

Methodist University Community Oral History Project
Methodist University
Fayetteville, NC

Anonymous 2016 7

Interview Conducted by
Peter C. Murray
August 9, 2016
Fayetteville, NC

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Interviewed by

PETER C. MURRAY

0:01

MURRAY: My name is Peter Murray, and this is August 9, 2016, we're at the Crown Coliseum in Fayetteville, North Carolina, and I'm with—

0:12

ANONYMOUS: [Name omitted.]

0:14

MURRAY: And, [Name omitted], would you tell me a little bit about who you are, and kind of biographical information?

0:23

ANONYMOUS: Who I am, I'm a sophomore in college, liberal arts schools. I was born and raised in Georgia. I spent most of my teenage years up in Virginia. Now I'll be going back down to Georgia to finish out college.

0:39

MURRAY: Do you have siblings?

0:40

ANONYMOUS: I have one younger sister.

0:48

MURRAY: What were some of the major formative things as you grew up, events or things that have influenced your life thus far?

1:02

ANONYMOUS: Like political events, or like personal events, or—?

1:05

MURRAY: Personal kinds of things.

1:07

ANONYMOUS: Let's see, I became an Eagle Scout—

1:09

MURRAY: Oh, congratulations!

1:10

ANONYMOUS: Yeah, thank you. Took flying lessons, I went to regions as a wrestler, varsity wrestling. President of my high school politics club. I just have a really hard work ethic, this whole background I've been accustomed to, so, work your butt off.

1:31

MURRAY: Tell me a little bit about how your parents raised you, and, you know, who were your heroes.

1:38

ANONYMOUS: Yeah, so my parents raised me with good Christian values, good southern hospitality.

Good conservative values: honesty, dignity, and respect the twelve points of the Scout Law. What was the next question?

1:53

MURRAY: Your heroes?

1:54

ANONYMOUS: My heroes? One would be General George S. Patton, Commander of the Third Army in World War II. He was very audacious: he didn't really care what he said. Ronald Reagan. I really admire Steve Jobs: I think the company and culture he built is just fantastic, it's phenomenal. Ronald Reagan, 'cause he really brought about a sense of American exceptionalism.

2:18

MURRAY: I like Steve Jobs [indecipherable]; I'm an Apple person myself.

2:21

ANONYMOUS: Yeah? Good.

2:23

MURRAY: I've had Macs for several—. I think I'm on my third or fourth Mac.

2:30

ANONYMOUS: Really? Good for you.

2:34

MURRAY: So, [Name omitted], what led you to decide to drive down today?

2:41

ANONYMOUS: Yeah, so, I just wanted to be part of the movement, you know, the [Donald] Trump movement, you know. Back in 2008, we didn't really see this with Romney or McCain—of course, Romney won the primary vote. There wasn't as widespread enthusiasm for the Republican Party. I mean, like, Romney, he was part of the establishment. He had some—. If you ask me, as a businessman he wasn't qualified like Trump is. But, I mean, it's just exciting, you know? I mean, especially given the prospect of where our nation is right now, where it can go with Hillary [Clinton], you gotta be kidding me. It has to be Trump. Even if you do say it's the lesser of two evils, it has to be Trump.

3:18

MURRAY: Are you—. His running mate is [Mike] Pence, who comes in some ways from a more traditional evangelical Christian background. Do you prefer Pence to Trump? Or, how do you see that combination working?

3:41

ANONYMOUS: Well, it works a lot because I think Trump is a little more lenient on the marriage laws and the transgender issues, and Pence I think brings balance, because he is from the evangelical Christian background. He's from the Midwest like my fantastic mother is, and I think those values are great in society. The founding fathers were devoted Christians and, I mean, I think you've got to have some very good—if not a state—you don't need to have a state religion, but I think you should definitely have, like, strong morals and ethics as a society. I mean, yes, there are some ethics and some morals in different societies that are wrong. We're not cultural relativists, I mean. Some are wrong, some are right.

4:24

MURRAY: What are your aspirations in terms of—what do you think about America's role in the world?

4:30

ANONYMOUS: America's role in the world? Well, always we should be first and foremost a global power. I think we should have a strong military, just a strong military presence everywhere, you know, that keeps everybody in check. Of course we want to be on top of the economy, with the worldwide economy. I think it's that oil is traded in the U.S. dollar. I think we've got to keep it that way, but we can't be beholden to the Middle East for oil, or for other natural resources. We're a world leader. I think if you the world and you, like, took the United States out of it, it'd be chaos. It'd be insane. It'd be like [indecipherable]. There wouldn't be anything left.

5:20

MURRAY: What about the U.S. economy, and why do you see Trump as good for the U.S. economy?

5:34

ANONYMOUS: Okay, the U.S. economy. Okay, so, there's many problems with the U.S. economy that Democratic, Keynesian, Liberalism, Socialism economic ideas. First of all is the minimum wage. To simply raise the minimum wage is not gonna really help any economic growth. It's actually gonna take people out of the workforce, 'cause when you raise the minimum wage and then decreasing the pool that the companies have to choose from workers, 'cause now they've got to find workers who can produce at least fifteen dollars of value, which is not many. So now they're searching from a limited supply of workers. And then the workers that are gonna stay employed, they're gonna get bumped up to the fifteen dollar an hour. Now the companies are gonna have to start—they're gonna have to turn, like, to automation, just like McDonalds and Panera Bread, they're using these kiosks to serve, 'cause they can't afford it. The next thing would be the federal regulations. We're a free-market economy, we're capitalists at heart. From an Austrian economics perspective, it would be insane to increase federal regulations. Federal regulations just increase the regulations on the businesses, it increase[s] their taxes, and that just decreases their productivity, decreases their profitability, and then with decreased profits, these businesses don't have enough money to reinvest into society, into the economy. There's so many issues in this American economy, but I think those are the two main ones: like, lowering or abolishing the minimum wage, because we need to leave it up to the companies, and then—what'd I say?

7:02

MURRAY: The minimum wage—

7:03

ANONYMOUS: Yeah.

7:04

MURRAY: —has been around since 1938.

7:07

ANONYMOUS: Yeah. Correct.

7:07

MURRAY: Do you think it's likely to be abolished?

7:11

ANONYMOUS: Of course it's not likely to be abolished. The American people would not put up for it. I think the well-educated ones realize that, hmm, wait a second, this minimum wage was enacted by FDR. He was a progressive, right? And you know, like, these—

7:23

MURRAY: When the minimum wage was started, it was forty cents an hour.

7:27

ANONYMOUS: Well, now look at it, it's about to be fifteen an hour. Regardless, the minimum wage cuts out a certain amount of people from the workforce, 'cause they won't be able to produce anywhere from forty cents to fifteen dollars an hour. It takes people out of the workforce. It makes these companies more selective—actually, less selective. So now these companies don't get to choose freely who they want to hire. They've got to go from a limited pool.

7:46

MURRAY: What's the minimum wage today?

7:47

ANONYMOUS: Right now, in my state it's, like, 7.25 to eight bucks. Right now there's talk to bring it up to fifteen. That's preposterous. It's insane. Companies can't afford that. And also, raising the minimum wage, it's not gonna—. Like, even in a month—

8:00

MURRAY: The minimum wage as it is now, is it too high in your opinion?

8:05

ANONYMOUS: Of course it's too high! I do not favor any increase. Like I said before—. Well, aside from that, if you raise the minimum wage, maybe immediately you'll have some nice effects: you will see, like, a raise in your income, you'll have more buying power. But over time, the prices are going to adjust to more money in the economy. Right now the Federal Reserve just prints money freely. There's nothing backing it, like what we had on the gold standard. I am a proponent of the gold standard, but going back to the minimum wage, like, the prices are gonna go up, there'll be more and more inflation.

8:37

MURRAY: Okay. Okay. So, are there other issues that particularly energize you besides the economy?

8:50

ANONYMOUS: Immigration.

8:52

MURRAY: Immigration? Do—

8:52

ANONYMOUS: I mean, what's happening on the border is, like—it doesn't make any sense, you know, like, that you can just walk across and, like, get a job in America or go to college in America without any legal identification. Legal immigration—sure, like, I'm not gonna dispute that our nation was founded upon immigrants. But these immigrants came here accepting American values, accepting American traditions, accepting American language. Now we're living in Virginia, and even up in New York, where we have, like, Spanish—. We have, like, Spanish lettering in T.V. shows. It is insane. Nations need borders to stay a nation. Like Rome: they fought continuously even on the Danube River to maintain their borders, 'cause they just had barbarians or these, like, Celts and other tribes just flowing across their borders nonstop without check. You're not a nation! It's just expensive. Like, you gotta maintain a national identity. Just have them come in the legal way.

9:56

MURRAY: Okay. Are there other issues that are besides immigration and the economy?

10:10

ANONYMOUS: American military. I heard it's, like, being decreased to pre-World War II levels, or, like, to lower than pre-World War II levels. That's, to me—it doesn't make any sense, of course. Maybe that's why the Democrats like it, 'cause it doesn't make any sense.

10:24

MURRAY: I don't know where you got your new data from, but the United States still outspends every other country in the world on the military.

10:30

ANONYMOUS: That's why we're number one! That's why we're number one.

10:33

MURRAY: But that doesn't support what you were just saying about—because pre-World War II, we were behind Romania in the size of our army.

10:40

ANONYMOUS: Really?

10:40

MURRAY: We were sixteenth in the world in terms of military force.

10:44

ANONYMOUS: For size?

10:45

MURRAY: What?

10:45

ANONYMOUS: For size?

10:46

MURRAY: For size.

10:47

ANONYMOUS: Yeah, well, China has, like, the largest military. Right?

10:50

MURRAY: But China's military maybe has more soldiers, although they don't make distinctions between police and military like we do.

11:00

ANONYMOUS: Yeah, but they're not as effective as the U.S. is. I'm not comparing our military size relative to the world; I'm comparing it relative to what we used to be, and how powerful we used to be. And now we're being diminished. I mean, like, you're decreasing military spending; the rules of engagement are, like, insane. I don't agree with the rules of engagement at all. I don't—I'm not an expert on them, so, I mean, I don't know all the rules, but I mean, I think we should be able to shoot first and—. I mean, of course, oh, then, like, I think they want to put more regulations or rules on, like, drone strikes. Like, for some reason, the whole world's saying that American society, we're so soft. I think we're pretty spoiled with how we live, the standard of living. Like, you gotta realize that civilians are gonna be killed in war: that's just a casualty. Like, yeah, we don't want it to, but it's necessary. I mean, you don't want to go out and kill civilians, but it's gonna happen. We shouldn't be afraid of that.

Like, we shouldn't decrease our military or let the bad guys live just because some civilians are gonna die. That doesn't help any country's interest.

12:17

MURRAY: Are there other concerns that you'd like to talk about, or things you want to tell me? You're an Eagle Scout.

12:28

ANONYMOUS: Yes, sir.

12:30

MURRAY: Tell me about—what kind of project did you do as an Eagle Scout?

12:34

ANONYMOUS: Yeah, I built a prairie garden for my church.

12:37

MURRAY: Okay.

12:37

ANONYMOUS: That was it.

12:42

MURRAY: Tell me a little bit about your church, and how you decided on that project.

12:51

ANONYMOUS: Yeah, so, let's see. I originally went to—this was our, like, backup church, it's, like, closer to us. Our main church we went to was, like, fifteen, twenty minutes down the road, and we really loved them, and I wanted to do my project there. And I sent my proposal and I presented it to their board, and they liked it, but they actually wanted me to do, like, a whole three-sixty on my project idea and build them a playground. And it's my project, it's my funds, and so I said no. So I had to go to the new church which is, like, five minutes away from my house. They openly accepted my proposal. And I felt that by going to my other church, where I would have more autonomy and more direction, more power over my project, instead of the church.

13:38

MURRAY: Sure. Sounds like a great project.

13:44

ANONYMOUS: It was, yeah. It was good. It was a lot of money, a lot of hours, but it was worth it. They use it all the time. You know, they do Sunday School out there, they do ministries out there, like, personal meditation, just to go chill, you know. It's a great addition to the church. They still upkeep it. I go there regularly to, you know, like, water the plants, fix the mulch, glue the tiles onto the stone benches again, 'cause they'll get loose.

14:16

MURRAY: Thank you for your time.

14:17

ANONYMOUS: Yeah. You too.

14:17

MURRAY: I really appreciate your coming and talking. Oftentimes the people we interview are older, and I think it's nice to have a young person's perspective and point of view, and to record those, as well. So you're adding a little bit of diversity to—

14:37

ANONYMOUS: Yeah, well, closing remarks for the young people: Really consider the unintended consequences of what you want passed right now. Minimum wage might seem good to you now, but, you know, in ten to fifteen years it may not seem a good idea. A great book is *The Road to Serfdom* by F. A. Hayek, published in 1944, and it's a whole great book, you know, criticizing socialism in the first place by its very roots, since it doesn't work. It's failed. Just be smart and put your country first.

15:07

MURRAY: Okay. Well, thank you, [Name omitted]. I appreciate your time.

15:09

ANONYMOUS: Yeah, thank you.