

#37 INTERVIEW OF BLACK STUDENTS ENROLLED AT WASHINGTON AND LEE

1. *Have you decided upon a college major? If yes, what?* Yeah, I'm a biology major right now, BS, that's what I've declared, and then I'm also gonna declare a second major of natural sciences and mathematics, which is a BA because with all the, I'm taking extra courses besides what I need to do take. *So you're getting both degrees.* Yeah

2. *(If the answer to do question 1 is no, skip #7.) What is your grade point average (GPA) in your major field? It's probably around a 3.0 right now.*

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

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

I think I might want to do be a professor, either that or strictly research, but I think it might be easier to do get into the profession as a professor and do research from there.

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

Definitely

6. *While growing up, did you attend or were you personally active in church? Yes / No* For first second and third grade I attended a Christian school in Haiti. Chapel every Monday. *Other than that were you involved in a church?* No, I wasn't.

How would you characterize your church involvement in Lexington? Nonexistent.

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

I participated in more extracurricular activities in high school but I've still kept that up, like I do the community big brother program, stuff like that. And I've stayed with music too. I do the same level of participation in music as I did in high school. I'm with the wind ensemble right now, and also I'm with a band called aqua-nautilus. We've been together, this is our third year, and I think there's 2 guys in it from SAE and there's an independent Tom Leggett and there's Aaron Bretherton, he's my year, but he depledged this year from Sigma Phi Epsilon. *So you play parties?* Yeah

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

Actually, I came here from Project Excellence. My brother just got a scholarship from it on Friday. So, he got a full scholarship to do Vanderbilt. That's awesome. *Wow, that's wonderful. I bet he's really excited.* So, what that was is the three top, or the two top African American English students and the one most improved African American English student from each high school in the DC area were nominated by the teachers, and then that was over 500 at the beginning. Then we each wrote a one page essay and from that they narrowed it down to do 120, and then we all gave two minute speeches to do a panel of famous, really good journalists like

Carl Rowan and a lot of the journalists for the Washington Post. And through that they narrowed it down and gave about 18 full scholarships and some \$10,000 one time and \$4,000 one time. And, when I got nominated I was in the counselling office in high school and I asked my councillor if she had ever heard of Washington and Lee and she said “yeah, it’s a pretty good school, you should check that one.” Cause I was checking all the ones that I would accept. I didn’t think about it any more until I got a call that said Washington and Lee had offered me one. They said that it was 15th or 16th in the US News and World Report and so I accepted it. I had never seen the school. I know the area though, since I’m from Maryland.

Well, we’ve covered a little about the next questions, so let’s just go through them and you can add whatever you want to do add.

9. *To do what extent were you assisted during the admissions process by an alumnus of Washington and Lee?* I wasn’t assisted by any alum.

10. *Did you visit the campus before you matriculated as a student?*
If yes, under what circumstances?

Before fall term freshman year? *Yeah.* Yeah, I did. the next weekend after I got that I came down because they were having a reception for I guess just students in general. It was some time in May, and I came down for that. *Tell me about that visit.* there was just the typical lunch on the lawn in front of the president’s house, and a speech given by Dean Manning, and that was about it. *Did you go to do classes?* No. *Did you talk with any minority students when you were here on that trip.* No, not really.

Please describe your reactions to do this campus visit. I thought it was beautiful. I couldn’t wait to do come after that. *You had already accepted at that point?* Yeah. What they did is they called me on the phone. They did the same to do my brother, and they say “We have this scholarship for you,” and they give you about, at most five minutes to do decide, and you have to do decide on the phone. I’d never seen any pictures. I mean, I’d gotten, among the hundreds of brochures I’d gotten I’d gotten one from Washington and Lee. But, since it was a good school and I knew the area, I figured it would be pretty stupid not to do take it.

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

Well, initially it wasn’t even on the list, but after that it was definitely my first choice. *What were the things that determined that the others were your first choices?* Well, by, one of the big things for me was the area that it was located in and the academic reputation, and the programs that they had. I wasn’t exactly sure what I wanted to do do, I knew it was within the sciences, initially I wanted to do be a marine biologist, and I applied to do schools, like I applied to do the University of Miami and the University of Maryland, which would have allowed me to do do that, and then I applied to do Tulane, and if I had gotten into there I probably would have gone into medical illustration. So, basically it was academic reputation.

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

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

All of them.

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

The scholarship. I mean, I would have gone. I had a offer, either a full scholarship or a 3/4 scholarship to do Loyola in New Orleans. And if this school hadn't had it's academic reputation then I wouldn't have taken this. So it wasn't solely the financial aid. *So, since you got good financial aid And it had a really good reputation...* Um Hum.

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

Well they thought it was really neat. a lot of people made fun of me just cause like the conservative aspects of this school, but I didn't have too many qualms about it because, well, conservatives tend to do be, in my experience, tend to do leave you alone as long as you don't bother them about their views because their whole thing is everyone is allowed to do their own opinion and they shouldn't have their rights infringed upon. *Hun, that's interesting.* I try to do be positive. And then people were real impressed too, especially my friends at school, cause no one else got in, and several people applied. *To do W&L?* Um Hum. *But, people made fun of you because it had a conservative reputation? They knew enough about it to do 'know' that?* Yeah, well the people that did. But that was all just in jest.

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

Nothing that made me think seriously about not coming. I figured, I've had an interesting background and I have an interesting opinion about myself and outlook on race because going back and forth between Haiti and here, when I go there basically I'm considered like the white elite, like the people at this school, and then I come back to do this country and I'm not fully accepted by certain members of the white or the black cultures. It's just, I figured that it wouldn't be too different since in high school I had some problems with both groups. *High School in the states?* Um hum.

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

Well, I thought it was easier, just because my step father had talked up universities so much for the whole time... He married my mom when I was in fourth grade and ever since then he'd talked up universities so much that by the time I applied to do colleges I thought that - well he was just really critical of our grades and by the time I applied to do colleges I thought I'd only get in the University of Maryland and he said, "You should apply to do all these." and I'm like, "What are you talking about?" *He set you up, didn't he?* Yeah, but I thought that it was going to be a lot more work than it is because of - he made us work a lot through school and he always talked up the good colleges as being really hard. But then, after I was applying he said, "You can do it, don't worry. you're prepared for it." But, also he said when I was writing my college essays he said "You're going to do be put in remedial English." And then I tested into 105, stuff like that, gave me more confidence. And then there are a couple of semesters, like this semester with organic is pretty tough. *Are there other ways the university was different than what you expected?* I think going to do any university you'd have problems and feelings coming up just because you're leaving home and going to do college and that's how I looked at things that came up here. Just, you have things that would come up with any university..I don't know, I didn't

have any problems that would, that I'd really attributed to do this type of university. *So nothing that surprised you, really? No How did it work out, ... with conservatives ...?* It's been pretty accurate, actually. Especially because I think that upper class people who aren't threatened, who aren't in economic trouble, or at the lower end of the economic spectrum really don't have a problem. I mean they don't really voice any racism they might have as much as people on the lower end of the economic spectrum just because people on the lower end of the economic spectrum it's kinda like I think they have to do find a way, since they don't have the education and means to do out compete people that way, it's just a way that society finds to do lessen the competition, I think. I don't know if it's relevant to do the question.

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 do be your greatest challenge at Washington and Lee.*

How have you dealt with it?

I knew you were going to do ask that question. And I'd have to do say my greatest challenge here is definitely organic chemistry. Because, like the last test, I studied about 50 hours for it and I got a 41 ½ on it, and the class average was a 56. It's just taught me - my work ethic has increased so much. I'm so much more efficient at studying and I've learned a lot about it. On the last test I tried to do get an a on it, instead of my normal Cs I get on them, and tried to do learn all the thousands of little details, and instead I'm now just going back to do the old way of studying, of getting the basics, like the general concepts, and then filling in whatever details I have time to do. Instead of going along and studying really slowly and then by then you forget the stuff at the beginning, or I do. *So that overview type studying, does that work well for you?* Yeah, it does, it's not as necessary if the subject isn't as complicated as this, but I kind of go through, over and over, two or three times and just fill in more details as I keep going over it.

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

Um, it's a little bit lower. I graduated with a 3.5 from high school, and I have about a 3.0 right now.

16. *What academic resources have you used at Washington and Lee?* I've used the science library, the Leyburn library, computers, I haven't the writing center, haven't used tutors, I guess I've used informal study groups at times, I go to do public lectures on academic subjects, but more often, it doesn't have to do be within the subject I'm studying, just anything that interests me. I tested out of French, so I didn't need to do go to do the language lab. I go to do professors quite often. And I haven't taken any study skills courses. I'm trying to do think of anything else. That basically covers a lot.

Undergraduate library

Science library

Computer facilities.

Writing Center.

Tutors in the disciplines.

Study groups.

Public lectures on academic subjects.
Language lab.
Visiting professors in their offices.
Study skills courses

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

I think these facilities are pretty adequate. Definitely.

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

Actually I've had interest in the sciences since I was five years old, and since the fifth grade I knew I wanted to do be in some sort of biology, so initially that was what made me choose it, and then my particular course of study within biology, but now, coming on the senior year, I'm also looking at job opportunities in the fields. *Is that why you're thinking of the second major?* Well, the thing with that is I heard from two seniors that they had done the same thing, but I'm not going to do have to do take a single extra course to do get that major, because it's not as hard a major as the biology BS, and I think basically anybody with a BS in Biology can sign up for that major and not have to do take any extra classes. It's just kind of a loophole. - something you can do.

18. *Have you changed majors since you have been enrolled at Washington and Lee?
If yes, please describe that change.*

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 think it depends. I think for a lot of people at this school it depends. I've seen a lot of degrees that people take the honor violation, they interpret it in their own ways to do different degrees, I know people who hardly ever report anyone for anything and then I know people who reported their best friends for putting an extra - they ice skated an extra time for PE. I think if it were jeopardizing the integrity of the honor code, I think that I would. *So you would use your own judgement...* But if it put the honor code in jeopardy and it were definitely against the honor code. I'm not sure about.. There was a case where someone's girl friend said that they had a court hearing, cause they were having problems in their relationship and she didn't want to do see him over break, or something, and he reported her for lying after he found out she really didn't have a court hearing. So, I think with the social realm if it's pretty innocent. I don't think I would report that, because I think that's between people and it really doesn't have anything to do do with the school. *Sounds like you want to do protect the system, but..* Yeah, I have a lot of respect for the system. And I like it a lot.

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

I think they're really easy to do approach. I think they like to do talk to do students and they like it when students are interested in their courses and have enough interest to do come and talk to

do them. *So you found them interested in speaking to do you, and available?* Yes, definitely.

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

Yeah, I have an individual study with Dr. Knox right now, and in the summer I'm going to do work for him doing research. *R.E. Lee research.* Um Hum

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

Well, initially I rushed. I ran into a problem during rush that I didn't figure out until later. When I was in 9th grade I took Tai Kwon Do, and I was going to Tai Kwon Do class. Ten guys approached me and said "You owe me money". I was like, "I don't know what you're talking about." Then my dad was over at the car and he came and stepped in. My dad's white, but he's been in Haiti and he's been in Seattle and a lot of rough areas, like Harlem. He's got pretty good street sense. He started speaking Haitian Creole to them. That threw them off and they all started to walk away, but then we didn't think and we walked in the same general direction as them to get to the car to get my stuff to go up to class. That was freshman year in high school. They turned around and were like "Are you trying to sneak up on us?" They pulled out knives and chains and bats. They had their hands in their jackets. They hit me in the mouth and knocked my dad down with a bat. Then somebody drove up that we knew and scared them off. But that ties into the rush thing. I told everybody during rush that were I put in another situation where there were several people beating on me or something that I might kill someone. First of all, I'm a black belt. In my black belt test, there were two people on top of me and they had just come back from the nationals. They weren't hurting me or anything, but they were just beating up on me. I threw both of them off of me. I was probably one of the first people in the history of my Tai Kwon Do school to win in a 2 on 1 match. I didn't really know what was going on at that time. I just kind of snapped. I still had enough wits not to hurt them. I told that to the people during rush, so I didn't get a single bid. After I told somebody that, all of a sudden people stopped talking to me too. I was a little upset about that at first, but I got over it pretty quickly. Just found my own friends to hang out with. Up til about this year I've gone to frat parties once in a while. I haven't been to one since October. I have my own group of friends now—just hang out together. I don't miss it at all. I think overall, social life at W&L has been satisfactory.

Sounds like it's been very independent.fraternity parties...

Freshman year I'd go once or twice a week just because that's what.... I was hanging out with Charlie Mason, that's who I room with right now. He'd go home and see his girlfriend every weekend. That's mainly the time when people would go to the fraternity parties. So I'd do it then. Then maybe last year I went maybe once a month. This year I don't go at all just because I hang out with my friends. It gets really old fast.

Do you live off campus?

Yes

So do you have a house where you can have things happen?

I have an apartment. But it has a big living room, so we can pack people in and do stuff on our own.

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

I've had social engagements without alcohol. I don't think that's the point of getting together. I think that it can help if you don't abuse it at the social event. Right after midterms or something, I don't think it's bad to have alcohol. I don't think it's the point of the social gathering, to just

get together and binge drink. But a lot of people do.

Do you do that sometimes?

Very seldom. Probably twice a year. That's never on purpose. It's never my intent to do that.

Is it your impression that it is the intent of some people?

I know because they say it's their intent. Like this one guy—I went on a trip to Japan last year with the wind ensemble. We were on a bus trip to Nagasaki one day and he drank—I mean nobody was really paying attention to him. Everybody had their little cans of saki. They sell saki and everything out of vending machines over there. He had a bottle of vodka. In five minutes he drank 3/4 of it. Afterwards he told everyone he does that like kind of often. He looked like he had alcohol poisoning.

How did you handle that?

Most of the group was really angry at him, because he was like throwing up on the street. I mean we were a group of Americans in Nagasaki. He threw up in a restaurant. At that point somebody just took him back to the bus. He just slept it off there with the bus driver. Everybody was pretty angry about it. Dr Kolman said that had he been on his bus, he would have been on the plane back to the States. That's really no way to represent your country.

Among your friends would you normally have alcohol but would not normally drink to that level?

Not to that level. I mean I have a couple of friends that that'll drink and get drunk every time. That's far from getting alcohol poisoning every time.

How important to you are drugs at a social event?

Not.

Do you share drugs with people sometimes?

I have occasionally, but it never became something that happened frequently. It was something that was just done socially, I guess out of curiosity. That's also gone out of my life at this point. I just don't find interest in that at all

...Maturing past it...?

I think so. ...I guess the rebellion. I could see how somebody could get hooked on it, but I don't think I could get hooked on it just because it's—for one thing, the amount of guilt that I feel afterwards is pretty overwhelming.

Is this from doing what substance?

Just marijuana is the only thing I've ever tried.

Is it your impression that it's used rather widely on campus?

Definitely, among all social and racial groups. It's very widely used I'd say.

Are you aware of it because you see it being used?

That and more so people talking about it. People get habituated to it to the point where they're just not careful about what they say. It's more a point of showing off for them, I think. That's primarily how I learn about it.

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?

Any more that you want to discuss?

That's about it.

Do you drop in on fraternities? Do you go visit friends at fraternities other times than parties?

Last year I did that just because people in my class were....houses. I'd do it occasionally. Now I don't. I don't know many people in frat houses. I also found it kind of awkward.

Really? Talk about that.

You just walk up to a frat house, even if you're with a brother and they act like their intentions

....with people in frat houses. Especially if you go in by yourself to look for someone. People are always wondering what you're doing there. They won't always say something.

It's uncomfortable?

Yeah.

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

I haven't had any experiences on athletic teams. I was-- freshman year I got involved in the Tai Kwon Do club that's run by - Chris, I forget, but he's in Sigma Phi Epsilon. We just disagreed with him on a philosophical basis as far as what the martial arts represent. It seemed like he came from a school that was showy and stuff. At my school we're taught that the only reason you take martial arts is for bettering your mind and your body. You never use it except for self defense. He believed, but I had a problem with--he kind of just showed off.

P.E. classes are pretty cool except when they're early in the morning.

Facilities are nice. I play racquet ball and tennis once in a while.

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

Up until last spring I was going out with someone. First she went to U. of Arizona my freshman year, then she transferred to U. Maryland my sophomore year. Then we broke up. So basically there wasn't any need for dating here. So I broke up with her last spring, and then this October I started going out with Melissa Gibson, a senior here. We're still going out. I think you'll find whatever opportunities you want to make for yourself.

25. *Have you ever considered transferring from Washington and Lee to another college/ university?*

Not really. I did apply to U. Maryland to transfer. I didn't even send my transcripts or anything. But that was when I was dating and I was having problems with my last girlfriend. It just got to where I applied so she'd stop bothering me about it. I've never really seriously thought about transferring.

why not?

I find that I'm getting a good education here and have a good group of friends. Mainly, I think I just want to stick out the course of education here, because it's really good. I just think I have a good thing going with the education I'm getting here. I'm happy with it. It's my motivation. If I were ever to seriously think about transferring it would be because of academic reasons. Going to somewhere with a better program for what I want. ..if I thought the education here lax, which I don't. I really have no reason to.

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

I've worked for the calling campaign, calling alumni. I started that freshman year. I think part of the reason I do that is that I think this school has given me a lot by giving me a scholarship. I probably made between 20 and 40 thousand dollars for the school so far in 3 years. I'm one of the higher grossing callers.

So you really feel like you've paid back the school some.

I don't think there's--I mean they've given me a really good opportunity. It's a way to pay off a little bit. They've given me more than money I think. The school could have given me 70 or 80 thousand dollars to go out in the world. Education is worth a lot more. I don't think there can really be a price on what they have given me.

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

I've gained more insight into alumni and how the thinking has changed over the years, especially with coeducation. A lot of times I'm the one who gets to call the older alumni. Inevitably most of them complain about coeducation if they want to give a reason for not giving the school money. Most of the people call are female—it's not really pleasant for them to have to listen to that. I think it has influenced my level of satisfaction. I can definitely appreciate how the school has changed over the past few years.

How has it changed?

A lot of the alumni back then were really against it. I don't know if I can name a single guy at this school right now who would rather that this school be all guys again. It's a big change. They're getting sorority housing right now. I think there's a level a respect of women on this campus. I think with sorority housing they'll feel more a part of the school. I think that with that will come more respect.

Do you think that's parallel with the experience of the minority community here? Coming in as a new group?

In some ways it is. It can be related in some ways but it's also different because I think that if I were a white female at W&L in one of the first classes, especially if you came from a household where equal opportunity for the sexes was taught, it would be kind of a different frustration, because you're a member of the same ethnic and socio-economic group, yet you're being denied the things you and your family have worked towards. Just because you're a woman, you're denied that. I think that's different than coming out of something where your heritage and your ancestors were all denied it. I'm not saying either one's harder. It's different.

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.*

Now we ask some background information:

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

Born in Haiti, moved to Seattle when 10 months old. Then back to Haiti when I was 2 and a half years old for my little brother to be born. Then about a year and a half after that, moved back to downtown Seattle this time—to Woodby Island by the Puget Sound. Those were the earliest memories I have. Then I moved to Dallas. My parents got divorced when I was 5. About half a year after that I moved to Haiti. I stayed there for 2 and a half years, then moved to Maryland the summer before 4th grade. Stayed there ever since.

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

Suburban

I went to an elementary school a lot like this. It was public, but just the way the districting was done for the schools and everything. In that county it's political. There's always fights about that because somebody will buy a house, then they'll change the district. They'll take the county to court and everything. I think the county is one of the top ten or top five counties for public schools in the nation. Now the elementary school that I went to, my little brother is going there. All the parents buy computers for the school. They've set up computer labs on their own. They have 2 computers in every classroom. When I went there they had a computer lab with 2 or 3 computers. Now they have a Mac computer lab with about 20 MacIntoshes. It was basically a pretty affluent suburban community

So is that the community you would say you spent most of your growing up years in?
Yes.

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

Predominantly

Originally it was predominantly white, but I think about 20 years before I went there they started bussing people in from Silver Springs, which is about 4 miles away. The school was right between the two different areas.

So was it like half and half then?

It's hard to say. Initially it seemed about half and half. Then it seemed for Caucasian when I went into the honors classes. There weren't many African Americans in those classes.

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

My mom and my dad until I was about 5, then I moved to Haiti and lived with my grandparents and my little brother. My uncle was also there, he was about 15 years old. My mom went to Miami to collect herself for about 6 months through the divorce. My dad went to Dallas just for a change of scene, also to collect himself. I had that period with my grandparents. Then I lived with my mom and my brother until about 3rd grade. I lived with my mom and my stepdad from 4th grade on. At the beginning of 5th grade my dad moved to the area so he could be closer to us. I would spend during the week at my mom's and weekends with my dad.

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 mom never finished college. My dad got a BA. His major was Art. He was a couple of credits away from a minor in Aerospace Science or something like that. He was a pilot. My grandparents—my grandmother just had high school. My grandfather graduated from Rennsler Polytechnic with a degree in civil engineering, top of his class. I'm sure he was in the top five of the math majors he graduated with. He was All American in two sports, tennis and soccer. Actually I lived with my dad's parents, too, but I was really young at that point. My grandmother equivalent to this out west, I forget what it is. She dropped out when her dad got sick, to go take care of him. My grandfather had a high school education.

My stepdad, I think he got his undergraduate degree in sociology, then he was a couple of credits away from getting his master's in sociology. I haven't asked him why. I don't think he's volunteered it either. I know he didn't get kicked out or anything, probably got tired of it.

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

My dad has recently taken a job with a new company as their national sales manager. They work in powered scaffolding, like the window washers with the motors on them. His company bids the jobs that are really hard and other companies won't do like the Statue of Liberty. They did that. He has a mind that likes to work through problems like that.

My mom started her own company when I was in 6th grade, Art of Moving and Living. She has two branches. One of them is condominiums and apartment complexes pay to have her keep the common areas clean. The other part is moving people who have a lot of money. Her company is the most expensive company, they do the best job. Like people with expensive art. She's looking at selling off the cleaning part of it and just focusing on the moving. That's where the money is basically.

My stepfather, when we first moved in with him, I think he was working as a consultant with some firm in DC that was getting students from South Africa scholarships so that they could come to this country. They couldn't afford to come to this country. He knows the whole financial aid and scholarship thing really well. Now he's doing independent work for MCI, putting different concepts together for websites and video-conferencing, stuff like that. He does some consulting work at the same time. He does a lot of different things.

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

When I lived in Haiti - I'd say I can relate to a lot of people at this school. Definitely upper class. My grandfather owns 3 factories down in Haiti that supplies the capital with soap. There's a lot of money that comes out of that. I've been part of the elite. When my mom and dad first got married, they were lower middle class. I think that's a typical way for a lot of people to start out. I've talked to a lot of people here whose parents did that too. Now, I'd say probably below average, but not far.

How do you think this has affected your experience?

It's run me up a substantial credit card bill, because one of the people I'm moving in with next year, his dad just writes him a blank check every month. He has to use it within reason, but he gets like 5 to 8 hundred dollars a month from his dad. Then I hung out with someone freshman year, the first person I hung out with Gary Marie, who's no longer here—he had 3 cars himself. He had a 3 year old Isuzu pickup and a 2 year old Acura. Then he had a 54 Mustang. You kind of get caught up in thinking that you have extra money to spend too. It's not that my parents don't have money, they just don't give me what these others get. As a result, I've built up bills - it was up to about \$3000 but it's down to about \$2500.

I don't think I've felt any disadvantage because of it. That's about it.

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?*

Definitely, first as a student.

Please explain.

My stepfather and my grandfather had a lot of influence in the way I think like that. My grandfather went to Renslaer. When you come to this country, you associate with people - you work hard and race isn't really as relevant. He always makes fun of African Am. in this society just because they're always - like the sub-culture they've developed. He always had people at Renslaer asking him why he wasn't living in the International House. He was like "I came to this country to be a student, I don't consider my race as a factor." If I start considering it as a factor, other people will. My stepfather was really active in a lot of things in the Civil Rights Movement, including campaigns for a lot of people in the South. He lived in Tenn. He worked for newspapers. He would never compromise his position on stuff. Until he'd ruled everything else out, he never considered being fired or anything else as a result of racism. I think you're at a disadvantage if you're always thinking that way. You trip yourself up like that. It's something I'm still sorting out for myself. I know what I believe. Personal experience is one thing, but reading helps clarify the strong points of the position.

My dad's into personal development where he was. Like the New Age workshops. He was always giving me books to read. I'd always get mad at my stepfather, because when he would find me reading one of those books, he'd give me a book written by Freud or Jung, like basically these books were a summary of that. That way you can read where it originated and form your

own opinions on it instead of believing in opinions that people formulated from the original ideas and theories.

Is your own personal development going in the direction of your grandfather and stepfather? Is that what you're saying or are you questioning those thoughts?

I have questioned those thoughts. I feel that unless you question something you believe in—the more you question it, the more solid your beliefs will be. Generally, I'm definitely going in that direction.

Is that direction to not focus on racial identification?

You keep it in mind, but you don't use it as your primary motivation and you don't use it as an excuse throughout your life, not to take personal responsibility for things. A lot of people use it to that extent.

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 they are more heterogeneous - in my freshman class they were. As students transfer, I think it becomes more homogeneous. I also think that in order to feel like they have a place at the school, a lot of students will - there aren't that many Af. Americans at the school - they will kind of group together and become friends. With so few students at the school, they're bound to become homogeneous if there's only 2 or 3 groups. You have common activities and listen to the same music, watch the same programs, have conversations with each other. You kind of form opinions as a group sometimes.

So you're saying that a lot of people are starting quite different, then some people leave. The rest who stay are becoming more similar.

That's a general trend with all students at this school, especially with the fraternities. They also become more homogeneous.

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.*

I don't know. I think that the political perspective is different. But you can find people with all political perspectives at this school. The social class position, as a whole the Af. American students are from a lower socio-economic status. I see that as a good thing, because a lot of them wouldn't have been able to come to this school if they weren't given scholarships. It's just a hard one for me to answer.

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

I think that it's inadequate. I don't think that it should necessarily be augmented by strictly - like programs of scholarships to needy students - to go recruit students. I think one of the big things that would help with that is there are hardly any - I don't know of any Af. American students here except for Gary, who applied without being told by someone that there would be financial aid available and that that wasn't a driving force to get them to apply. I think that if instead perhaps there could be more p.r. to Af. Americans. All people in my school heard was that it's really conservative - like what are you going to do when you get there. The image portrayed is extremely negative for any incoming African Americans. I think the school has done a good job in some respects. It's not a bad place for Af. Americans. Perhaps the students could go out and recruit, tell people what it's like. I know my brother is applying to schools this year. The student from the U. of Md., Baltimore campus called and asked if he had questions. I think that if we try

and actively show people that it's not as bad as they think it is, I think there will be more Af. American applicants to draw from. There are definitely a lot of Af. Americans in the U.S. who could afford to go here and who have the academic capability of going here, but they just don't want to apply.

You could work with the guidance departments at certain high schools.

I think we have a good university to sell. I don't think it would be hard to sell them.

What would you like to see the percentage be?

I think more important at this point - the Af. Americans are better represented here than any other minority group. I think there should be other minority groups. I don't think there should be a target percentage, but I think it would be good for the school to set a goal to induct more minorities to apply to the school. As a result the numbers would increase on their own, because they'd have more applicants who they could accept without making special allowances for them or anything like that.

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

The turnover of professors at this school is really slow. There are a lot of groups that are not represented in the body of professors. One of the good things they're doing is getting more women professors. I think personally that it's a more pressing issue. I think the biggest problem with this school is the male/female relationship stuff. Just because - I mean there's 40% females and 60% males. I think the minority population of the school is so small that people don't even bother getting upset about it. It's not a level where it's "in your face." I think there should be more black professors in the future. At the same time it needs to be based on merit.

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

I think at this point - I've never really talked to Dean McCloud, but I've had Af. American friends that have. She seems pretty supportive. I don't think with a student body with 3 or 4% that you need to have half of the faculty and staff to be black just to support that small minority. I'd say it'd adequate. The administration isn't really that large.

37. *Should the university offer activities designed to bring new black students together?*

If not, why not?

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

I don't think so at all. That sets them apart as a group from the onset. I think that would make me feel.... There's the Minority Students Assoc. that's put on by students. It's different if you have students who are trying to get new black students to meet each other, but if the university got black students together, I don't think any of the white students here get resentful of it, but the black students might think they're just trying to get them out of the way.

Has the Chavis House played a role in your life at W&L?

In the social aspect. I have friends that live there. I think it's good for some people who come here. For me, I wouldn't need that to feel like I belong here.

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

Not really. I've gone to 2 or 3 meetings since I came to W&L. For one thing, I found out later, when I came to this school I was known as the black student who really isn't black.

Who were you known that way by?

I don't know, but Jack Thorn told me that some people knew me by that. He's always been really nice to me. He's definitely the most intelligent black student in this school. If you sit down and talk to him for a couple of hours, it's incredible.

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?

I do. I don't think at this point—is there a requirement to take any? I don't think it'd be good at this point. I've already read the reactionary newspaper that comes out once in a while. You know what I'm talking about. I read an article in there last year that some professor wrote re: racial heterogeneity at this school is threatening the history of W&L and stuff. It was way too diverse. I think we'd take more steps back if we took the steps to make it mandatory in the curriculum.

We would take steps backward if we required people to study...?

These professors are already up in arms enough. Alumni especially, I talk to alumni all the time and they don't know what race I am. I don't really get upset about it. I talk to them about whatever just to get money out of them. If they make a comment, I'm more apt to just sell harder to them and get more money out of them.

I'm just not very familiar with those departments, but they should offer some classes in women's studies and also in different racial studies.

I think the original intent of this question was "Do you think this recognition should be incorporated into general humanities and social science courses?" Not just a course in African American history but any history course or any literature course or sociology course.

I think it would be good. I don't think it should be presented in a way - like a chapter in the book about Af. American history. But there have been contributions by all groups in history. You could easily incorporate in so it wouldn't seem like you just did it to incorporate it in.

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

The problem is I've just taken science courses and don't have much feel for it.

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

It's just a climate in a classroom as a student basically. I don't think race comes into my mind.

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'm not exactly sure.

How can the role of this Office be improved?

I think that from what I've heard from other students, that Dean McCloud's doors are open for people to come and talk to her. I think that's good. From what I've heard I think she also takes a certain interest in the black people in this school and tries to make sure they're all doing OK and stuff.

Is there anything you'd especially like to see this office do?

I think if they could help in any way with the African American/minority students as a whole—they have access to the minority community at the school. I mean they have resources that are available and they could use them somehow.

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.)*

At this time I receive the greatest emotional support from my girlfriend. That just goes with the territory of dating. As far as faculty members or administrators, I'm kind of - I don't discuss my

emotions with faculty or administrators. The farthest it goes is just expressing my frustration if I study for something and don't do as well. I don't enter into interactions, that kind of personal life

My roommate is a quiet person til you get to know him. He never really talks about emotions or anything, but I think it helps me - we'll just sit sometimes and watch TV from 6 in the afternoon til 6 in the morning and just kind of vent our frustrations about things indirectly. That helps a lot. I've had maybe one heart to heart conversation with him. We've known each other since the second day I was at W&L.

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

I'd say the white persons are much greater. I have a lot of black friends. When I make friends, race is not the consideration really. There are some times when I feel it might be good to talk with someone like Jack. He's from Louisiana, so he's from a Creole culture, too. It's more like talking about stuff in the culture we grew up in. I'd say maybe 90% white, rest blacks and international.

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).*

I don't think I have. I think everyone experiences things that are unpleasant, if you want to construe it as such, you could find things in your own mind to support it.

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?

There is some racial tension. It's probably more on the side of the blacks. It's hard not to have emotions come up, being 20 or 30 students when there are 1400 in the student body. The larger society as a whole has more racial tensions because there are more - if you have more members of a minority, it's going to be more threatening to certain groups in that society. More competitive for jobs, income, stuff like that.

The racist tendencies at this school are less. They're not very informed. There's more things that they've learned from the people they've hung out with, their parents—they just haven't been exposed to the culture—no deep seated resentment.

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?*

I don't have too much experience. I haven't heard much. It's my impression that they have to take action so rarely. I don't think they target anybody.

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

There may have been some since I've been here, but I don't know of any black students who have been kicked out for honor violations. I think it's pretty much of a blind system, just because of the way it's set up based on student reports. They also have the hearing. They have to have a case against you to get kicked out. You can't just have someone say that you did this. If it's one person's word against another, it's my impression that you have to have more than that to get kicked out. I think it's definitely even handed. I don't think it's easy to take advantage of the system.

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've had a radio show. I think he graduated last year, I think his name was Mike—he wrote for

one of the newspapers. I'm not familiar with the whole process at the J school in assigning people onto the staff. I assume that if you have the talent, you'd be assigned. It's fair.

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

I haven't read much about black students. For the people here, there's proportionately less to report. I don't think they've misused their power in the media against black students.

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.*

They have both similar and different problems. We're all students here taking classes; you're gonna have problems with that. You're gonna run into problems with certain people in town who don't like students at this school. Students at this school are pretty pompous, regardless of race. They're pretty high on themselves. The members of the community don't get the respect they deserve either. A lot of the black students feel pretty lonely here. But at the same time, I think that to overcome that problem the black students could take one of two courses. One course is the same thing as the fraternity or you could live together and sort of do things to affirm your racial heritage, but I don't think you're really affirming it. I think I got into that a little bit. I wanted to get the braids and dreadlocks and everything. I came to realize that it's another way of assimilation with another group. I think that instead of being forced to assimilate with another and therefore be thrust out of the student body that you have a lot to learn here. You can make a lot of advancements as a person. I think if you take that course, then your personal convictions will stand up to a lot of stuff in the outside world in a group that doesn't get very far past your resentment about it.

So would you say that the blacks have a different kind of challenge that the white students?

It's different in the respect that the white students have a more structured way of assimilating in the fraternity system. They're the same to start out with, that's why they get chosen to be in a fraternity. I've known a lot of people at this school who have changed a lot and have come to fit the description, the stereotype of people.

*47. Sex M

*48. Age? 21

*49. Year in college? JUNIOR

*50. Cumulative grade point average [as of Fall 1996]? 2.922

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

In my mind, on a day to day basis I think of myself as an American because I've spent so much time here. But when I sit and ponder questions, I think there's a lot of influence from the Haitian background that comes in, I think of myself as Haitian-American. One of the reasons I am in the major is I want to be a genetic engineer of plants or an agricultural engineer. There's a lot of stuff going on with that, but there's really nobody doing research on the kind of plants that are grown in third world countries in poor soils. I want to get into that. That way I could help Haiti. There's not many grants available to go into Haiti. The different factions that come into power, they wouldn't care if you had a grant or anything. They'd come and confiscate anything you had and kick you out of the country just as fast as they'd kick anyone else out. It's hard to set up a lab somewhere where you have electricity for 6 or 7 random hours out of the day. I think I'm just going to try to do work in this country that can be applied there.

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

I think I identify myself in racial terms that are present in Haiti, just because they apply more. I consider myself a mulatto, I think, just because there white members of the upper class and there are black members of the upper class. Then there's the upper class that is mulatto. There are different interactions that go on between those groups, different problems they have. I think they are similar to the problems I

have here. I think I have more problems in this country with acceptance from the black community. It kind of parallels that racial group down in Haiti.

53. Are there additional comments you wish to do make about any aspects of Washington and Lee? They should make organic chemistry a little bit easier. It's the theme in my life right now, just trying to get through it and not having to take it next year again.