

## #17 INTERVIEW OF BLACK STUDENTS ENROLLED AT WASHINGTON AND LEE

1. *Have you decided upon a college major? Yes*

*If yes, what? Religion/Sociology*

*Like a double major? Yes*

2. *(If the answer to question 1 is no, skip #7.) What is your grade point average (GPA) in your major field? Not in my major. That just changed this term, from Biology to Sociology.*

3. *What type of degree are you working toward at Washington and Lee?*

BA

4. *What is the occupation or profession you want to enter upon finishing your education?*

I plan on going to graduate school. I'd like to study abroad a little bit, learn more about different cultures, maybe write something about what I've gathered. I'm considering teaching, but I think I'd like to work in the field, maybe teach after some field experience.

*What kind of field experience, do you think?*

Probably ethnographic, ethnological, I'm sorry, in the field.

*What does that mean?, sorry, I'm ignorant..*

With like, I guess you'd call natives. Go there, and instead of learning about it through research, learn about it through first hand participation, first hand interviews, learn about the culture, seeing how everyone lives their lives.

5. *Do you plan on working toward an advanced degree at some time after finishing your undergraduate program?*

yes

6. *While growing up, did you attend or were you personally active in church? Yes, my family is highly religious. Pentecostal, Jamaican Pentecostal, which is pretty strict. My father is senior deacon, and my mom's evangelist in the church from the time I was able to go outside every Sunday morning, Sunday night. Tuesday night Bible class, that sort of thing, until probably of age to make my own decisions, and even then when I go home, my parents still pretty much coerce me to go with them.*

*How would you characterize your church involvement in Lexington?*

Zero.

*Do you miss it?*

No. I'm glad for it cause it made me who I am today, but There's so many discrepancies I've found with religion. I think religion on the whole, the principals, and maybe some of the, yeah pretty, much the principles they have for everyone, for people to live, it should be based on individual interpretations and gather from that what's good for you and beneficial for you. I don't think I'm one for taking someone else's interpretation literally and applying it literally or verbatim into my life, especially if I'm not allowed to question it. And that's the thing I don't particularly like organized religion, anyone's allowed to have their own philosophy and should explore philosophies of other cultures. a lot of them are similar, but some add and complement each other So I guess the more you know about principles and values, how to get a broader understanding one's place in the world, what type of role you might want to play. I guess that helps.

*So you're enjoying spreading your wings a little bit? And exploring beyond your home church.*  
Yes.

*Have you visited churches here?*

Yes, I visited one church on, a little past Randolph, past First Baptist, Henry Street. It's also a Pentecostal church not too far, a couple houses down from the Laundromat. I've been there once or twice. Two girls who graduated here last year used to attend there and so they invited me and I came out

7. *How would you compare your level of participation in extra-curricular activities in high school and at Washington and Lee?*

High school started off, .. got a lot more intense I guess as I approached senior year. But freshman year was pretty much sports, sophomore year a couple clubs, and junior year I got really active in clubs, partly because I wanted to do things to put on the resume, to be quite honest. But I mean, I like, but I like, and was active in most what I did.. Student government, National Honors Society Treasurer, I did like volunteer groups, stuff like that, throughout my senior year. Here, when I came here, I applied for a couple of programs, but I didn't get in and was rather discouraged but it was just like - forget it. Like for freshman leadership council, SAB or whatever, but I didn't get into.. Freshman year, I was just more interested when I came here in just getting myself situated, so I really can't do to much - I mean, MSA, which is the thing most black kids are in, intramural sports, international club, freshman orientation committee - to host kids. I've done it pretty much every year. I did it once this year also. they tend to like to have freshmen do it just because they're a little more based in age and whatever like that with seniors in high school. I like to have - to see new faces - a little bit of diversity - whatever I can do to help I'll do that, so I try to have em come here. Give em honest, but.. opinion of the school, with still favored in - giving them the pros and cons, stressing the pros, showing that you can enjoy here, really based, I guess on who you meet, who you know. And I lot of people who they knew when they came here on visits, if they met people here and the people they met were coming here, they'd think to come here. I think I was one of those, and other people in my year were those. Even last year. They ask, will you come here next year. a lot of it comes down, if it's a good school, yes, but it is small, conservative, not very diverse, so the factor is usually money. Really a lot of [] it comes down to..

*So are you saying that when you hosted people and they got to know you, it made a difference so that they could come and know that they knew somebody here, or do you mean that sometimes when you come as a visiting high school person and you meet others that might...*

Other visiting high school people - it might help. but I like, whoever I'm hosting, I tell em we can out, we can party, but make sure you get to class tomorrow. I want you to check out the academic side of the school also. As well as try to see the social side. recently they've had kids come when there would be nothing going on, like Sunday night, so it's just like - all you do is go to class Monday morning and then you leave. You don't really get a feel...

*They only stay one night?*

One or two nights. When I came here, you came on like a Thursday or Friday and you were here for the whole weekend. And so you go to class maybe Friday morning and party Friday night and then you've got Saturday to hang out and you leave Sunday. Which was good. One of the reasons why I came was because I met kids here who I - yeah, also knowing that I came here I knew kids also helped, and I hung out with. Like the guy who used to live in Chavis House, hung out with them, had a good time when I came and that was pretty, much a deciding factor on whether or not I came here.

*But that's changed, just this last year? They're having a different schedules for visits?*

They've moved I think to coming on Sundays. I think they might have moved it back. We had a meeting with Dean Manning, Howison, and someone else, a couple of us, discussing what we feel about the school, a couple of changes that could be made. And I mentioned that as being one of them because we don't have the numbers, there are maybe four black kids coming in, and it's nice to see people, for whatever reason, who culturally tend to have more similarities. not just based on race, but little things like music, movies coming out. Little things that are activity and that you, or influence your social life, the general formation of a person.

*You've talked about some of the questions coming up. I want to recap number 7. It sounds like - they want you to compare your **level** of participation in extracurricular activities... And it sounds like you're saying you did a lot more in high school than you're doing here..*

Here, there are lots - for whatever reason - there are things I would have liked to do, but when I heard about it, it was like too late. One of the things I'm doing now is the Big Brother program, I like that.

*The town one, or the university?*

The university one. So that was good. I haven't spent that much time with him - just do it whenever he's available, I know when I'm available I'm not sure if he is. and I don't try to set "I'm going to be there Saturday" and if for whatever reason I can't make it. If I'm not sure, then, sometimes I could have done it, but I wasn't sure going into it, and didn't want to get him too upset, I'm supposed to see him tomorrow. Hang out, probably ride bikes, stuff like that. Would like to just give, you know, leave a mark, leave something positive. If I can be positive in somebody's life that's great.

*So you are doing some things, and some things you got discouraged about, or just didn't happen at the right time.*

Well, freshman year I wasn't really trying to get involved in a lot of extra-curricular activities. I was just really trying to go through the transition of finding my place here. Couple interviews I would really liked to have gotten and I didn't get it. But usually like in high school - probably changed from high school to college, cause like in high school whatever I tried to get, I got. and here you're competing with other people with equal or higher qualifications. And then sophomore year. Freshman transition was pretty rough. Not really rough. My grades were solid, but I was more or less miserable here. Not really miserable, but pretty much depressed. And coming in the summer before my sophomore year I had a really good time, worked, had money, hung out with friends, clubs, stuff like that. When I was driving down here I said to myself, "I'm going to have a better time here sophomore year, or I'll probably transfer, if I don't experience what I expect to experience out of college" And I expect to learn a lot in school, but I expected to learn a lot more about life without the textbook and if I didn't get those experiences - you know, typical college experiences, here, then I would have been gone by Winter term. But I came here met a whole lot of friends - most of them were seniors, graduated, most people ever since I've been here most people I've hung out with have been older, they've pretty much been juniors and seniors, so usually I've been hanging out with different people every year just because the older ones are leaving, which is cool - for whatever reasons I have more in common with them.

*It was a great crop last year, wasn't it?*

Yeah. But, so, during my sophomore year academics and school wasn't really much of a priority, it was, quite honest, put on the back burner. I did what I had to do to stay here, but I was just happy. Finally I was happy here. Finally, as a sophomore. And so my grades reflected that I was having a good time here. But, I think it was necessary, for me to find the balance between two extremes. plus, freshman year a lot of people were doing rush, doing the fraternities, and I'm not really into fraternities, just, I didn't see anything here that reflected me. And there were, pretty much anywhere I go, I know people there. I hope.. tend to treat people the way I want to be

treated, and hang out. But sometimes I didn't really feel my place, you know, as far as being able to relate on the same issues I mentioned before, like social and active, and stuff like that. So that happened sophomore year, so I didn't really get involved all that much in school. And this year, I've been pretty much trying to get the GPA back up, and gradually getting involved in extracurricular activities. If I hear something I'll probably make a phone call and see if I can get into it, and ...

*But your priorities have been elsewhere as compared to high school.*

Yeah.

8. *How did you learn about Washington and Lee University?*

My senior year. Josh Nitske, he graduated whatever, he went to my school, he was valedictorian, don't think he ever got a B in his life, so he was very smart, very bright. And he applied to this school and he came here, my guidance counselor was telling me. And I'd never heard about this school, so why.. I guess up north you don't hear much about it. So I said, "Well, there must be something good about the school, why he came here with all the other places he could have gone. and mu guidance counselor, she's dynamic, she's really a nice lady and she knows her stuff. she helped out a lot of kids who barely graduated and helped them get sport related loans, or like that, so I trusted her knowledge, trusted her wisdom, and she highly recommended - "I think, if you get into this school, I think you should go, bar none, I think you should go with this school." So that was a major decision also, major factor in my decision was her view of the school. I light of Josh coming here.

*So two people that you knew recommended it.*

9. *To what extent were you assisted during the admissions process by an alumnus of Washington and Lee?*

I don't think I really knew an alum. Josh was still a student.

*did you know him?*

No not really. We were on the same basketball team but never really talked outside.

10. *Did you visit the campus before you matriculated as a student?*

Yes. I came here twice. I came here actually as an honors scholar. and I came again on parents...- It was between here and Penn State. a big school and a small school. the two factors were the place that I applied to and that I liked, and the places that offered me a full scholarship. So I had to choose between that. So I came here and I liked it. I was coming from a small school with a class of 88 kids. So I didn't feel like getting lost in a big school. So when I came here, at that time I liked the size, I liked the relations you could have with the professors. That fact that the professors do know you, there's that incentive to stay regular in class. I like to keep my attendance well in case the grades are ever borderline, it does sometimes come down to what our attendance has been. And I came again with my parents and my older brother. And they liked it here. They were impressed when I came here and Dean Manning remembered my name, but - he knows everybody's name, but still, when we came here he was like "Hey [], How're you doing?"

*Did you go to class that time as well?*

No, I came that time just to feel out my final decision, and let my parents see it and give their opinion also, and they liked it.

*If yes, under what circumstances?*

Visited on your own

Participated in the Summer Scholar's Program

Visited during a Prospective Student Weekend



Other:

*Please describe your reactions to this campus visit.*

Yeah, came in the spring, It's gorgeous that time of the year. My brother lives in Northern Virginia. I like Virginia. So, plus he lives, about two and a half hours away, not too far from DC. And I wanted to get away from home, home's pretty sheltered, but I wanted to be close enough to go home if I ever needed to go home, but far enough where I'm pretty much on my own, and so Virginia was pretty much a good distance away.

*When you visited, did you have much connection with other students and get advice from them, or..*

Yeah, well, I'm not sure. I don't know how much I got. I'm sure I questioned the older people, the ones I hung out with most were the black kids lived out at Chavis. I hung out with them more when I came down here, on my visit, got some input from them. So they seemed pretty cool. They being here was good cause I could see I could be here also. So I hung out at Chavis House and had fun there.

*10a. Was W&L your...*

I think my first choice that I got into was UVA. I didn't get the money I wanted. So I visited Richmond, I didn't really like it, I came at a time, I think it was Thursday night when nothing was going on and I was bored, so I didn't get to see much of the social scene. I didn't get the feel... the two places I visited were Penn State and this school. I had a pretty much equally good time at Penn State, but It's just humongous. It's bigger than what I would like. Taking busses and stuff to class. I think it would have been too much of a change from what I'm used to. Small town, close to the city, but it's a small town in between a whole lot of bigger towns but still, it's almost like isolated. And plus, freshmen at Penn State weren't allowed to have a car, and I had just gotten my car and wanted to take my car with me. And that was also a factor in coming here, the fact that I could have my car here. So it was between Penn and W&L. Two good schools, but I'm not sure if this one was ranked higher. Penn State is slightly below Ivy League, I believe. So, It was tight. It was a decision that was - a close decision - but eventually I chose this one, plus the factors I mentioned before, advice, my parents had input, stuff like that.

*10b. About how many other colleges did you apply to?...*

I think I applied to about 6 or 7. I didn't apply anywhere north of where I lived, New Jersey. I just didn't like dealing with the winter cold, particularly ....I would have applied to Cornell or Brown, but I just couldn't see myself going through that cold. And Virginia's got a good mix of weather. Pretty sane humid winter. Summer and spring pretty nice, not as humid as where I'm from. So, not as hot as Texas...

*10c. How many other colleges accepted you?*

I applied to Rutgers, state university, got in there, got a full scholarship but it was home, and I didn't like being that close to home. Princeton - didn't get in - you always apply for the far reaching schools, the state schools, and the ones in between. Penn State, Georgetown were the far schools, didn't get those. Rutgers was the state school - I got that.

Applied to UVA, got in; William and Mary, got in; University of Richmond, got in; and Washington and Lee, of course. William and Mary offered me half scholarship, Richmond offered me half, and I think that was probably because I didn't really show that much of an interest, strong interest in the school in the interview. I think it probably came across that I probably won't be coming here.

11. *What made you decide to attend Washington and Lee?*

All those things I mentioned before in addition to rank. I came in here and the speakers sold the school pretty well. President Wilson spoke at Lee Chapel, my parents and brother were down here, and mentioned it's ranking in liberal arts colleges, best buys, and stuff like that.

*Was that during an honors weekend?..*

No, for parents of accepted students to visit. So after that I was like.. They packaged and sold it pretty well, so I bought it.

*Were there other factors you considered in making the decision?*

That was it.

*When you talked to the other black students when you were visiting at Chavis House, and they told you the pros and cons, did the cons impress you at the time? How was that?*

I really don't remember how much I talked about the school. You know what I'm saying it's like, the social scene, as far as maybe ... so different, transition, take some time getting used to, you know. But ...in the reality of the situation you can make do... if parties aren't maybe going as you like, you can have your own, and I was there for one that they had, at Chavis House. So I saw that in spite of whatever lack of diversity that they had here, you could still make it here.

12. *Once you decided to enroll at W&L, what was the reaction of friends and relatives?*

"Washington and What?" "Where's that?" "Never heard of it before" ... "We hear it's a really good school." "Figure if you're going there it probably is a good school."

*Were there negative images about W&L that made you think seriously about not coming?*

The whole southern thing, I didn't know about that. I didn't hear about it being a southern conservative school. At that time I didn't really know what all that meant, politically wise, or anything. I didn't really consider it much in the south, cause I didn't really think of Virginia as that much of a southern school [sic], but there's a lot of southern heritage in this school. It was good, cause I remember coming for the Honors Scholar... and I stayed in Graham Lees with someone, and I was walking through the hallway and there was some big Confederate flag on the wall, and having no real experience with it - except for what you've seen in the history books, I was like "Well, I'm not hanging out with that kid. I'm staying away from that kid's room." But one day I was sitting in my room reading, my host was gone, and he was walking by and he stopped in and said "hello, how're you doing." That was probably one of my most eye-opening experiences. I realized that I came here with prejudices of my own and I understood that what the flag whatever it symbolized to some, it didn't necessarily symbolize that for all. That experience has had... It opened my eyes up to other things. there are people here I winded up being friends with, acquaintances with, who if you told me my first day here these would be people who I would be hanging out with, the ones that I have, I would be like, "Yeah, whatever.." Now I hang out with everybody. Whoever's cool, whoever respects me, I respect them also, sothat too was an eye-opener for me also.

13. *Once you were enrolled, did you find the University to be as you had expected?*

Never being to college before, sometimes you don't know what to expect. Just the lack of being

able to find, let me say, my place. I mean, the guys I knew when I came here were seniors, I was a freshman. So they pretty much had their group of friends already, and they might hang out, but there was still pretty much an experience age gap. Coming as a freshman I pretty much don't know, so there's things you don't necessarily - I couldn't really relate with you until I experienced it. But it's funny how, even though most of the black kids don't really join fraternities, they have a fraternity-like system within their own cliques. Where the freshmen pretty much get hazed, whether it be jokes, or whatever like that, but it's all done to build your character till you eventually start joking back. So I'm coming in and it's like, "Man, what are these jokes for?" But the sophomore he got his joke too. So [ ] and I eventually started joking back. And it was one time one of them was a third year law student and he had some girl visiting him for like homecoming weekend, and I talked to her for a little bit, asked her if I could leave with things, and it was "Hey, cool," So we ended up hanging out, whatever like that, and so whatever, and so he met her at a party and said "Hey, you left me, a third year law student, for a freshman." So after that I got, some kind of clout.. I didn't say anything, nothing to be said, I mean, he said it, and I was like - "All right, whatever, it just happened like that."

*So your respect quotient went up..*

Probably. Probably. I think it did a little bit from that. There's still a lot of growth to be done. There's a lot of soul searching, finding what I wanted to do that I couldn't do when I was home. That resulted in the desire to find out a lot of things, a lot of questions I had that couldn't be answered by tradition, family, or particularly religion. One of the reasons I guess why I ended up doing sociology because in the course of events I became less interested in biology. I had determined to take that up when I was in high school, I came here as a biology major. Should have come here undecided and dealt things out and decided what was right for me, but that's how I'm not doing biology.

*So, It wasn't necessarily different than you had expected, because you didn't know what to expect, is what you're saying...*

Yeah, I didn't think. I think my shock was rush. Came in here for a couple of days and then this whole thing about rush going on and I'm just getting - don't really - it's taking up a lot of time, a lot of people, ..

*Did you participate in rush?*

No. I didn't. If I want to do it winter term, I'll do it. You know, whether I want to do it, I can always do it next year. But most guys were doing it, doing rush stuff and I was pretty much like home, chilling in my room watching television which was like cool. I didn't have anything else to do, I just did work. But at the same time it was just like.. Anyway with fraternities like forming, different guys began to hang out with different groups of guys within the fraternity, so being independent at that time was just like, ...hang out with you guys, invited to their fraternity parties

all the time, went to a couple of them, but it wasn't like a place - sometimes you need a group, or a peer group, or like a single group of people to hang out with, but a regular group would be nice. A more consistently hanging out - with people I hang out with pretty consistently.

*And that didn't happen...*

That didn't happen freshman year.

*Mostly because of rush?*

Not just rush, but fraternities, you pretty much hanging out with your pledge brothers. I didn't go to Goshen till sophomore year. Even though a lot of people were going, I've never been here, They're going, "Well, I'm going with my brothers," or whatever like that, so I, well, "See you when you get back." So that made freshman year a little bit harder.

*How about academics, was that as you had expected it, pretty much?*

I came to college, like I'm gonna come here and get 4.0, 3.5, whatever like that, but going into spring term my freshman year, I had like a 3.0. Dropped like a 2.89, got a D in Calculus. And after that it just went - during my sophomore year, until recently. Don't know if it was the result of freshman year, and compensating for everything I feel like I had missed. ... It was like I had expected. Of course it's harder, maybe more in depth, but you're still at the same time taking basic 100 level classes. So it kinda guides you into - I knew it would be more work than in high school. So I knew if I applied, I'd probably get the results. I came in, academics was first and foremost important. I'm glad I got that established first so it gave me a little bit of margin to do whatever with, which I really went over that margin a little. But the faculty, or whoever else, when they saw it, realized I do have the potential to do the work in regards to this period, sophomore year. Biology, the average was like a C...

*If the school differed from the way it seemed when you first heard about it or visited the campus, please describe how it differed.*

14. *Please describe what you consider to be your greatest challenge at Washington and Lee. How have you dealt with it?*

Well, this kinda goes into like the last question. I guess there were expectations that weren't being fulfilled. Not just social.. yeah particularly I guess the social, diversity - I expected more. I expected that there'd be more people I'd be able to relate with, and that didn't happen. ... where are we?

*I'm on question 14, so it's...[reread]*

um.. I guess greatest challenge. I guess, people ask me, from the north, ask me ..say "Man I don't really like it here." ..who are here .. a couple may have left. They were doing well academically, but it lacked a lot, diversity - whether it be parties, whatever like that. Even something like DJ parties which I could relate with a little bit more, were even a little bit more mainstream than what I'm used to. Songs that were hits years ago are big party favorites. And you're trying to find something a little more close to home. And basically how you deal with it is just bite the bullet and just be like... for me, I guess I just try to keep smiling, cause no sense grieving over anything, just make the best. I guess that was hard. Eventually you just couldn't hide it, people would ask "Are you all right, cool and everything." "Yeah, I'm fine." My mom called once, I think once in November..

*this year?*

No, freshman year. And I'm the youngest, and I've always been with them from the time I was - every trip, vacation or trip they went on I was there, so I guess she has a sixth sense about me. And my brother said "Nothing you're going to do, Mom won't find out about. Get used to it. and they'll probably have a hard time letting you go." But, she called and she was like "I have a bad, I just have a feeling something isn't right. Is everything OK?" And I was like, "Yeah, everything's fine." "Are you sure?" "Yeah." And she called back the following night. "Everything.." "Sure" I'm not sure whether that night, or the following night when she called I was just "Whoa, this is too uncanny.." so I think we sat there on the phone for a couple hours. I think that's the longest I've ever spoken to em, and that's the closest I think I've ever really felt to my parents was during that time. Which was cool - helped me through that.

*How'd they help you?*

I guess just talkin with me. Just telling someone the extent, exactly what I was going through. Your other black kids going through similar things at the same time, but they haven't - I guess the problem with that is they hadn't quite figured out a way for them to deal with it - and I couldn't be here and just be unhappy. I wanted to enjoy my time in school,..

*Sure. And the major source of your unhappiness was..*

Didn't feel my place. I was just .. yeah .. just amongst peers I wasn't - I was never, ever rejected, anywhere - whether it was a fraternity; Pi Phi, SAE, whatever.. whoever I knew in there was cool with me, I was cool with that.

*So you never felt rejected.*

No I never felt rejected. I pretty much felt welcome, and if there was anyone who had anything against me, I didn't know about it. If they did, they hid it well.

But you still didn't feel like you were comfortable..

I fit..yeah .. everyone seems to find their niche, and I didn't quite find my niche. Academia was fine, but sometimes you sit in your room watching television when everyone else was out doing something, or keep like in the halls, like they say conversating all night, but you just can't just hop in the conversation, you know. It's gotta happen, and it didn't happen. And that was something I had to deal with. I felt lonely a lot.

*And you said the way you dealt with it was mostly bite the bullet and try to keep a positive attitude.*

Yeah, just see what happens, just basically I'm here, get through this year, and see how I feel towards the end of it. Just live through the day and not think too much about the future. I got to take care right now first and foremost before I can..

*And you said before that when you got to your sophomore year you just dove in and sort of made it a challenge to make it work or not..*

Didn't even make an effort, it just happened. I came back my first day - came the day before school, the night before I was supposed to come I was at a club, I was having a good time,

*Were you here or home?*

Home, in New Jersey. Like early early Sepember, was home, had money, hanging out, having a great time, a car, met different people, different relations, whatever like that, and I knew I was coming back here where that probably wouldn't - no doubt it'd just stop. And so when I came down, the people who were living in the house seemed cool, and the new faces, freshmen who came here, seemed cool.

*In Chavis House?*

And so, for the first night everyone just chilled and watched movies. People started coming in gradually, met different people, and then hung out the next night, couple of us. And then from then it was just like "All right." and this person met someone else and I pretty much hanged... out with them. And I think a lot of the friends who I met were, tended to be friends .. or friends who I hung out with were I think friends who a friend of mine may have met first, and then we all started hanging out a little bit more. Yeah, so I guess from the start it just happened. So let's say someone who was here met some froup of people and we end up hanging out, had a great time, then from that kind of friendship developed - and then before you know it you're hanging out more frequently...

*At Chavis House, mostly?*

No. Didn't hang out there much, I mean a little bit, but most of the time we spend off campus. Away from campus.

*Did you live on campus?*

Yeah, I lived at Chavis House my sophomore year. But an incident happened where I guess a girl got sick eating some brownies that I didn't know had any type of illegal stuff in it, but after that whole thing happened I guess it came down.. I was acquitted - I mean it was found I had no involvement in it at all, but at the same time it had a little bit if stress as far as hanging out, whatever like that - Not really, but...

*Do you think people perceived you differently after that?..Is that what you're saying?*

No. I don't think a lot of people really knew about it. Plus I was just one of the people there, also.



I just happened to live there. But the people who were upperclassmen, they had their own houses,

...

*What month did that thing happen about the brownies?*

I think October.

*Oh, so that sort of set the tone a little bit for the year. Made it a little less comfortable?..*

Yeah. I think it was November, actually. Things were going really well, then one of the people involved had to leave, then there was another roommate who was there, who first was cool, but towards the year, it wasn't just me, people just didn't like him. He just wasn't like, I don't know if he's too politically correct, or tries to be politically correct, rather than just whatever, just be whoever you are - so sometimes it got to a point where towards the end of the year had lose altercations with him. Other people had close altercations with him, so I really just wasn't home a lot. Plus there was a whole lot more freedom, not really freedom, yeah freedom to a degree as far as say space off campus - just in the sense that you are in Lexington, in a pretty much confined area in town on campus. So you feel like if it's nice weather, a nice day, you can't really like hang out outside, whatever. It was cool, another one of my friends lived about four miles outside of town. So it was almost like a getaway from like stuff going on in town - you do what you did in school, and then out. You'd go and you're hanging out. And while you're there, whatever else is going on here isn't really valid. So as the year progressed I just pretty much slept in my bed and when class was over I was out again.

*15. How has your academic performance at Washington and Lee compared with your performance in high school?*

I think - well high school started gradually - no one thought much about college till junior year. That was because teachers and professors were like "College is right around the corner. It's your junior year, but you can't really wait till your senior year, you've got to get on top of it now." So with that took a extra active role academically. My grades were good, but took more college classes, and for credit.. that required more work, so I did work pretty hard. Especially towards the end of high school, just for the level of classes I was taking. And I guess involvement increased gradually also as I progressed from sophomore to junior to senior year. I expected the same to happen here. "Well, I probably won't be too involved freshman year. Sophomore year probably a be little more involved. Junior year hope fully a little bit more involved. Then about my senior year I'll have a more active role in the activities on campus. So I mean, high school, similar, small school, all the teachers know you, teachers pretty much liked me and my work - cool with everybody...

*So performance was about the same as high school - grades wise? ..effort wise?*

No. Effort has also slacked off some.

*Cause of that.. 'getting adjusted'.. sophomore year...*

When I was in high school, a lot of my friends of mine were hanging out partying a lot, and at that point I wasn't trying to do all that. First I knew I had to get to college before I could do anything. I can't get to college and mess up, but at least I got to get to that level. And hangin out - well first of all I wasn't cool with that anyway - I was cool with all the people, even in high school. Kinda similar when I first started going there as far as diversity lack. So. Did sports. Pretty much sports. Hang out with, maybe friends who didn't go to school. A few friends, who.. whatever. And academics. Just hangin out. I knew when I came to college it probably wouldn't be equal. I knew it would in effort, but social aspects of it - I mean even my English teacher - brilliant guy - got grants from Columbia to study, travel in england, stuff like that.. - he said "College will probably be the best four years of your life. [ .. ] But while you're there you'll probably never have as much fun, learn a lot, and learn about life." So that was an expectation I

came to college with - was to experience that time that I'd heard so much about. Which is one reason why freshman wasn't as pleasing as it was, and why sophomore was as pleasing as it was.

Gee, I think I've strayed from the question some.

*That's all right, I think you're saying that you didn't expect to have the same academic focus as you had in high school cause in high school you were just trying to get to college, and then in college you knew you were going to want to do a whole range of things..*

Do well. I knew I intended to do well, but at the same time, home was pretty not really sheltered, but parents were pretty.. to a large extent, as far as times when my friends could stay out and hang out compared to the times I could hang out.

*Your parents were strict..*

Yeah, so when that happens sometimes I guess you do tend to break out a little bit. Which was expected. Anyone who knew me or knew my cousins, we pretty much grew up in the same family same environment - expect that to happen. So yeah, I expected college, academics was first priority, but the social aspect was more of a priority than it was in high school, and sometimes things gotta give. What I learned here, which was cool, was that the kids tend to party hard, but they work hard. Which is just fine with me.

*So you eventually found a way to do that..*

Yes.

16. *What academic resources have you used at Washington and Lee?*

- x Undergraduate library
- x Science library
- x Computer facilities.

Unfortunately I haven't used the writing center, which I should. I tend to articulate myself well, but not as well on paper. For whatever reason my points I get across [] when I speak it. So I will be making use of the writing center more often. Unfortunately the number of assignments I have completed the night before leaves no time for the writing center. Until the end of the sophomore year, or .. I didn't know what the writing center was. So I'm just really finding out about that now.

Tutors in the disciplines.

x Study groups. I had study groups, particularly for biology freshman year, we all [actively] studies, compare notes, and stuff like that and sit around and test each other. Study groups never really worked for me. I usually work better by myself. It's alright usually after I know it cause there tends to be a deal of socializing that goes on even in some study groups. A lot of something I can do on my own and have complete control over how it's gonna happen. I never know how it's gonna end up, until it's done.

You mean the studying process?

Studying, projects, work, whatever like that. I start working with it. sometime I didn't really outline unless you know what the end result's going to be. I just feel it as I go along. can't really do that in a group. cause sometimes you need a set of outlines that goes to what you're gonna do.

x Public lectures on academic subjects. I've started attending those more recently. Particularly within my major. Just because I'm interested in it. Like I said, biology wasn't ... I began to realize that my focus I guess for doing that was the career goals at the end, and as I studied more, I liked it less, cause it really wasn't where my head was. Another thing about sophomore year - a group of us, pretty diverse, you had history majors, philosophy majors, neuroscience majors, biology majors - and so in our discussions, even though we were hanging out, I learned a lot. I could have attended pretty much any - the philosophy class they were in or

the history class they were in and have done well in a discussion just based on the discussions that we had. So that was fueling all the.. the questions I had about life were slowly being answered in that aspect. And that was a major goal of mine, was to find the answer to those questions that I guess education would provide cause it's just a broader scope of knowledge that you are going to be attaining. So as that began to occur, I began to realize that biology - particularly when I was focssing more on the classes that weren't my major and putting my major off towards the end, that's when you know you have problems and it's time for you to change. And so now, sociology, all the stuff I've thought about and figured out already just based on observations, people watching - I like to watch the show of how people interact with each other - whether in the academic arena or the social fraternity party arena and just draw basic patterns or whatever, of how different people react to each other in different situationss. And what you can expect if such and such and such is the case with such and such a person, almost put yourself in their shoes. And sociology, is pretty much the study of that. And with religion, a class I took in religion, I saw the cultural function of religion. Not just being a belief that you just believe, but the structure and the organization behind it and why religion works as it works. And growing up in a belief where there's only one way to do it - one way to serve God - and that's the way we're doing it here. Which I always questioned. What if we're wrong. what if God told us - I told my father, that's one of the talks we had. Trying to figure out where I'm going, but it couldn't come across cause they're really entrenched in their beliefs, and that you, I guess for security you dismiss anything else that may quuestion it cause that's pretty much what your whole life is based on. You don't feel that it is stronger than I may cause you to feel a feeling within yourself. So, I tried to have a talk with them, as far as questions like that, what if you've been serving God this way your whole life and God told you on judgement day that you were wrong? Might say the Catholics had it right. Everyone believes that they're doing it the right way, so what I've learned here in the religion and sociology classes is the idea of pluralism and relativity and based upon one's experiences and that different religions can funciton equally well for people and it's pretty much based upon your cultural tradition. and with that the most important thing you learn is respect for other people, and with that you, if you don't open your mind you don't learn anything - you're limited by what you know. and the more you know, the greater understanding yo have of the workd and your place in it, which is why I'm enjoying my major, I guess.

*Yeah, and you were saying you were enjoying attending public lectures because you're interests are going in that direction.*

Yeah, if it sounds interesting I try to make an effort to go.

*So the other things they are listing here...*

x Language lab.

x I don't think I've ever....at one point I think I've spoken to each one of my professors, but it's often related to something - I don't think I've ever some in just to talk. I've been advised it's good to do that, but I do't think I've ever taken the time to do that. But I guess in the course of the few times I've visited he might get an idea and hopefully my views will come off in the work I do.. Like, for me grades are important, but it's - for me it's someone else's opinion. Someone else might like what I'mn saying, or agree or disagree, the grade may help me see how I could work my views in, the way they might like me to, but I'm more interested in what I gain from it.. How it adds to me as a person and my general understanding. I want to get the grades and all. Sometimes I put my best effort in and the grade wasn't what I like to get, there'll be disappointment, but at the same point it's like, no, I did what I could do.

Study skills courses

*Do you have suggestions for the development of these or other facilities?*

I think the writing center it would be good if it was open for maybe even an hour or two in the evening. In the day you've got classes, stuff that you have to do, so sometimes it's hard to make it during that day. So if it was open in the night. I've come up at night and it was closed. Then I found out recently, about a week ago, that it's only open during the day. I didn't even know where to go or anything like that. I guess that's probably the only thing...

*You've talked about the next two questions quite a bit already, so maybe you could just see if there's anything else you think needs to be said...*

17. *What factors contribute or contributed to your selection of a major course of study?*

*Promise of earning a handsome salary after graduation,  
Interest in the particular academic discipline,  
College friends recommended this major,  
Adult relative recommendation etc.  
Other*

My parents were wondering why... their thing about me changing my major was because I was lazy, cause biology does require a great deal of discipline and a great deal of determination. You cut off yourself from a lot. Whether it was because I just wasn't feeling the same about it. I think for me it was a combination of both. I wasn't feeling the same way about it, and at this time I'm not mature enough for the discipline it requires. the truth is - I'm not, right now.

*And ou chose sociology and religion because...*

That's where my head is. That's the stuff I talk about regularly. Those are the type of things - not necessarily on my mind, but the same questions, the same things I'm trying to find out, the same patterns, same understandings about how people relate to themselves and to their environment, to their society, and within their culture.

*So you're interested in that particular whole realm of thinking.*

Yeah, what makes you who you are. the more perspectives you have on anything, the greater your inderstanding, like I said. And my brothers told me, "Do what you like. Mom and Dad will probably let you. Of course the're going to want to have a son who's a doctor, but you gotta do what you like. Doesn't make sense waking up every morning going to a job you don't like." And so, I figure whatever salary comes or doesn't come, happens or doesn't happen, and this is trying to find my purpose.

*And you also talked about the next one already..*

18. *Have you changed majors since you have been enrolled at Washington and Lee?*

*If yes, please describe that change.*

*I don't know if you need to say any more about that..*

No.

19. *If you saw a person or group of persons lying, stealing or cheating would you report it as an honor violation? Please elaborate.*

I don't know. I guess it would depend upon I think before I would tell on someone, I think I would confront the person. Like, if ...I'd probably ask "did you do this?" or blase blah, "Probably shouldn't do it" There's pressures here on all of us, based upon this honor code. But I don't think I've ever had that situation occur. So, I probably honestly don't quite know how I would handle it. Might try to put myself in the other person's shoes, how I would like to be treated, and I think I would like someone to confront me first - not necessarily confront like "Did you do

this?" but find out whether that really what I was doing before you tell someone else, or report...  
*When they wrote this question, they wanted to make it clear that if you SAW,...so there's no question that it's happening. So then the question is- if there is no questions that this was happening, then would you report it..*

If I saw someone stealing, yes, um lying..I guess it would depend upon the context of the lie. If it was amongst friends, that's amongst your friends. Particularly if it was in relation to me, yeah, most likely

*Most likely what?*

I would report it if it was particularly in relation to me. Cheating. To be honest, sometimes I feel like what you do is what do. It's your business, as long as it doesn't infringe upon ... I mean that's I guess between... to a degree it's largely your conscience. If I thought someone stealing from someone's room, I would report that. that is a definite violation and an infringement upon someone else. If someone was lying with the intent to hurt another individual, or gain an advantage on someone else, I would do it. If someone took my work and used it for their benefit, I'd report that. Probably the most likely things I would report are things that directly affected me. Other things I'd probably give advice - "Probably shouldn't be cheating on this exam." But, cause honor is very string and it highly affects your life, and my experiences, observations have been, it's not all that objective. Some of the people ... the election is still a popularity contest. For EC. From my conversations with some of the people who've been elected, their minds I don't think are able to properly make decisions for the significance those decisions are. And I've seen where people were not necessarily innocent till proven guilty, but guilty till proven innocent. And with that, I take that into consideration also. If I saw more where the trials were - a little bit more subjective, where you truly were innocent till proven guilty, Proven guilty. Then, if that was the case I think I would report probably more than I would probably report now. But I've seen just people who were actually involved in it, and some of em do it just for the resume - looks good on the resume. And to a degree it's almost .. I wonder if they're actually on a power trip. You've got this much power in your hands over some people's lives. Do you just maximize it, it's like an ego trip, or do you honestly try to find out. And if there's a shadow of a doubt that this person might not have committed a violation, this person should be in school. but if it goes beyond a shadow of a doubt, that this person has committed this, then they should be expelled. Or forced withdrawal, or something like that.

*Sounds like you think the process isn't careful enough to be rigorous and make sure the person is actually guilty..*

Yeah, and that's important, cause I'd feel bad if I had that much of a role in someone being expelled who was really innocent. And if I reported this person to the EC, that's where I guess it would have to be something I clearly saw with my own eyes. It's touchy, cause I've never been involved in it, in that situation, but - so I don't want to say I would do something I wouldn't do, or wouldn't do something I would do. Until I've actually been involved in that, it's probably the best I can say.

20. *Do you find Washington and Lee professors easy or difficult to approach?  
Please describe in what way they are easy or difficult.*

Very easy. Make an effort to talk to you, get to know your name, get to know you, whether it be in class, they encourage class participation which is good. I'm interested - not really intereted, but if I got something to say I'm going to say it if I feel it's going to be beneficial, to myself as well as to the class. If not, I'll just try to be quiet.

*Have you been able to establish close working relationships with a member or with members of the W&L faculty?*



I think more, yeah, more recently now. Professor White, I guess I'll be working with him, talking with him. I applied for a study abroad program. He doesn't really know much about me, so he wrote a recommendation based on what I wrote, on the application, and so it's a good possibility I'll get this study abroad program - case studies of culture in South Africa. there's a good possibility I'll get it.

*Boy, that'd be exciting.*

Yeah, that'd be great. So there's a beginning of a correlation with him. Doctor Sessions' Philosophy of Religion Class. I'll be going with him, actually Thursday. He has room in his car for 4 people. But I'll be going with him to Ohio, Danbury University, theology seminar from Thursday to Sunday next week. So, that probably will be my closest working relationship with him as a faculty member.

21. *What has been your experience at W&L with regard to social life?*

Know what the social life is, accept it for what it is, and try to enjoy it to the best of your ability. What I've learned from the guys who were here before me, who graduated, particularly black kids, actually from them, when they told me "You can make it anywhere if you've got your boys." With what I've learned from them, if you can make it at W&L, particularly as a black student, you can make it anywhere in the career world because unfortunately the level of education that we get, which is good, for the topmost job I could get compared to, let's say, a non-college-educated person, there won't be a lot of black people or a lot of diversity in these fields. So, if you make it here, it's a really complete transition where you get two different environments where .... You've got more to work with, more places that you can fit yourself into, as opposed to being in one type of environment your whole life. This is something you have to deal with, and the younger you are, the better able you are to assimilate and accommodate. If you learn how to do that — you don't get aid in the job market as you do in college. This is what I've learned. My older peers have told me, you can do anything as long as you got your boys, your friends, which is true. You can be in some of the best places in the world with people who are really jerks and it sucks, and you can be in some of the least favorable places with who you're really cool with and you can have a great time. So the social scene here, I've come to appreciate, like bands, which is good, 'cause being here I've also been open to different types of music and it has broadened my horizons. Stuff I probably wouldn't have heard at home.

*So your social life has been open to you? You've said you can visit fraternities and go to parties and dances as much as you want to.*

Yeah, whether or not it's a closed party or an open party pretty much I know someone enough at all of them where we're cool enough where "Yeah, he's cool, he can come in." For instance right now I go places and hang out with friends, it's cool with friends who are getting pledges to come pick you up. And some of my friends got my roommate, who is also an independent, and we get the benefits of being in a fraternity without actually having to pay for it. Even last night, I went out, being chauffeured by pledges to friends' fraternities. I went out not too far from Goshen last night.

*It sounded like you said earlier that you didn't necessarily feel like you fit in for a long time. But now —*

I think I've found my niche. I am comfortable with my social life now.

*How important to you is alcohol at a social event or social engagement?*

I guess due to the cultural significance here in Lexington, whether or not you're a student or faculty member, or townie, alcohol plays a major role in your social life, social events. From

what I see and what I'm hearing is that there is nothing else to do. And it is used as a social tool. But I don't need it to socialize. I actually prefer to socialize with sober people than people who are really drunk and into really making irrelevant conversation. Unless the conversation is going somewhere, it's usually, "Hey, how're ya doing, blah blah blah." My behavior tends to be the same whether I'm drinking or not. It's just more like social.

*So you're saying that for you, when there alcohol, you're involved in it, and when there isn't, you're fine with that?*

Yes.

*How important to you are drugs at a social event?*

It's also used similar to alcohol. It's prevalent enough here. It's almost equally as prevalent as alcohol on campus. It's pretty much accessible. It does become almost as important as alcohol in a social event. Like, before you go out there's an infamous pre-party and a lot of that just involves, OK, it's 7 o'clock and nothing is really going on until 11 o'clock. What are you going to do. So you sit around and drink and talk and shoot the crap. Whether or not alcohol is used or marijuana — I don't like synthetic things, there are too many things that man has synthesized, I don't trust it. But marijuana

*So marijuana is pretty available and broadly used, in your experience?*

Yes.

*And you participate in both marijuana and alcohol?*

Yes.

*And is the marijuana at big social functions mostly, or is it at like smaller groups of people hanging out? You were just saying that lots of times you'll get together and do something when you're waiting for something to happen.*

Yes is just chillin' out to some. So it's usually amongst smaller groups. Usually hanging out with people I'm close with. I'll go visit the whole world in the rest of the party, but usually it's just with close friends. Plus for the mere fact that substances are illegal, or illegal to minors, you tend to be more discriminative about who you're hanging out with, how well you know them.

That's another factor, also.

*Which may be why some people are aware of it and some aren't.*

Yes, usually after you do your freshman year, the kids are like, yeah I'd like to have some whatever, but at home I knew everybody, but here I don't know everyone. And by the time people get to their sophomore or junior year have located the resources for whatever they need. It's not always available, but if it is, they'll let you know. Usually by sophomore year.

*So you're saying that in your life it is not essential, but that it is part of your life, because it part of what people do here.*

Yes. Substances to a large degree dictate, particularly during spring term, the social scene. The GHQ, when they have a band no one's there because alcohol is not allowed to be served, while other places if they have no band they have a hall crawl (a different drink in every room), that place may be packed. Sometimes I see people just exhibiting behaviors that may be a little bit beyond what's actually a result of the substance, just because it's permissible in that social arena, to be silly. It's kinda in that sense an escape. Not for me, I am who I am, you can be whoever you are. I try to let you know who I am and what I'm about before you get to know me. If I like hanging out with you, and if I don't, it's nothing personal.

*So will you find yourself gravitating to places where alcohol and other intoxicants are available, or will you make your decisions otherwise?*

I'll go where there's alcohol. It's been an acquired taste.

*So you would choose not to do the GHQ but to do something where you —*

No, I'll go to the GHQ if there's something good there, but I would probably tend to go — like if

I heard someone's having natural lites, Heinekens, or mixed drinks, I'd go to the mixed drinks first in order to get your buzz on and then go see the rest of the scene.

22. *What experiences, if any, have you had with Greek organizations on campus?*

*How would you evaluate or describe any experiences you may have had?*

Only experience I've had is actually going to the parties. I've never rushed. If you've never done that, you basically have had no involvement. I know people who have rushed, done it. Most of the people I know, tho, they depledge or are much less active by their late sophomore or junior year, than they were early in their sophomore year. My friends who I know are less active. By that time, the whole fraternity thing is almost like "you've found your place." You join a fraternity and you have guaranteed friends here. I'd rather choose my friends than have someone choose my friends for me. They hang out together because they're in the same fraternity, tho they may not have anything else in common.

*You go to parties pretty freely. Do you go hang out at fraternities when there aren't parties?*  
Yes, to visit friends there once in a while.

*You haven't felt excluded?*

No.

23. *Evaluate your experiences with regards to athletic teams/athletic facilities/and physical education classes.*

I've never joined a team of sport. I came in my freshman year.....cross country, track, possibly basketball, but after not doing anything my senior year, what it would take me to get in shape was more than I was willing to put into it. Partly because it's for those who like to do it, and if you aren't into it that much there's intramurals. So I like intramural basketball. The phys ed classes are good, but I think you should get more credit for taking 5 P.E. classes. Whether they are academically strenuous, they are taking up a portion of your time and you are getting a grade for it, so it should count a little more than they do. But I've enjoyed my gym classes and I've learned the fundamentals of the sports and activities. The facilities pretty much fit the size of the school. I wish there was a swimming pool that was open to the public. It think that would be nice. And an outdoor basketball court would be nice. They have one at Sigma Chi, but around here would be nice. Sometimes when you go in the afternoons, they may have a gym class in there and you can't use the gym. I try to stay active, I'm not like a health nut, but I can tell my body needs exercise, and I shouldn't be feeling like this at 20 years old. So I make a concerted effort to get in shape. And when that happens, our facilities are available, whether at Gaines or over at the gym. The gym could be open a little bit later for basketball.

24. *How would you characterize your opportunities for "dating" while enrolled at Washington and Lee?*

Improving. Freshman year — actually this year is my first on-campus relationship. I may have had like — you know, the hookup thing, someone from home or someone I knew from another school, maybe Hollins or Mary Baldwin or Randolph-Macon. Not a lot, really, involved here on campus. Could be the way we relate or some of the situations for meeting people, like I said, a lot of people I'd rather talk to sober, just because the content of the conversation is more — I have no problems with someone being drunk, but the conversation is going to be typical of party conversation, and I'm just wasting my time. Sometimes I'm at a party where I don't feel much like talking or I'm drunk and I feel like — or if I'm sober, I'd just like to listen to the band play. I don't pretend to want to talk.

*You're saying that's not a scene that promotes getting to know people in a dating way?*

Exactly. I think if you meet someone you probably end up in a relationship with, for me, I would want to meet them first on a regular campus social environment, or non-party related.

*The hookup thing means you just encounter somebody at a party and spend the evening with them or the whole night. Let me clarify for myself, does that always mean a sexual connection?*

There is some kind of physical intimacy. It depends on how far both of you want to take it.

*When people say hooking up they don't necessarily mean sex?*

It may be kissing or fondling or whatever like that. Kids make a big deal about it. For me that's really not much at all. Especially when alcohol is involved, you got to be careful that this person is aware of what's going, just for the mere fact that you don't want anybody saying — I mean I've had situations on campus where I've actually said "never mind, go to sleep" because this person is half-way between passing out and having no idea of what's going on. That just doesn't appeal to me. Like someone who is just clearly drunk is a complete turn-off for me. Some people might try to scoop those up, like some type of game. Even tho people might disappoint you a lot, you tend to appreciate them a little bit more when your skills have been tested.

*OK, so your opportunities for dating were influenced by the way the scene runs.*

No, I think it's more influenced as to how I guess the attitude and the attitude develops more as you begin to find your niche, your place in society here and the world in general. Attractiveness is, I think, maybe 60% has been given to you by DNA and the other percentage is your attitude. And that's expressed in many ways, the way you walk, the way you talk, the way you dress, the way you conduct yourself. For a number of reasons sometimes you don't see that from people when they're drunk, girls when they're drunk, that you might see when they're sober. It sometimes seems juvenile, not like I'm old but it might have been cool maybe fall term freshman year, whatever. I don't develop a relationship with everybody I meet, but I don't have to act like it never happened either. If I enjoyed your company, I enjoyed your company and if you want to do it again sometime, that's be great too. But I see people who are afraid to speak to the person afterwards just because — after a hookup or whatever — I'm like, you're putting too much stress on this whole thing. It should be between you and that person and maybe one or two close friends.

*What were you saying about when the girls are hanging out with the girls and running around and being silly. I missed that.*

Sometimes it just doesn't feel natural.

*The way the girls hang out and twitter?*

Yeah. The scene sometimes just doesn't seem real. I wonder if people meet each other on a regular basis, guys and girls, and if they're looking for something substantial but what usually develops from that, I'm like, I mean, I don't know what you learn about the person in the conversation that you're having over whatever, and if you probably remember tomorrow, at the parties — Sometimes it's fun just to watch the show, because sometimes it just seems so void, so lacking in something. That's one thing that we miss is, being a party school and all, and alcohol plays a big role in this community, just for the mere fact that there is not much else offered in terms of spending your time.

*So it makes interaction more superficial, is that what you're saying?*

Yeah, superficial. You could have had that same conversation whether you're drunk or sober. Alcohol may be a catalyst that may beef it up slightly, but it shouldn't be the cause for the interaction. When alcohol is the cause for the interaction, then it lacks substance. That's where it doesn't really appeal to me that much.

25. *Have you ever considered transferring from Washington and Lee to another college/university?* Yeah, beginning of sophomore year, the summer between freshman and sophomore

year. And then towards the end of my sophomore year when my grades were dropping a whole lot, I was like, all right, I've got to turn this around; can I do it here? Knowing who I know, social life being what it is, my discipline being what it is, can I get done what I want to get done here? If that's the case, should I transfer? And would it be worth everything to transfer and start everything all over again, and go through the whole finding your place. You're eager to do it as a freshman because everyone else is going through the same thing, as opposed to transferring and pretty much being amongst people of your own age who have already found their place wherever they are. For me, I don't think it's much of a problem. I think I could probably do whatever I wanted.

*Why/why not?*

*If yes, what factor(s) influenced you to stay?*

I began to enjoy life here. I was happy so it was worth staying.

26. *Have you had a paid job on campus (including work-study)?*

Yes, ..... and work in the dining area.

*If so, has this influenced your level of satisfaction at W&L?*

Yes. Because sometimes the more free time you have, the less you do. Having something to do every day at a certain time for a certain amount of time adds some kind of structure to your life. It also adds, besides pocket money, a feeling of worth and accomplishment. It's almost like handing in a paper when you've got it done, you feel accomplishment. When you've done school and you've finish work, you know you're taken care of but you're taking care of your needs financially as well as academically, it adds to a feeling of accomplishment.

27. *Would you be willing to recruit other students for Washington and Lee either as a student yourself or as part of an alumni program? Please elaborate.*

Yes I would. Particularly black kids, just for the mere fact that I think they know the academic opportunities that are offered here, but can they deal with everything else, the social baggage that goes along with it. Let's say, no radio stations, no BET, videos, things that are found in everyday culture and society at home that you're used to and that you're not going to find here; the type of parties, whether it be like a dance party — I personally have more fun if there's a DJ, as long as they are playing something relatively modern. If they become too mainstream, need to keep people dancing. Every now and then.....something pretty new, relatively recent, a recent artist. Plus recruiting students, yeah I would like to have them experience and get the opportunities that I've had here. Not necessarily be turned or discouraged by the social aspect of the school.

Now we ask some background information:

28. *In what geographical location did you grow up:*

Country:

State: New Jersey

*In what type of **area or community** did you spend most of your growing up years?*

Urban

Suburban X

Rural

29. *Describe the type of **high school** you attended.*



Urban  
Suburban X  
Rural

*Predominantly*

Black  
White X  
Mixed

30. *Please give the kin relationship(s) between you and family members in your home when you were growing up.*

Close family, father, mother, pretty much everyone in my family — no one divorced in my family. Father, mother, three older brothers, one came up from Jamaica when I was in the fifth grade. They all came up from Jamaica one at a time as the funds and finances were there.

*Your family moved from Jamaica when you were little?*

Yes. I'm the only one who was actually born in the States. Everyone else was born in Jamaica and came up during their teenage years. Grandmothers, aunts, and so on.

*So most of the time it was you and your mom and dad and added brothers now and then.*

One brother would babysit me. He would visit me more at school. My brothers are nine, maybe twelve years older than me, so sometimes they border on father or brother/dad, elder level than just brother level.

31. *What was the highest level of education achieved by your parents, guardians, or others with whom you lived when you were growing up?*

My parents, not too far past elementary school. My mom was high school. My brothers have pretty much gotten college educations.

*What are the occupations or professions of your parents or guardians?*

My mom works wiring money for a bank and my father is head custodian at a middle school in Jersey. One brother is a computer programmer, another works as an airline mechanic, another one works a social worker.

32. *As compared to other W&L students, how would you characterize your overall social class position (based on parents' education and family income)?*

Middle class.

*How do you think this has affected your experience?*

I know that my parents came here with very little if anything. I know they had to work two and three jobs at a time for a period of years until they were able to only work one job. My mom was happy when she was ....she was like, "I'm not going to work two jobs anymore, I don't want to work to jobs anymore, I'm not happy with two jobs anymore." Which is good to see, because, you know where you're coming from in the sense of what they had to do to get to what we have. We have a lot more than a lot of people who were born with more advantages. Because they worked hard. Friends would drive me home and say, "You live in this house, is it a two-family house? No, it's a one-family house. Do you rent it? No, we own it. Is this your car? Yes, this is my car.

*So how does this affect your experience here at W&L? Just because you appreciate what work went into —*

I know that class is pretty much part of this: that if it is based on money, it's superficial. Class doesn't really matter to me. Whether or not you're poor or rich, as long as you're cool with me, I'm cool with you. There's a lot of kids here with money that you would never know. Like, at home, if someone has money, you know about it. The expression of material gain is important, I guess, at home. I don't know if it's like black, or for whatever reason, being seen with material gain is almost a sign of status. Wearing expensive, brand-name clothes, which for me is like, to spend \$80 on a shirt really doesn't make any sense to me. But there are kids here who are just cool, you wouldn't know they were just loaded until you actually find out about it. Money, as far as class distinction, is really insubstantial.

33. *In general how do you think about yourself first at Washington and Lee -- as a member of a particular racial/ethnic/national/gender group, or as a student?*

I see myself first as a student who happens to be a black male.

*Please explain.*

34. *How homogeneous do you believe black students are on this campus? In answering please consider racial identification, political perspective, and/or social class position.*

I think that for the numbers that we have here, the personalities are more diverse proportionately to the number of white students you have here. Political views, social views, religious views, there's more diversity within the black community than I've seen among the white students.

35. *How similar or different do you believe blacks and whites are on this campus? Consider the same categories that are mentioned in number 34 above and add any other factors that you deem important.*

Growing up, our peers were black. A lot of people here spend a good portion of their time when they go home with all blacks, and you're coming here where the people you're dealing with have different experiences than you have. I think there is a difference in black culture than there is in white culture, whether it be religion or whatever. The blacks tend to be more expressive than white churches may be. And all the little variables accumulate to large factors enough where there is a difference. But that's where the learning part comes in, when you learn that people are just people, who are different based on their experiences. The more different they are, the more you can gather from hanging out with them.

*So are you saying that the black population and the white population are different ?*

The culture oftentimes is two different cultures that can co-exist well. They have for me. I've enjoyed meeting people, who like the type of music that I've never heard before, and it opens me up to it to hear it and decide whether I like it or not. Similar or different? I know that everyone comes here with prejudices, black kids coming here with their prejudices, white kids coming with their prejudices, and the only way they overcome that is by interacting with someone different than themselves, which is one of the weaknesses of W&L. It doesn't offer that very much because it lacks that diversity and it tends to stress more conformity. People I know had the conflict of being who they want to be or being who they should be to fit in. And a good number of them chose to be, for a little while at least, who should be to fit in. That couldn't be me, because I don't try to exclude or alienate anyone, but I've got to be myself.

36. *Do you believe the size of the black student enrollment at Washington and Lee is adequate or inadequate?*

Inadequate. I think if the numbers were greater there would be more interaction between white

students and black students. But when there are so few, I guess they hang out together — if you have more in common, you tend to hang out more, but if there were greater numbers of blacks here, then there wouldn't be that, I guess, that survival need. There'd be enough so we could hang out with them when we wanted, but enough where we could hang out with other groups from time to time, also. Well, if the black kids hang together in the dining hall, I could ask why the white kids stick together in the dining hall, too.

*Do you believe the number of black professors is adequate or inadequate?*

Highly inadequate. My freshman year there wasn't anyone on the faculty I could talk to who'd actually be able to relate to what I was going through, which really, you know, sucks. You feel like there's no one, not in a position of authority but in a greater position of experience than the level you're on.

*Do you believe the number of black administrators is adequate or inadequate? Explain.*  
Also inadequate. Anything black related to this school is highly inadequate.

37. *Should the university offer activities designed to bring new black students together?  
If not, why not?*

The University should offer activities but they work in conjunction with black students to improve social life and social. If the University does it not just from within but from without it might be seen as "you're only doing this because they're black, why are they giving so much attention to the black kids?" But if black kids make a concerted effort in conjunction with the University, then.....they'd get a better appreciation for it also.

*So you'd like to see support, but interactively?*

Yes, I don't think it should be pretty much, like, the University, because they're not experiencing it, they can't adequately design the activities.

*If yes...do you have suggestions?...*

*Has the Chavis House played a role in your life at W&L? Please describe.*

It definitely has. When I came here, one of the places, if I did hang out, I hung out there. When I was a freshman that was one place to always stop in and say "What's up?" But at the same time I felt like a freshman in a bunch of seniors, which was the only thing. But there seems to be a tradition of black kids that visit it and carry on living there. You hear it in stories and things you can do. People are going to live there and going to have friends there. Whoever you live with for a year or over a period of years there will hopefully be some type of bond that develops. But as you look at the guys who have been there in the past, on the wall, you can imagine what they experienced based upon what you've experienced. Hopefully, it's an incentive for me to actually one day be one of the guys on the wall who passed through W&L and has been successful. I don't know if they still put those pictures on the wall anymore, but they probably should. It's a home base. I still live there. Socially, the black kids in the community, especially the W&L community, they were more involved with the people in town in the past than they are now. There's been a little drop-off there. Right now, kids from town, to generalize, —

*Kids from town used to participate with you at the house?*

Not with me but with the class — like there would always be people there from town, like when they would have a DJ party, it would be open to whoever: W&L student were free, kids from town would have to pay. But I haven't met a lot of them recently, for whatever reason, and sometimes my experience has been just hanging out at a party where there was pretty much kids

from town. The behavior was sometimes not as appropriate as it could be. We really don't need that. As parties go, it hasn't been as active, and as far as the social life of black students as it has been in the past — I'm interested to have parties there, just for parties, and the black kids are invited and the white kids are invited, but I hang out with whoever I hang out with. Often my ..... are towards black kids, but oftentimes my relations have been longer and more solid with some of the white kids. It's open to whoever the Minority Student Association — it's cool because in order to do anything you need money and if you want to have programs and activities for yourself that you can relate with, you need money and organization to organize it and carry it out. It serves that function. Not so much the social role, I guess the black kids know each other already, but when they do have something the people show up and meet regularly, I guess, and discuss what your goals and objectives are.

*Do you go to MSA meetings there regularly?*

I was more active in it freshman year and sophomore year I was vice president. But the participating wasn't there from everyone else, so I felt I might as well forget it. So now I have all these things I'm involved in and have got to do, whether it be work or academics or — to be honest I'm not as interested in it as I was. I participate more in ..... social activities, if they have a band I'll go. But it hasn't been active. I'll probably be more active next year, but this year it's been more laid back. I figure I'll let you guys handle it and see what you can do with it. If you do a better job than I can do, then the more power to you.

*Has the Minority Student Association played a role in your life at W&L? Please describe.*

38. *Do you believe that it is important that courses in the humanities/social sciences include recognition or study of works by persons of color?*

Yes. Whatever you learn about the history of America, blacks have played a major role, but it's .....(coughing). You should learn about all the contributions to society, whether it be black or white. And you already know that, due to whatever prejudices, blacks were left out of the history books of whites. The typical high school text might have five pages or so of actual black contributors to American society, when there were many more and they were very significant. But they've just been dismissed. So, a liberal arts university where you're expected to get a liberal arts education, which is pretty much a broad spectrum of knowledge, it should be offered much more than it is here.

*So you think it has been inadequate here?*

Yes, it has been. And some of the courses that are more African-American or African related, you miss the perspective not because the professors are white, but because they don't have the knowledge to properly teach the class. Dr. Porter has talked with students after class, and I let him know I was disappointed, that I learned a lot about what happened post-colonial, but I really don't care about that. You learn what happened after America and the Far East and where ..... tried to colonize it, it's been pretty much the same government. But the cultures before that were very diverse. He said he just didn't have the qualifications to teach it. That's sad. This school ranks very high in its liberal arts program, but for me, in many respects, ..... I've been let down, thoroughly.

*If you think works by persons of color should be included do you think the recognition was adequate, inadequate, or excessive? Please explain.*

39. *How would you characterize the climate in the classroom for you [as a black student]?*

Cool. Most people know me or they've seen me before. And if I've got something to add, I'll say it. From my experience, it's been beneficial to the class or the professor. And, for me, it's also good because, when I first came, I was conscious about being black at an all-white school — what people thought, was he here just because he's black, did they accept his qualifications. So I made a concerted effort to say something every now and then in class to let the professor and students know that, yeah, I belong, I deserve to be here just as much as you do. And now it's not necessarily for that purpose, but it's good we can show that result. Because sometimes, if I say something, some people may go "Whoa!" Sometime you have maybe just feelings for people that's based on superficial things, people you don't even know, like you might see, let's say, a beautiful looking girl but she speaks and she has a mind like you wouldn't believe and that you never even considered.

*So the climate in the classroom has been good for you?*  
Yes.

*If you have encountered 'problems in the classroom, how have you dealt with those difficulties?*

40. *What is the role of the Office of Minority Student Affairs?*

I don't think she's in touch with the black students. She doesn't meet — I mean, she's a nice lady, and all that, but for whatever reason I don't feel like I could come to her with whatever personal problem I was having with my life. I think it might be the same for a number of black students on campus.

*What's that based on?*

I guess we see her more as Dean McCloud, rather than Mrs. McCloud. I'd love to have a faculty member I could just be like, "We're having a party at our house, you're welcome to come by and chill," or whatever like that. Sometimes you can't put your finger on it, you can't blame someone, but you just don't click like that. And from what I've heard from other students in the past, they've had similar experiences. She does the job that she's supposed to do within the office, but particularly for the blacks being few in numbers, whether the administration or students, it would be good to have a relationship that could function outside the office. But I'm not sure whether it's personalities, or generational, or age-wise ..... But it's cool because, the type of function, a lot of us need tutoring that we can't afford and they provide it for us. Whatever we may need — I think black students, particularly when they in, do have needs beyond what other white students may have, just because it's a white-based social environment, you know, Anglo-Saxon male-based. It's pretty much geared toward them. And a lack of diversity. And if you're not happy, you're not going to do well. And that's the case. The kids who are happy here did better, or the kids did better when they were happy here. When they were depressed they didn't do so good. It's hard to do work if you just really hate life here.

*So it sounds as though you're saying that on some levels, like the helping with tutoring, the Office is helpful, but on a personal level it isn't necessarily.*  
Yes.

*How can the role of this Office be improved?*

I think it could have other black faculty members, not necessarily in the Office of Minority Student Affairs, but work in conjunction with it for other perspectives. It's not just a black perspective, there's diverse perspectives among black perspectives. I think it would be good to have a little more diversity.



41. *From whom do you receive the greatest emotional support on campus? Do not use name(s), but please describe the person(s) in terms of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, and position (i.e. fellow student, faculty member, administrator, staff member). If appropriate, include more than one individual and describe the type of situations in which the person provides emotional support (i.e. personal, family, religious, etc.)*

A black student who is older than I am, has been here longer, and I've learned just from talking to him and he has learned from talking with me — he's told me, "Yeah, you've grown since you first came here, which is good." But someone who came through, the interactions begin with, you learn from other people's experiences. And so when I was having problems, even socially, freshman year, when girls, for instance, like man, when I was home, I didn't have this problem, why is it so hard to find somebody here? Little things like that. There was a black student, American male.

*What percentage of your friends are black, what white, and what international?*

I'd say that most of the black students here, for whatever reason, I think because there seems to be a dividing line between freshmen-sophomores and juniors-seniors, which surprised me. Most people I hang out with are either juniors or seniors. The greater number of black students here are freshmen and sophomores, and so I found that my relations here with them is more on an acquaintance basis. The students who happen to be white whom I know happen to be juniors or seniors and I've known them a bit longer and on a friendship basis. There's sometimes a thin line between friends and acquaintances. Sometimes they merge.

*So among the folks who are your friends?*

My house has two males who are black and who I'll hang with. Gosh! I guess most of them would be white, partially because I work with them more. I'd say 60% white/40% black.

42. *Have you experienced any discriminatory behavior on campus directed against yourself? What form did that behavior take (written remarks including graffiti, spoken remarks, physical assault, discriminatory treatment). Who was responsible for that behavior?*

Individual students

Student groups

Greek

Non Greek

Faculty

Staff

Security X A number of the security guards at different times at the gym asked me or other friends of mine who are black or non-white for our ID and ask whether we go to school here, bringing up phone books and asking us to point to our name....and this was after being asked this for a number of times. They've seen our IDs. Until one of them actually made a complaint, one of the students, a person standing outside, their father called the head of Security, Mike Young. But there were times when we were there and there were white kids who were not students, and they were never questioned.

*And that happened to you?*

It happened to me, with other people around.

*Anything else?*

No, not really. No verbal remarks, no assault, nothing like that.

*Leaving aside behavior, do you sense racial tensions on campus beyond what exists in the larger society? If so, how do you think such tensions could be eased within W&L?*

No. A number of black kids have white friendship relations and there is actually less tension than I thought there would be here. A whole lot less. Partly because everybody knows so much each other more as opposed to a larger school, where there might be more inter-ethnic conflict.

43. *Aside from the Honor System do you believe that the student Executive Committee, the Student Conduct Committee or other University judicial committees treat black and white students equally fairly?*

Don't know. Never heard of any cases where there were any black students included. I don't have enough knowledge to answer that question.

44. *Do you believe that the honor system is applied in an even-handed way to black and white students?*

Yes.

45. *How would you evaluate student publications (i.e. the Ring-tum Phi, the Trident, etc.), the student radio and television stations with regards to opportunities for black students to participate.*

I think it's open to whoever wants to do. Our major complaint is that there is no DET. We're thinking about doing a petition, just because that's like a real big cultural link, particularly when you're away from that culture for so long. So many changes occur within the music industry. It largely dictates black life, the music industry, the trends and the fashions are often seen in the music. That's lacking.

*How would you evaluate them with regard to their treatment of news about black students?*

I've hardly seen black students in the news here. So I don't know what to say about that.

46. *Do you feel that black students at Washington and Lee today have problems that are basically different from, or basically similar to those of whites? Please describe in what way you feel they are different or similar.*

Different. The social structure in which fraternities are a major, is pretty much the only social outlet. If you don't feel that you fit into the fraternity system, then you are missing a big part of the social aspect. I mean, there are students here who are actually considering cross pledging at black fraternities at other schools. I thought about doing it, but I'm not missing any fraternity get-togethers.

*So the problems are different primarily based on the fraternity system. Is that what you are saying?*

Yes.

*That would have to mean that you're assuming that black students will be less interested in the fraternity system?*

The school needs a University Center — a real center. Games, arcades, places to hang out. Sometimes you don't necessarily feel like drinking and going to a party. But there is nothing else to do, so you can sit in your room. And I'm a person who, if I'm inside for too long, I start to lose it. I just start going crazy. I've got to go out, I've got to hang out, I've got to do something. And so I'll go out and when I come in, I'm like, why even bother go out tonight, I know what it's going to be like. But sometimes you hope it'll be different, or something interesting, and you have to adjust. This isn't a social environment that you particularly used to. You have to make an effort to deal with it before you can begin to enjoy it.

\*47. Sex                      Male

\*48. Age?

\*49. Year in college?              (Junior or Senior)

\*50. Cumulative grade point average [as of Fall 1996]?

\*51. How do you identify yourself in terms of nationality?

52. *How do you identify yourself in terms of race?* Black.

53. *Are there additional comments you wish to make about any aspects of Washington and Lee?*

It needs definitely to diversify: its curriculum, it hasn't reached my expectations as a highly ranked liberal arts school because I don't feel I'm getting a liberal arts education. I am getting a conservative arts education. I am beginning to see diversity among students, with this freshmen class particularly. I just don't like seeing everyone doing the same thing, wearing the same thing, talking the way, everyone trying to be the same person. Instead of dealing with life, twenty people are dealing with three who are the same personalities, and there should be a concerted effort to diversify the school; not just blacks, but maybe even Hispanics, Asian, whatever. I can learn more from an Asian student than I can from a black person who has the same friends that I have. I partly relate more from just not knowing as much. I think that's it.

*Go back a second, because you said something interesting that I didn't quite understand. Academically it let your expectations down because of the lack of diversity even academically you didn't get a liberal arts education, you got a conservative arts education. Could you tell me what you mean?*

Like I took history of the United States from Civil War to present. I don't feel I learned anything about one African-American in the whole class. And if I did, it was probably one. And for the contributions, however indirect they may be due to whatever, discrimination or whatever like that, it's still good to learn for other people to know. Like I mentioned before, the African culture, I don't know anything about African culture. I learned about post-colonial African culture, which is not African culture. The people who were not living in cities but who were out in the country. But the professors are highly learned professors. I enjoyed the sociology and religion classes, the professors are really good, science department, and everything like that. But they need some, some things that are not as tangible, I guess, either career or post-graduate needs are important. That may be lacking. I just haven't seen — Granted, until now I've been allowed to choose as much as I would like to, but I was taking biology because I had to fit it in... so it could be basically the fact that I just haven't had the opportunity to find those other things. But diversity among the students and the faculty and there needs to be a social outlet besides partying. People begin to wonder if everyone here is an alcoholic or why alcohol plays such a major role in the structure because there really is nothing else to do. Until then, I think drugs and alcohol will be prevalent in the social life here, regardless of whatever else is done, as people try to relax or whatever, pass the time away in ways that's not normally done during the hours between 8 to 7.

Can I take off one incident? Can I take off the brownies incident?

*Just not talk about it at all, leave it out?*

Yeah, just because the person who's involved probably, I don't know, .....  
[end of tape]