

Interview with a Middle-Aged Female Radio Personality

R. indicates the interviewee

Interviewer is a Dickinson College Student

R: And, the location was ideal. It had a 360-degree viewpoint because I'm like two miles from the volcano as the oriole flies. The oriole is our national bird. And, I was like, my house was the second house beneath the volcano in the neighborhood, in the Plymouth neighborhood, really. There was one other house above mine. All the others were downhill. So I, I look over the port of Plymouth, I looked north to this side of the island. I looked east to the mountains, to the Soufriere Hills, and I looked over to St. Patrick's and the rest of the Soufriere Hills. You know, it is a, it was a 360 degree, panoramic view that I, that I had at that location. So I lost that, but it's okay, that's okay, because again, my, my whole thing of adventure and starting over, I'm not afraid to start over again, you know, once there's life, you know, there's a certain excitement in that. I mean I tell people that, because, different people have different experiences of course and based on where you are in life will determine just what you do and how you see things, right? But for me when I lost my home, I knew I was gonna lose my home, I mean I could not be living that close to the volcano with out losing at some point. Plymouth is a delta of the volcano; we now know that, you know?

R: I did not feel that way when my house was destroyed because I knew my house would be destroyed. We could not come to grips that Plymouth, our capital, would've been equally destroyed. It was like taking a chunk out of the island from a psychological standpoint, from a physical standpoint, from all standpoints. So those were the significant and real traumatic aspects of the volcanic experience that really, really stay with me.

R: Okay, I did talk a bit about the, uh, the topographical changes in some parts, but even in north of the island where most of us are now located, and the north of the island means the northern third of the island, which is from Salem to Lookout, that is the new area where most people now inhabit. It has changed significantly because at the start of volcanic activity, one of the reasons why I said earlier that so many people had to leave because we did not have enough houses, we did not have enough homes, it is true, the north of the island at that time was considered underdeveloped because the majority of people who lived in the north, those of working age, the professionals, they built their homes and their lives in the urban areas, although they came from the rural areas here in the north. And then when the volcano started erupting and we've had to move further and further and further to the north from east and south, then

we've discovered that there were so many people that owned land here in the north, people who we thought, "

R: And so that's another story, another program altogether. But to say that the people who've come from the east and the south, those of us who were lucky to get a piece of land to purchase here in the north, we have begun building our permanent homes. And before, where you had few houses, now the place is peppered in houses, you've had new communities developing, where you had existing communities, like Barsey's, Lookout was a completely new community. As you drive through you'll see. Joan's Hill, Judy Paste, you know, those were areas that existed, but very small, now they're expanding more and more as more houses are built into the area, you know.

R: You know? Yeah, we, "Come, come home!" And this is what we said to everybody, "come home." But, but on a more permanent basis. You will have some that will come home; some who are now investigating the possibility of finding a house on Montserrat to either build, build, build or live in. Getting a piece of land on which to build, you know.