

#38 INTERVIEW OF BLACK STUDENTS ENROLLED AT WASHINGTON AND LEE

1. Have you decided upon a college major?
If yes, what?

Yes. Accounting.

2. (*If the answer to do question 1 is no, skip #7.*) What is your grade point average (GPA) in your major field?

I don't really have one yet. I haven't started the actual classes or anything.

3. What type of degree are you working toward at Washington and Lee?
BA
BS [science or commerce]

BS

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

I haven't decided that yet.

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

yes
no
maybe

Yes.

6. While growing up, did you attend or were you personally active in church? Yes / No
If yes, please give the denomination, and the type of church activities in which you participated.

I was. I guess up to do about thirteen years of age, I believe. My family was real religious until my dad left, We went maybe a year or two after he left, and that was it. I haven't really been since. I still pray.

What type of denomination was it?

Baptist. I was an usher and Sunday school for my early years.

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?

In high school I was involved in a good number of activities, and here I'm just not aware of - I'm just now becoming aware of the numerous things that you can do at this school. So I'm involved

in some things, but not anywhere as much as in high school.

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

W&L literature

W&L admissions counselor

Relative

Adult friend

Peer

Other

I want to do say a football coach, cause I don't know how, but I remember Coach Aldrich came, or sent some kind of letter to do my school, and that's how I found out about Washington and Lee. I had never heard of Washington and Lee.

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

I wasn't. I don't think there were any that I know of, I don't think so.

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

If yes, under what circumstances?

Visited on your own

Participated in the Summer Scholar's Program

Visited during a Prospective Student Weekend

Other:

Yes. I was brought in I think two or three times for football, and once by Angela Allen and the admissions office.

Was that for one of the minority student weekends?

Yes. The visits were actually good visits, but they kinda hid the actual W&L lifestyle.

There's a questions about that a couple of questions down, so why don't you describe what the visits were like and what your reactions at that time were to do those visits.

OK, the sports activities, the coaches really - they really hyped up the sports life at W&L, and from what I know now, they made it out to do be more than what it is. And of course that got me all excited, like oh great, this is great here.

In what way did they make it seem like more than it is?

They made it seem like the actual student body was really behind all the sports and everything and that it was a big deal. Of course, the academics was always first, but they made it seem like, if you're an athlete, and you do well, you'll have a good life and you'll have fun cause everybody's into it, and nobody was down on the athletes here. And it's just totally opposite. Those were the sports visits, and the actual minority visit was also I think misleading, because there were, the panel I got to do see, there were a lot of blacks in the room discussing the panel, and they all seemed to do get along really well. That is not true. I can attest to do that from a situation I had tonight. So that was just misleading.

What kind of feedback did you get from those minority students?

They seemed to do, I think they were trying to do warn you, in a way, but they also said that you could get by, I think is the kind of message I got from it, but then I really didn't understand. I was really confused by the message that I got then from them. Overall I think that they were giving you a warning about what you were going to do get into.

Would you describe that visit and the other visits

Please describe your reactions to do this campus visit.

10a. Was W&L your...

- First choice
- Second choice
- Third choice
- Less than third choice

After I found out how much money I was going to do get, it became my first choice.

And before you got a scholarship?

Before, I think it was a tie for - it was probably second, because the football helped out.

Mary Washington was my first choice because I love the atmosphere. I love being in Friedricksburg, it was close to do Richmond, close to do DC, and the people there are really nice. But, that's the way it worked out.

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

- No other
- One
- Two
- Three
- Four
- Five
- Six or more

I only applied to do three. And those were the three that were offering me the most. I was looking to do apply to do quite a few more, but we just didn't have the financial means to do pay for any of them.

10c. How many other colleges accepted you?

- None
- One
- Two
- Three
- Four
- Five
- Six

All of them. [three]

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

- Relatives wanted you to do come here
- Teacher advised you
- Good academic reputation
- Good social reputation
- Offered financial assistance
- Offers special programs you wanted
- Tuition lower than similar colleges
- High school guidance school counselor advised you
- Private college counselor advised you

Wanted to do live near home
Friend suggested attending
Recruited by college representative
Recruited by athletic department
Graduates go to do top graduate schools
Graduates get good jobs
Religious affiliation or orientation
Size of college
Not accepted anywhere else
Rankings in national magazines

The financial situation and football. The fact that Washington and Lee has a football team and Mary Washington doesn't. They also gave me a full ride. And then I guess you could say the academic reputation helped out too, but I didn't really consider... In high school, my last year, I wasn't really thinking education wise, it was just College - you're supposed to do have fun, supposed to do play sports. So that's what I ...more.

Were there other factors you considered in making the decision?

I think as it grew closer to do the deadline when I would have to do tell what school I was going to do, I think going to do a school that had a prestigious name like Washington and Lee as compared to do the other schools that every single one of my classmates went to do. I wanted to do be different, I think that's the only other reason I chose it.

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

They didn't know what this place was. My only relatives who knew were my two cousins that graduated from Duke, They knew, but the majority of my family besides my mother, they didn't have any formal schooling besides high school, so they had no clue what Washington and Lee was, and my friends - they didn't really know what it was, except for a few, but I don't think I had any adverse reactions because I think people didn't know where or what it was. So that was about it.

What did those folks who had gone to do Duke think about it?

they knew it was a good school, and they knew I'd have a lot of trouble here.

In what way?

As far as the environment I was coming into. And they tried to do warn me, but of course I wasn't listening. Now I wish I had listened.

What did they say about it.

They just said that I would be going into a situation that I'd never encountered before and that I probably would not encounter again. And it would be similar to do what they went through at Duke when they went through.

In what way?

Racial areas, ethnic discrimination, however you want to do label it. They just said it was going to do be very adverse, that they're not going to do want you here, and you're going to do just have to do find a group of people you can get along with and just push through and get out and just use the education to do your benefit.

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

I didn't - at the time when I was coming, um applying to do school and accepted, I didn't have any problems. I was just going to do come and play football, and I was coming up in August, and I had no clue what I'd get into. So I didn't see any negative aspects. I thought it was like high school, cause I went to do a majority white high school and people there had a little bit of money. The ratio there of black to do white was a little bit better, actually it was probably twice as many as are here, same size school, but I just thought it would be the same thing. So I didn't think anything of it.

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

No.

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

OK, my first year, when I first got here, since I was [], I was just shocked by the lack of color on the campus. But I didn't really think anything of it, of course, cause I though it was just like high school and everybody was going to do be as open and kind as they were at home, and then I got to do know, or started interacting with people when classes started, it was - I think I was in shock my whole freshman year, so I didn't really realize what I was into. I think I was still trying to do figure out what was going on. But I had a real good roommate last year, and he helped me through a lot of thinks - he's just a good friend.

What were you in shock about? What was it that stimulated that?

Um,

Since you're saying it wasn't really the numbers so much...

It wasn't the numbers, but it was just the way that I was being treated. It's like I could sense that people were uncomfortable with me being here, and a lot more people than I wanted to do acknowledge didn't want me here. And they kinda let you know, they weren't saying things to do your face, but they'd let you know - "You're not supposed to do be here." and then the only other thing last year that I actually realized at that time last year was that people didn't really think that I, because of my color, that I was on the same level as they were. Not everybody of course, but the majority of people thought that they were superior, and that just through me for a loop, because we're in the nineties here, and we're not supposed to do be thirty years back, and I just couldn't grasp..

And that wasn't your experience in your white high school..

Oh, No, not at all. Of course you had your few, but it was a very small few. Everybody got along. that's what I've been trying to do figure out this year. I don't know if it's whether we grew up together, or if it's because it's a different socio-economic class, or whatever, But everyone accepted everyone, no matter what that was, or what kind of background you came from, or what kind of music you listened to do, or .. People accepted you for what you were, and if you wanted to do be friends with that person you were, if you didn't that wasn't because of - that was because of something else. And I just,...This is just a big shock.

Yeah, well, so tell me how it was that people let you know, since you're saying it wasn't very overt.

Well, that, this just started - I just started to do realize theses things this year when I started to do open my eyes to do the situation. Last year I didn't really realize what was going on, but I just kinda got a feeling. But, if you're at a fraternity party, for instance, you get looks, really bad looks. Sometimes people will say things. And since they're all drunk they think they're whispering, but of course they're not whispering. So you here some names being called and some things being said about how you should go back to do where you came from and why are you in

our party, or you're messing up my whatever, high or drunk or buzz, or whatever you want to do call it.

You mean by being there you're messing up their buzz.

Yeah, I mean, you know! I think that this year was when I really started to do realize what was going on. Walking down the colonnade, you know we have a speaking tradition at this school, and I realize you can't speak to do everyone you see walking down the colonnade, but when you're between classes and there's only a couple of people walking , and when you can look someone in the eye and they make eye contact with you and you acknowledge that person and they don't say anything, they just walk on by you like you don't exist, that just really gets to do you.

Does that happen all the time?

Oh, gosh. You know, one person you can take but when it happens consistently, every single say just over and over, it just drives me insane. I think I really am going crazy here. that's why I had to do go home [He had just returned from a weekend at home] I just had to do get - I can't take it here. That's a few of the things that have let me know how this school is that's different from other places.

14. Please describe what you consider to do be your greatest challenge at Washington and Lee.

How have you dealt with it?

That would be it. the challenge of dealing with adversity to do me, or being different at such a conservative school. And I haven't figured out how to do deal with it yet. It's a big struggle for me, and I hate to do say, but it's not helping - it's hurting my schoolwork. I can't concentrate like I would like to do because I'm constantly thinking about it. Constantly worrying about it. It upsets me. It depresses me a lot. AMD it's , it just puts a whole burden on your whole college life, what college is supposed to do be like, ...One of the few ways that I have thought to do deal with it is transfer, and that goes through my mind every day, and I just, some reason I think of a reason not to do, and I'm going to do run out of reasons sooner or later. and I'm going to do run out of reasons sooner or later, so we'll see how that goes.

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

Academic wise, high school was a lot better. I was probably two and a half percentage points higher in high school. I don't know why it is. I know it's a different structure than high school. I think that teachers here, the professors expects you to do learn a lot on your own, through readings and things like that, whereas in a public high school I think you were taught more in instruction in class. and I really am having trouble [] with that concept there, cause I was doing great in high school and then you get here and then, of course they want you to do come to do class, but it really doesn't matter because you have to do learn everything on your own, now I don't know if that's true with the C school or not because I haven't really been in that area, but as far as the social sciences are, which is not my strong point, you have to do read a lot and you have to do write papers on your opinion, and for some reason my opinion is always wrong, so I just, and high school I didn't have to do deal with that. In English you had to do write maybe a couple of papers, and basically the other classes you had to do just give the correct answer, or facts. It's just a whole new situation.

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

- xUndergraduate library
- Science library
- xComputer facilities.
- Writing Center.
- xTutors in the disciplines.

I don't know about any Study groups. I only form study groups on my own with my friends, you know Kevin,

Lectures, the mandatory ones and some that weren't mandatory..

I haven't used the Language lab because I'm in Latin.

I think I've seen every professor in all my courses in their office, trying to do get help or just asking questions.

I have taken Study skills courses from Dean McCloud. in reading and organization.

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

I don't - As far as my experience, I didn't know that the majority of these were offered when I got here, and it took me till winter term last year until I knew that two of them were offered and it kinda hindered my progress in academic situation as far as.. I don't think a lot of students know about - I didn't know, but a lot of my friends didn't know about it, so I think it needs to do be written down somewhere, or people be informed - more than just in freshman orientation, if it was given there. I don't remember it being there either.

17. What factors contribute or contributed to do 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*

Well, first I wanted to do be a doctor, well actually it started with, I wanted to do be a neuroscientist, and as a freshman, I don't remember what term it was, but I tried to do get a class in neuroscience and she said I had to do be a sophomore and everything, so I said, well maybe I'll just do pre-med right now, so I tried that and I took the core, the prerequisites you had to do take, and I didn't do terribly bad in it, but I didn't do as well as I like to do, and I could have gone on to do the next course because I passed it with whatever you're supposed to do pass with - But one of the professors told me that he didn't think I was science material, so I got really frustrated, with that, so I came over to do social sciences and that was really hard so I went over to do the c school cause I love business, So, I'll see how that goes.

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

If yes, please describe that change.

You just did describe the change, do you need to do say anything more about having changed?
Not really.

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

Um, There's a gray area I think in the honor violation subject. It would depend I guess on what the action was that I would see. Obviously if I see someone cheat on a test that would be an honor violation. But I don't know if I would necessarily report it, ... I don't know, it's a sticky situation.

In what way?

Cause, I would feel like it's not hurting me, cause they're cheating themselves, in cheating on a test, un and I think that they would take it on themselves. If they were cheating. If they wanted to do be honest then they would be honest, if they weren't then I would think that would come back on them without having to do tell I saw such and such cheating. Unless I think it was hurting someone else in the process. I think that's the only way I would tell.

Is that what you mean by the gray area?

Yeah, it is, and I think the stealing part. Yeah if I saw someone stealing, I don't know if I would report it as an honor violation, as much as I would report it to do the authorities or security. that's the way I would handle that, and the lying, I think that might go along with cheating. I don't know. That lying. Its kinda hard to do know if someone is lying unless you know the situation, and then I don't - I just feel that, I don't know how to do explain it, but it just feels like it should be bigger than going and telling on someone because they're lying. Unless it has some great importance, you know. If it's something petty I don't see the point, cause that's just everyday life. Unless it's something of great importance.

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

Some are easy, some are difficult. I've had my fair share. Some are really eager to do help you and they want to do help a lot, and the others, maybe they want to do help, but they either come across as - some I had this year are really confusing about what they're trying to do help you with, or some just give off this attitude and air about them that they are just so great and intelligent that they just can't be bothered with you and your petty little problems. But, then I've had some professors that are great, as well as administrators. I hope that on the majority of the professors on this campus are very helpful.

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

That include a Dean?

You could say so.

Yes. Dean Manning I've gotten really close and he's helped me out a number of ways when no one else on this campus has. Dean Howison I've talked over a number of things, Dean McCloud. I'm getting to do know an admissions counselor and the admissions office pretty well now. Professor wise, it depends on what term it is. My econ professor last term, Professor Goldsmith, was very big help last term and has helped me out with econ this term. Dean Peppers has been a big help this term. As far as other classes, I guess my English professor freshman year, Professor Adams helped me out, and I think that's it. the rest of them were kind of - if you needed help - Oh, Professor Machado also. I don't want to do forget him, he was a great help, and I enjoyed his class too, but the rest of them they were just confusing or you couldn't figure out what they wanted and if you tried to do go for help you couldn't really get a straight answer from them. So that was a big hassle.

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

Oh, wow! To be frank, social life, if you're a white person at this school, is wonderful. They're having the time of their life. For myself and my other friends, it's pretty dismal. You suck it up and go to one of the parties where they're probably not going to play any kind of music you enjoy or you can travel, which is kind of expensive. Traveling on the weekend is kind of stressful. Or you can just stay in your room – ...with your friends, which is basically what we do. That's the social life. As far as drinking goes on this campus, it's way more important. People drink too much here. I have never seen in my life any group of people drink as often and as much and for no reason. It seems like they just drink to get drunk. It doesn't make any sense to me. I can understand if you want to drink to get a buzz or for the taste - but getting drunk to the point where you can't function, that's just dumb. My friends don't do that. We occasionally have a little alcohol, but I don't think the black community....

So when you have a social event, you drink?

Maybe, but it's rare. Life after we finished mid-terms. I know when the Final Four came on, we had a few drinks watching TV. It's not every weekend or every day by any means. I just don't see where they get the money to keep doing that.

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

How important to you are drugs at a social event?

None whatsoever. I haven't seen them.

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

The only experiences I have is I work with Security For the most part everyone has been pretty good except that they don't pay on time. The only bad experience that we had with Greek organizations is a group of friends were walking somewhere and got yelled obscenities from a certain fraternity.... That didn't go over too well. That's the only bad thing that has happened.

How did they deal with that?

A certain individual, we had to drag, kicking and screaming.

You were with them?

I was with one - but it happened to a group of girls at one point when they were walking back from the grocery store. And it happened to a group of guys again also. It was me, Kevin and Travis. We didn't like that.

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

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

I'll go with facilities - I think they're doing a good job of improving the facilities for the outdoor sports teams, tennis - the tennis building - and the new locker rooms underneath the stadium. That was a big change. The year when I visited and my freshman year, it was terrible. The weight room is terrible. I managed a gym when I was in high school, a commercial gym. Even when we started out, our gym had better equipment than this. When I was being recruited, everyone boasted about how many people are involved in athletics here. We have such and such % of the class in athletics. If they're not in athletics, they work out. They run, this, that and the other. I expected to see this great weight room. I go in there and this thing is terrible. The bars are thin and old. It's hard to mess up free weights, but as far as dumbbells, they're terrible. You go up to about 60 pounds and you start skipping in 10 pound increments. Then you skip totally over 70's. I talked to Coach but he can't do very much about it. We discussed the equipment and everything. It's not his decision. That's another area that I'm really frustrated with. The phys. ed. classes—I have only taken swimming and weight lifting. Swimming was fun, because I

like Coach ... a lot. I love the water. I had to take the class because I didn't pass the test because I'm not a fast swimmer. I can do it but not in the times. That was fun.

Athletic teams—for the most part I enjoy it. I love competing, I love the guys on the team. That kind of gets me away from the environment that the university has - the sports teams. They know that you had to work hard to achieve something. I think there's a common goal there - everyone works together. I want to say and I really hope that this is the truth -color. When it's in that type of environment, I will joke about it and bring it up like that to shine a brighter, more positive side to it. I think that if you joke about it in an easier way, it kind of makes people feel more at ease. "There's no problem here. If he can joke about it, I don't have to worry about watching what I'm saying because he might take it the wrong way." Some people get offended by it and say "You can't say that." Overall, I think the athletic teams are pretty good. I just wish they could get more support from the student body. The crowds at the football games are basically non-existent except for family and faculty. People come for homecoming and then leave at half-time. That's terrible.

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

Terrible. Again that comes to the numbers of blacks on campus. I'm not a type of person who discriminates because of color. I leave opportunities open for all, whoever. I've dated a whole array of people from Asians, I dated a girl from Mexico, all over the place, white and black. It doesn't bother me. People are people. Here people don't see it that way. The black girls on this campus have a little attitude about them also. Not all of them.

In what way?

That they're too good for everyone here. They can't be bothered. Of course, they can date all the VMI cadets. I had a really bad experience with quite a few of them.

Was this an opinion clash?

No, it wasn't even a clash. She's the head of the MSA - or she might be vice president - and I started a new organization called Blacks for Campus Change. My group and I got together to help bring in a lot more black freshmen, so we called them and were trying to organize a weekend for them - we were going to have a party for them. Over this party, they wanted to put VMI on the flyer, sponsored by VMI. I was like "VMI does not need to be anywhere on this flyer, because first of all, we're sponsoring it and it's going to be free, because we're a non-profit organization. Admissions is paying for everything." They called me up yelling and screaming and just cursing. I thought we were supposed to be kind of professional here. These were group leaders. They were like "you need to do the party this way, do it right, do it this way." I was like, "Look, it's already been settled. They don't have anything to do with it. They can come if they like. I'm not having them on the flyer." They called me back, left a message on my machine with obscenities on it.

So did Admissions give you money for giving a party for the freshmen?

They're going to fund everything. Trying to help recruit. We're paying for a DJ, the security, that's it. So we're not going to charge. I've never asked for dues from any of my members, and I don't plan to in the future. See, they wanted to charge and wanted a part of the profit. That was a big mess.

Where's the party going to be?

In the Delt House.

For the black freshmen?

It's just for the black accepted students. They're going to be there. We invited schools from all over, whoever can show up. It's not just a black party. It just had to be sponsored that way. I

like to say it's a party where music is being played for us.
I hope that works out well.

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

Why/why not?

The environment here is really hostile. Not violently hostile, like being physically abused but - it wouldn't even be verbally, but mentally, psychologically it's going to kill me. I have never been more depressed in my life. I used to be a pretty happy individual. It's just taken a toll on me. Almost to the point where I can't deal with it. When it does get to that point, I'm going to have to leave

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

Money is one thing. But I just talked to a friend at home who owns the gym where I used to work. He told me he could get me a full ride at other schools if I just go talk to him about it. Another reason I stayed is I don't like to quit things when I start. I'd love to have a W&L degree, just because of the name of the college and the academics here. Kevin and Travis and BJ - those three - we have gotten really close, especially Kevin. I feel like I would let myself down and the school would have beaten me if I give up. But that might change. I might have to let it beat me. For right now, I'm going to finish out this year. As it looks right now, I'll be back next year.

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

Yes, dining hall. And Security - I worked for Mike Young in Security. I "sober drive" and do Security for them for fraternity parties

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

Yes, because I love Mike and Steve over there - everybody at Security. That does help a lot. When I knew I was working Fancy Dress with them, that made that night really wonderful, not because of the ball, because I don't like that ball too much, because everybody's drunk and falling over everybody, carrying on. But just being with them, getting to hang out with them, they make me laugh a lot. I like them.

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, we are in the process of recruiting students. I think it will help everyone white and black to see more diversity on campus, not just help us from being miserable here, but it'll help people. If you're forced to be around people who are different from you, then you'll have to learn how to appreciate other types of people. I think it's very important. I love recruiting and I'd be willing to do whatever it takes to bring students, especially black students or students of different backgrounds to this school.

Now we ask some background information:

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

Country:

State: Richmond, Virginia

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

My house is actually in the suburbs. It's in a subdivision. But I don't really live in the subdivision, I live back on the road with a whole bunch of trees and stuff. But we're five minutes from everything, about 10 minutes from Richmond. Some summers I stay with my

grandfather in Richmond, which is definitely urban.

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

Suburban

Predominantly

White

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

It started out, when I was really young, we used to live with my grandparents, that was like before I was one. Then it came to my parents - my dad, mom and brother. Then my dad left when I was 10 or 12. It's just my mother and my brother.

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 mother has her master's in education. She is special coordinator and has taught at middle of high school, one of those two. My father, I think he had some college and he has learned a trade in the Coast Guard, I think he's an electrician.

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

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

I'm probably on the bottom.

How do you think this has affected your experience?

I don't think my experience here would be changed any if I had money or if I didn't. If I had money, people would tend to talk to me more maybe but that would be superficial and based on material things. If you can't be my friend because of the person I am, not how much money I have, then it's not worth anything.

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 think of myself as a black student, I guess.

Please explain.

I think at first last year I thought of myself as a student here. As things went on and I started to open my eyes to everything, I am very different from the majority of the students here. I'd have to say I'm a black student.

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.*

Some are, some aren't. I think it's split. As far as political perspective, the majority are Democrats. Racial identification, I believe everybody identifies themselves as African Americans. I think three people, one who I got in an argument with tonight, she claims herself to be black for the application for yet she swears up and down she's Hispanic even though she's from the Dominican Republic, which they are black down there too. Social class position, I think we're all around the same. The majority of blacks at this school come from the DC area. I think there's two of us from the Richmond, VA area. A few come from other areas

So in some ways similar and some ways not similar?

Yeah, I think we're more similar than different.

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.*

Complete opposite. Everyone on this campus seems to be Republican. Any other ideals are not tolerated. ...Southern hospitality. I don't know if that's good or bad.

The white population on this campus is very homogeneous. Everyone is the same, same background, private schools, the majority. I mean I know there are a lot of public school kids here, but mostly private schools, mostly well-off families. It seems like everybody you see has light brown hair and blue eyes, drives a sport utility vehicle. Mommy and Daddy are doctors or lawyers. Nothing like that in my family.

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

Inadequate. I think at other universities what they call a good mix is between 5 and 8 percent. We have 40 and all those are not African American. There are some international students in there. So I think we might be, maybe 32 or 34 black students on this campus. They said in the handbook 3%, but I think it works out to somewhere around 2%, which is pretty dismal.

What would we gain if it were higher? Describe what you think we would gain.

I think it would be better for everyone. I said earlier I think people would learn from being with people who are different from themselves. It would actually make them better people when they get out in the real world. This definitely not the real world. I think it would make life a lot easier for black students to come here. They wouldn't have the same experience that we've had. It would be a learning experience for everyone.

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

Inadequate. There is one black professor and there are two visiting student professors who are working on their doctorates. There's one dean. There's no one for us to look up to. There's very small pickings of who we might feel comfortable to go talk to if we have problems. Or as a mentor or some kind of role model. If we have something that's bothering us, we can't go and find someone to talk to. Maybe we don't feel comfortable with those two people on campus. I'm lucky that I do feel comfortable with one of them. I'm to the point where I can talk. A lot of other students, they just don't feel comfortable. It would just be better for us and for other students to see blacks aren't just the ones on the TV that you see killing people and getting arrested, in jail. There are educated, a good deal of educated blacks.

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

Explain.

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

Yes. I do believe - and that goes back to the questions before - anything to help diversity on this campus, even though I understand the history and tradition of the campus. I would say change the tradition, I'm just saying help educate all the students on how the real world is and how you have to deal with different types of people. Everyone is not exactly like you.

This question means bringing new black students together once they're here as freshmen. So this is not in terms of recruiting. Were you answering in those terms?

I think I might have been.

Yes, I think we do a decent job of it, but there could always be more. Actually one thing that I

am trying to work on with my group is getting a fraternity-style house for black students on campus, so that we can be together with one another, so that we can have people to call on if we have problems. We can be together and help each other to deal with the type of environment that we're in.

If not, why not?

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

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

Not really. The house needs to be knocked or it needs to be a new one. That house is terrible. There's only 4 rooms in the house as far as housing goes. That's not adequate for the number of students there are. If they want to bring in other students, it's not very good.

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

Yes. That's the organization we come to for support but it didn't really serve its purpose. It seems to be turning more toward a social organization than what it was intended for when it was founded. That's why I started the BSEC just for the strict purpose of improving the quality of life on campus since they throw all the parties

So it's played a limited role?

Yes, very limited. And it's more of a negative role. I don't think it has to do with the organization, it has more to do with the people....

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?*

No. I've taken almost all my gen-eds. Only two classes have mentioned a significant part of blacks. That was Prof. Machado's class in American history. He had quite a few books that dealt with slavery and the 1950 civil rights. I really enjoyed that. Another person who has given recognition is Prof. Goldsmith in the Economics dept. Basically, he's telling the truth about how society is for blacks in the economic world. Coming from him, it gives credibility for those students in the class. He's a professor, he's educated, they see him as somebody who's telling the truth. They can learn from that.

Are you saying it's important that they do, but that you didn't encounter it very much?

Yes, it's very important. In everything you do, there's not just one race or one group of people. Maybe math, you can't involve that. But in the humanities, you can. I think it's very important. It comes right back to the homogeneous part of the majority of the students on campus. No diversity, no different.

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]?*

It's pretty harsh. There's only been two classes where I haven't been the only black student. That's pretty rough. In all of those classes it just seems like people look at you different. You feel people staring at you like "Why is he here?" If I'm having a problem in that class, it's because I can't - maybe I haven't encountered that type of work before - they look at me like I'm so dumb. It just makes you feel so bad.

Real specific kinds of looks?

Yeah, they give you a look like "Are you dumb? Why are you here?" But when I was in Prof. Goldsmith and Prof. Machado's class, the way they approached those subjects, it helped out a lot.

When you have a discussion on that topic, everyone looks at you like "Is that true? Do you really think that?"

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

The same way I do with everything. Keep it inside, really. Of course, you go back to your room and tell your roommates, but they can't do anything. There's no role models or people you can go to for help.

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

I really don't know.

I think it's Dean McCloud's office.

I think she - I really don't know the specific - I guess I should. But I don't know what she does unless she tries to do activities throughout the year to try to improve diversity on the campus and try to help us out with activities. Other than that I really don't know. We had dinner one time with the blacks and she brought a speaker. She's a wonderful person. Her heart's in the right place. I just don't think that office has much power.

How can the role of this Office be improved?

Maybe give her more authority. She has to go through other deans. I don't think.....

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.)*

The greatest would be roommates. They are the same race, ethnicity, nationality, gender and position as I am. If something happens, you go back to them and say "Look what happened to me." They'll say "Don't feel bad" or "You can do it." That's all we have.

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

My closest friends are black. I have a good number of white friends. I don't know internationals. My roommate last year was white; we're real good friends. I love him to death. There are a lot of people I'm really close with who are white. Actually I have more white friends than black, just because there are more white folks on campus. Color never really was an issue for me.

42. *Have you experienced any discriminatory behavior on campus directed against yourself?*
Yes.

What form did that behavior take (written remarks including graffiti, spoken remarks, physical assault, discriminatory treatment).

Written - I think we had the N word on our door once this year. We had, I don't know if this was discriminatory, but we had a brick come through our window. Nothing was written on it like you see in the movies. We were all three in the room. So I don't know if it was race related or not, but it happened.

Spoken remarks, not directly to you but it's easy to tell if someone is talking about you. They're whispering and looking back at you. It's kind of obvious something is being said.

The looks, the attitude, body language plays a big role.

No physical assault. Treatment, I've already gone over that.

Who was responsible for that behavior?

Individual students and some professors. It seems like I always have one each

term.

Somebody with a racial attitude?

Yeah. I won't go as far as to say racial, but it's kind of hard when they're extremely friendly to everyone else but to you they kind of have an attitude toward things. I'm very easy to get along with. I'm polite with everyone. I give respect to my elders and people to whom respect is due. I don't understand why people would be rude or act disrespectful to your student. I've had that happen a number of times, on graded assignments, too. I just didn't know how to handle it. I didn't want to believe what it was. But you sit and think about it. In one class I had a journal that we turned in and it was your opinion. You had to write down your opinion on what you saw that day in class. When you get the journal back, you could write so many. I had written the max amount of entries and they were all the proper length and format. My two friends got better grades than me but I did more work. That upset me. I asked why my grade was lower. I did everything you asked me to. She changed the subject, went on to something else.

You asked her about it and she didn't respond to you.

Yeah.

Anything else?

Last week...if you have to miss a quiz for extenuating circumstances, you can retake it...the professor. The next day I asked if I should come to class. I know you're probably going to go over the quiz and I need to make it up. It was like, you can make it up but come to class. So I come to class. After class, I was like "when do you want me to make up the quiz?" She's like, "You can't make up the quiz." "Why not?" "You came to class." Goodness!

Leaving aside behavior, do you sense racial tensions on campus beyond what exists in the larger society?

I think it's more than the outside world because it's in a body where everyone has the same beliefs. It's like you take the outside world and you pluck the people with the same beliefs and put them right here. In the outside world you'll have a mixture of all groups of people. It's not going to be as large a group as here.

If so, how do you think such tensions could be eased within W&L?

Education, which will take a long time. And recruiting students from different backgrounds. White students from different parts of the country, different schools. I know for a fact from Dean Hartog that they do recruit from the same high schools. You have more kids come here that are like the ones before. I think it needs to be a stronger effort in that area.

Once we have a more diverse group, the students here will be able to learn from different students.

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?*

As far as I know, yes.

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

Again, I'll say 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.*

If you submit a letter that you want to get published or if you want on the staff, I guess there's opportunity there. I'm not very happy with them, one in particular, because they print some pretty outrageous things - The Spectator. They printed the Ebonics Lord's Prayer. That just did

not go over well with anyone and it was really sad. It hurt a lot. I don't know if you've heard that from any other students.

I read it.

I didn't think that could happen in the 90's and from kids. Parents get that thing too. That's really unprofessional. The fact that it was allowed to be printed shows that the campus condones that type of literature being published.

Do you think the staff looks at what is printed or is that totally a student thing?

I would assume that the university knows what is being printed. They had to have the resources to print the material somewhere. Every organization that I know has to have some type of advisor or sponsor who is a faculty member or administrator—an adult who has some kind of bearing on what's being done in that organization. Someone had to know about, and let that particular incident go. That whole entire issue was terrible. The article on the gay and lesbian issue was terrible. It's really sad to read this.

How would you evaluate them with regard to their treatment of news about 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.*

I think they are similar, to some extent they are different. The majority of the problems are a lot different just because of environment and the way we have been treated on campus. The academics and usual problems most kids go through, but I think it's enhanced to a degree that no one is aware of but us - those students on campus who are in that situation have to go through the kind of things we have to go through. That makes things that much worse to the point where I would never wish this on anyone.

Do you want to run down the list of the kind of things you have to go through?

The psychological and mental torment basically. I think it's torture to go through those things every day that have to do with the looks, the comments, the actions, the body language, the separation. People say "Y'all don't interact with us, y'all stay separate over there and sit over there." They have never tried to include us in activities. They've always pushed us back. It's not everyone, of course. I don't want to give anyone the impression that I'm speaking for everyone entirely. The majority of people are like that. It really enhances the problems.

Let's rewind a bit. In 45 we were talking about what you think about their treatment of news about black students, but you were really only talking about the Spectator. What do you think about the Phi and the Trident and the radio and television?

The radio and television, I really can't say because I don't watch or listen. I listen to radio when Brian Jamison does his show. It's music we like. The Ring Tum Phi and Trident, I don't think - maybe I might be pushing it a little far when I say this, but it just seems like only negative things are printed in there. If one of us are on the sports team, you won't see that. But like if something bad happens, you'll see it. Just like in the regular news in the outside world. There's no positive - there's nothing positive coming from them, trying to help the situation. That might be going too far to say that's something they have the responsibility to do. But that should be something they should look out for. I just think that they're just taking care of themselves, concentrating on what they're used to.

*47. Sex M

*48. Age? 19

*49. Year in college? SOPHOMORE

*50. Cumulative grade point average [as of Fall 1996]? 2.051

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

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

Black.

53. Are there additional comments you wish to do make about any aspects of Washington and Lee?
I think I've said everything.

I can think of one situation, and it wasn't a blatant situation. When we came back from winter break, Washington Holiday, I was standing right over there on the steps. Before I walked down the steps, it was nice outside, nice and warm. Everybody was outside, talking to everyone. "How are you doing? How's your break? So glad to see you, glad you're back. We did this, we did that. What'd you do?" And I walked clear from this end to that end. No one spoke to me, no one asked me how my vacation was, no one did anything of that type. The only people who even cared on that day were my roommates. Some people might say, even I might say, try to make the situation a little better. "It doesn't matter; there's three friends you can count on." But then it really hurts when you come from a high school where you're friends of masses of people. When you come to a different group of people, you can just be excluded from that whole group, it's just painful.

Those are the freshest ones in my mind. I'm sure I could come up with more.

Well, thanks. I appreciate your being clear and specific. Thanks for your time.

No problem.