she faced to get elected being, young, Jewish, black and female, and the continued stereotypes she faces as a mixed race politician. She talks about her desire not to be pigeon holed by her involvement with 'women's issues' in politics, but also the need for female MPs to champion gender equality. King also discusses entering the House of Commons, and later, the House of Lords.

OPEN

TFG/8

Rushanara Ali

2011

Interviews with Rushanara Ali MP conducted as part of the Bernie Grant Trust project 'Taken for Granted', (October 2011).

Name: Rushanara Ali

Date of recording: October 2011

Length of recording: 0:29:26

Transcript: None available

Summary: Rushanara Ali was born in Bangladesh in 1975, migrating to London aged 7. She was elected as Member of Parliament for Bethnal Green and Bow in 2010 and held the post of Shadow Minister for International

Development. Ali is the first person of Bangladeshi origin to be elected to Parliament, by received negative comments when she stood for election because of being female and Muslim. She states that in her opinion the best way to overcome prejudice is to talk to people and refuse to let others speak for you. Ali also discusses the special experience of getting elected in the Borough you grew up in and the honour this has brought her in Bangladesh where the British parliamentary system is well regarded.

OPEN

TFG/9

Sam Gyimah

2011

Interview with Sam Gyimah MP conducted as part of the Bernie Grant Trust project 'Taken for Granted', (October 2011).

Name: Samuel Phillip Gyimah

Date of recording: October 2011

Length of recording: 0:18:14

Transcript: None available

Summary: Sam Gyimah was born in the UK in 1976, grew up in Ghana, and returned to the UK when he was 16. He was elected as a Conservative Party Member of Parliament for East Surrey in 2010. Gyimah discusses his route to politics. He was involved in student politics at University but perused a career in the financial sector after graduating. He also talks about the process of becoming an MP and the education he received at the University of Oxford. Gyimah discusses being a black MP in a majority white constituency, and how ultimately his ability is more important to his constituents than his skin colour. But he does discuss how his ethnicity informs his opinion, although it doesn't define it. He talks of the deceased MP Bernie Grant, and how he himself is encouraged to help those in the black community gain more representation in Parliament. Gyimah also discusses the economic problems (such as youth unemployment), and the negative portrayal of young people in the media as barriers between the political process and young people. He also discusses the scrutiny of politicians by the media.

OPEN

Interview with Virendra Sharma MP conducted as part of the Bernie Grant Trust project 'Taken for Granted', (October 2011).

Name: Virendra Kumar Sharma

Date of recording: October 2011

Length of recording: 0:33:21

Transcript: None available

Summary: Virendra Sharma was born in India in 1947, migrating to the UK aged 20. He became the Labour Party Member of Parliament for Earling Southall in 2007. Sharma spent much of his youth as a campaigner and a trade unionist, but at the time thought election to Parliament was unlikely because of his race. He talks about his affiliation with the core principles of the Labour Party and his memories of the deceased MP Bernie Grant who he believed helped the black community fight for their rights. Sharma discusses an 'average' day as an MP. He also talks about the importance of freedom of speech, so long as it does not lead to the incitement of violence. Sharma discusses working with communities to affect change and the importance of free education and health care to ensure the next generation has the same standard of living as the last. He also discusses the need for young people to engage with politics.

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