

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

1. Have you decided upon a college major?  
If yes, what?  
Biology and philosophy.
2. (If the answer to question 6 is no, skip #7.) What is your grade point average (GPA) in your major field? 3.3 in biology and around 3.6 in philosophy
3. What type of degree are you working toward at Washington and Lee?  
BA  
BS [science or commerce] Both a BA and a BS
4. What is the occupation or profession you want to enter upon finishing your education?  
A physician
5. Do you plan on working toward an advanced degree at some time after finishing your undergraduate program? Yes

6. While growing up, did you attend or were you personally active in church? Yes  
  
If yes, please give the denomination, and the type of church activities in which you participated.

When I was young I was part of the Catholic church, I was baptized Catholic and my parents were too. I believe I was an altar boy and I went to church every Sunday up until about 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

How would you characterize your church involvement in Lexington?

None.

*What made you stop?*

I was in a Catholic school and I chose to go to public school for junior high, and then I saw that — I took European history and religion at the same time and started to have doubts and then started to question the whole thing. Now, with philosophy and all, there's really no hope.

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

I would say they're about the same. As far as sports and non-sports activities. I play basketball here and played basketball in high school, and soccer, and I'm vice president of the IFC here and volunteer at the hospital, I am social chairman of my fraternity ODK. Similar kind of thing in high school.

8. How did you learn about Washington and Lee University?  
W&L literature  
W&L admissions counselor  
Relative My brother went to school here.  
Adult friend  
Peer  
Other

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

I guess fairly strongly since we are brothers. Actually he didn't help me, my mom did. It was my mom and I who did that stuff.

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

I actually visited even before that. I visited when I was, I think, a sophomore in high school just to see my brother.

Visited on one's own : I came here just to see my brother and once to see the school and they flew me down for Honors Scholars weekend.

*What was that weekend like?*

It was good. I got to meet some people. I had already known people, but I got to meet some kids that were going to be in the school the next year, other Honors Scholars.

*What kind of feedback did you get from other minority students when you were here that weekend? Did you spend any time with minority students?*

Not that I remember, not in any significant way. Well, my big brother in the school, who is also my big brother in my fraternity, was black. He was my host that weekend. I had met him before, through my brother. My brother knew him, so I guess, for whatever reasons, he told them that he wanted to take me around that weekend.

*Did he give you any feedback about the school for minority students? Or did that just not come up?*

Not anything that was new to me. My brother had made it clear what I would be up against. What was going on. But, it was always the case that where we grew up, our background, I went to a high school that through the whole time I was there had three black students, me and two others out 500 or so. This was in suburbia. I used to live in the city, where I dealt with more minorities, when I was growing up. But living in this environment that we have here is like living in my home town.

Participated in the Summer Scholar's Program

Visited during a Prospective Student Weekend

Other:

Please describe your reactions to this campus visit.

They were good. I liked the school a lot. Without what transpired, it was one of the top two or three schools that I was considering, like Harvard and here and Bowden in Maine. But Harvard didn't give me any money, and Bowden gave me some, and then I got a full scholarship here, so, my parents strongly urged that if I didn't feel that strongly about one, then we would prefer that you come here.

*And you liked this school, based on your visits? Did you get to see classes?*

Yes, I got to see classes and yes, I liked the school a lot. But I assumed that I would. My first high school was about 1600 people and then I transferred to the public high school, which was a lot smaller, and I significantly enjoyed the difference. So I knew that a small environment

was it for me. The only thing that made me apply to the ivy league schools was the prestige. When I really looked at it, I wanted to go to a smaller school. So I liked what I saw at W&L, and I'm happy now that I'm here.

10a. Was W&L your...

First choice All things considered, I'd have to say it was my first choice.

Second choice

Third choice

Less than third choice

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

No other

One

Two

Three

Four

Five

Six or more 17

10c. How many other colleges accepted you?

None

One

Two

Three

Four

Five

Six 17

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

Relatives wanted you to come here — My brother was a big part of it.

Teacher advised you

Good academic reputation — That was part of it, but not really because a lot of the other schools that I was accepted to had better academic reputations. I remember telling a lot of them, like Yale and Duke (Duke had flown me down there and kept on calling me and I told them I was coming to Washington and Lee, and they were kind of offended or something, wondering why I would go there). I would say that the reputation had something to do with it but it probably wasn't a huge factor.

Good social reputation — Social life, but I'm a social person. I consider myself intelligent and intellectual but not to the point that's unhealthy, so some of those schools that I went to were very work oriented and everyone complained about the social life and I didn't like that at all.

Offered financial assistance — Another major part was the financial part.

Offers special programs you wanted

Tuition lower than similar colleges

High school guidance school counselor advised you

Private college counselor advised you

Wanted to live near home

Friend suggested attending

Recruited by college representative

Recruited by athletic department — The athletics, I guess. I knew that it would be easier to play here than at some of the bigger schools.

Graduates go to top graduate schools

Graduates get good jobs

Religious affiliation or orientation

Size of college — The smallness of it, the family kind of atmosphere. The Honor Code, too, was probably a big part of it. My brother had told me his experience with that. And I liked that a lot, too.

*Did he have a specific experience with the Honor Code, or did he just like the idea of it?*

Well, coming from New York, it's like a bi-polar, the kind of stuff that you don't do in New York. New York is the kind of place where you don't even look people in the eye because they'll think you want something from them or you're causing trouble. So when you come here and there's the Speaking Tradition and you can leave money in the Co-op and come back and get it two days later — A guy in my fraternity is from Staten Island. He was amazed and so overcome by it. He was kind of thrown off by it because you're kind of taught that it's kind of phony. But ...

Not accepted anywhere else

Rankings in national magazines

Were there other factors you considered in making the decision?

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

Most of my friends had never heard of it, but they assumed it would be a good school if I was going there. So they weren't upset by it. My parents were happy because they weren't paying for college and because they figured that I'd be happy here. They felt good about the way things developed. There was no one who thought the place was too homogenous.

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

That was probably the most negative image to someone like me about it not being diverse, but that wasn't a deterrent for me. I wanted some diversity, I guess, but the way my parents brought me up and growing up in New York City, I feel like I've been exposed to a lot of people, so I didn't need that. I wasn't sheltered so I didn't need to go to a place that was diverse. Probably the truth of the matter is that, for me, that was kind of a deterrent. Those bigger schools that I visited, a lot of times they flew me down for a minority thing, that's all I saw were minorities. They had the attitude that you shouldn't be hanging out with those people — the blacks had that attitude — and I'm not for that. That wasn't the environment I was brought up in and I'm not accustomed to that. I like to hang out with whoever and that actually was a deterrent at those other schools. There are obviously negatives to being a minority here. But one of the plusses is that generally there are not enough of a minority population for them to faction off like they did at those bigger school. There you could live with just the one minority, Asian or black or whatever, go to the same parties with them and in the same group organizations and stuff, and I don't think that's healthy. I think here I've been forced to be exposed to whoever, and in a way for me it was somewhat of a learning experience. I'd never met people from Alabama before and I had something in the back of my mind about what people,

especially coming from New York where we think the rest of the world is backwards once you step out of New York —

*What about the stuff your brother told you about what you'd be up against?*

He told me that there are certain fraternities that you can't get into, either because you're from New York or because you're black. But he never had a serious problem with it. He had a roommate who was basically a hick from West Virginia and they became best friends and he was the best man at his wedding. So he said it wasn't going to pose a problem. I could see if my personality were different or my nature were different where I could clash, but it doesn't. So he didn't think there would be a problem. He went here and went to law school here too, here for 7 years. He was obviously had nothing bad to say about being here.

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

Yes. Exactly as I had expected. The only things that were different were, well, they weren't really different, there were things I hadn't anticipated like the fact that Lexington is the way it is. I live like 20 minutes outside New York City, so I can go to the City when I want. There isn't that kind of release here. I suppose Roanoke is a city but not really, in the regular sense of the word, so it's difficult to get away. I felt that freshman year. Because playing basketball, I hadn't gone home for 5 months and I had a real serious girlfriend. So it posed a lot of problems. But that wasn't school-related. That would have happened wherever I was. As far as the school and what I would expect, the kind of kids that were here, it was exactly as I thought it would be.

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

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

I don't know what that would be. I had academic difficulties sophomore year because of all those issues. I had broken up with my girlfriend at that point and that was somewhat disturbing to me and this was the aftermath of it. So that wasn't going well. And I was kinda not happy at school, like basketball was bringing me down. The winter and all, and I did really bad in winter term, sophomore year. So I guess that was a defining moment. But I recovered. Since then I've done well. There's been like one little period of bad grades, but it was the first period I'd ever had self-doubt. In high school I was valedictorian and never had a problem and I was star athlete. There was never any trauma and everything was fine. My girlfriend and I had been going out for about four years, and when we broke up it was a big thing and it wasn't good because I really couldn't deal with it because I was so far away. That was a problem that was distracting me, I just wasn't happy and that started bringing me down. Since then, there hasn't been any kind of relapse. Now I feel confident. I had a lot of friends here who helped with that and helped me through it. I'm friends with two people who are better in grades, like two of the best students in the top 5 or 6, so they're a good influence, I guess. It was basically just a learning experience. I feel like I've grown a lot. Within that year there was probably the most growth that I've ever had in my life. I was sheltered in the sense that I'd never had anything bad happen to me. Until you deal with any failure or disappointment, you're naive or unaware. So it kind of hit me all at the same time. Now I think I'm a better person for it.

*So there isn't anything else that you could call a great challenge at W&L?*

No, I haven't felt any great barriers. I don't consider myself — well, I'm pretty sure that I'm the first black person ever on the IFC, which should be monumental, but I don't consider it that because it's never been the case that "Well, because he's black, then this." It's never been like I have this obstacle to surmount. I don't have any of those — That time that I had problems was due to external factors.

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

It hasn't been as easy, but I have improved. A lot of that, though, was not because I've had difficulty at school. It was because I had — I'm like a very practical person, I guess. When I applied at colleges and I got into all these schools, I got a scholarship from my Dad's work, I got another scholarship, I mean I ended up getting like 3 scholarships. I had something ridiculous like a 99 average, and I used to work a lot in high school — more than anybody. Then when I looked at it I was like, "Why would I ever do that much work??" Because somehow I'm the kind of person who feels like I shouldn't do extra work just for the sake of doing work. So I took the attitude in college that I was going to do well, but I wasn't going to kill myself. So I did do well, B+s and A-s, but then I had the bad times. Since then, and especially recently, I've realized that it makes me happy to do very well just for the sake of it. Whether I get into the same med school with a 3.0 or a 4.0, I'd be happier in the 4.0 circumstance because of when I go to sleep at night saying I did well. I thought before that wasn't the case, I thought I'd be happier watch an hour or more of TV there or whatever I could do with those hours.

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

- 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.

All of the above except the Writing Center and the tutoring.

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

I would say no. I'm pretty happy with what's here, especially for a smaller school. The library is obviously a great situation, that couldn't be much better. The computers are fine for their capacity. I use them. The "visiting professors" has been probably the most rewarding thing, just being able to go in there, not having any special problem, which doesn't happen at other places. I wouldn't have any suggestions.

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

Well, I picked biology because I plan on being a doctor, which is in large part because people told me that it was what I should do. They said, "Well, you're smart and only smart people do, like science." My parents were like, "You should do this." I wanted to be a politician, which I realize now probably wasn't such a good idea. Initially, it wasn't something that I thought of, the seeds were planted in my head. So when I came here I was set on doing biology. Then the philosophy was something that — I like biology and all, but there is a lot that isn't there, 'cause I like

theorizing and thinking and so I took a philosophy course and was real happy with it. Then I started taking classes in it, and thought I might as well make it my major.

*What year did you take your first philosophy course?*

My freshman year. My brother told me to take an easy class, and I took the easy class. It was somewhat easy, I guess, but it was also really enjoyable.

*So it was relatives' recommendations plus interest?*

Yes.

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

No, except for that addition.

Please describe that change.

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

That's tough. I know that I generally try and avoid seeing those things or have people tell me about them. But you kind of know that they go on. Well, you don't know in the sense that you could prove it in a court of law, but that's always what you need. You can tell where somebody ..... some things that there might be, and you might be overstepping your bounds to make an accusation. But you can kinda tell that's probably what they're doing. And that's the one reason that I wouldn't generally go towards reporting someone. The other reason is that I think there are things that are minor that are so shady. There are things that obviously are violations, like looking at a cheat sheet. I've never encountered that. But there's stuff that people will say. They tell you freshman year that if someone asks you how your test was, you're only supposed to say, "I'm glad it's over." or something like that. But people say more than that, usually to people who aren't taking the test. To me that's not an Honor violation, in the sense that it wasn't meant to deteriorate the system. So I would never pursue it, because I think it's petty. On top of that, I also have a little bit of a problem turning people in. I am glad I have never been faced with that kind of dilemma. I know other people who have. It's just one of those things that are like such a serious matter that I feel like I don't want any part of that. Like I would never be on the EC. I obviously firmly believe in the Honor System, and I think it's great, but it would be tough for me to sit across from somebody and say, "I'm going to end your college career." Because I think of what that would mean to me. It's pretty serious.

*So it's because of the single sanction thing?*

Yes, that's a big part of it. But that's also what makes it work, so I'm not criticizing the system. I think it has to be single sanction for it to work. But it also creates other problems.

*So you are saying that you would hesitate because of the seriousness of the consequences and because it's hard to prove most of the time.*

Yeah, and that's assuming that it's an obvious infraction. There are things that occur, people you know that deep down they don't have any intention of breaking the Honor Code and they don't even know. That's what I'm saying. There was a guy, my roommate, the president of the IFC, he went to the Alumni Board Meeting in Florida, and they started a study and they weren't happy about the results of the study that he did on our Honor Code. Ours was by far the best. But still to the Board

there was an alarmingly high number of Hbs. In the textbook definition of HB and what goes on, there's a bottom part of the graph that I don't think even any teacher would be opposed, yet in the technical sense it might be an honor violation. So there are those that — there are probably safeguards against when people say, "Well, that's not an obvious honor violation" so they never report something that's petty, while the EC would throw it out. The person did nothing malicious.

*The question was meant to imply that if you saw it happen, so you were absolutely certain that it was happening and you couldn't escape the fact that you saw it. Then, how do you feel you'd respond?*

I don't know what I would do. Optimistically, I would say I would turn the person in, but the truth is, what if it's my best friend? I probably wouldn't, because you have to weigh. I might try and deal with it on my own. And I would talk to the person about it, but I don't think, when it came down to it, that I would be able to do it, knowing what it would lead to and knowing that either his parents or —

*What if it was someone you didn't know?*

It would probably be easier.

20. Do you find Washington and Lee professors easy or difficult to approach?

They're easy to approach. The fact that they're college professors and we can walk into their offices or call them at home. We had four teachers at my house last term. So that's something that I told my friends at Georgetown. They said, what do you mean you had them at your house? I said, they were at my house!

Please describe in what way they are easy or difficult.

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

Yes, teachers like Prof. Pemberton is a lot of help. I've taken five or six classes with him. He's my adviser. I did research with Dr. Lord. But plenty of other teachers, too. Like Dr. Russell in biology department, and Dr. Knox. There's a lot of teachers that I talk to on a regular basis about all kinds of stuff. Like the other day I talked to Dr. Knox for about an hour about the Honor Code and about the biology department and somewhat questionable policies about the Honor Code. About scheduling exams. Now it's like you take your test out of the room you automatically get a zero. It's a thing that you would expect in the same kind of place where there was no Honor Code. I understand the reasoning behind and they have had problems with it, and they are trying to eliminate the temptation. However, it's just one of those things where if you group of people in a situation where you expect a certain thing of them, then that's what you're going to get. I think a lot of the freedom here is what leads people to say, "Look at what I've got. I'm not going to jeopardize this." If you're watching people and treating them like lab rats, I think that's going to create a problem and undermine the Honor Code itself. They are going to act potentially less honorably and it'll make you more nervous. The atmosphere that's there now as opposed to freshman year makes you more nervous, even knowing that you haven't done anything wrong. It's like you're being questioned. You just don't like that idea. You may be the most straight-laced person here, but if a teacher confronts you and is putting you in the confined part, and you're supposed to be equals in understanding, you have a trust, that definitely undermines it. It's also true that the people here are just that. Stuff comes up, especially when that stuff might keep you out of the profession that you want to get into. So there is a big temptation. So they say, in light of that, we're going to try and

remove some of that temptation, not let people take the tests home, etc. I don't know if it's right.

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

It's been fun. It's been great, except the city thing. Occasionally there are things I want to do that I can't do here because there is lack of culture. You can't go to a play here. I mean, you can go to a play at the Lenfest, but I mean you have to wait for one to be put on. You know what I mean? Any day in New York City anything you can think of you can do. That just doesn't exist here. So that has been a limitation. When I get upset with that, I'll go to DC or to Baltimore, get away. As far as the social life, yeah, I know some people — A lot of people have a love/hate relationship — A lot of people leave freshman year, like "I can't deal with the scene." The frat parties, that's all you're going to do. I'm obviously a frat guy. I never had a problem with it, and again, that's what it's like where I live, so. We were always at people's houses or at the golf course, so it's a bunch of people sitting around, drinking and occasionally you put music on for variation. We go to the city, but we're not city kids. City kids go to clubs every night. I never did that. It wasn't an adjustment for me.

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

It is important to me depending on my mood. Sometimes I would want to drink lite beer. For me personally, it's not so much the important thing. Having alcohol at a function entirely changes the atmosphere. I think it's psychological. At this school, alcohol is obviously the centerpiece of socializing. If you try to have a party without alcohol, it's like people are lost. If you did an experiment, people wouldn't be able to deal, they would have to leave. Whether they are heavy drinkers or really want to drink, they may go to an air party and have one drink all night, but it's like people here, for whatever reason, feel looser, feel it's more of a party if they see a keg or people are handing out beers, whether or not they are drinking. It may not have to do with drunkenness or anything like correlates to it sometimes. Some people feel less inhibited when they drink alcohol. I think a lot of it is just the social aspect of it, people think this is now a party if you have alcohol.

*Did you say something about drunkenness? I missed the connection there.*

Well, I'm saying that that's part of it. There's also people that like to drunk. I know a lot of people like that, too. They can't go out without getting drunk. They don't have as much fun or they don't feel loose enough. Obviously if you drink enough you're going to become somewhat different, a totally different person.

*Where do you stand on that, in your own experience?*

I guess I drink pretty regularly but I — well, yeah, I drink pretty regularly. I drink as much as the people that drink, but I don't do it for that kind of — I'm a pretty outgoing person, so I don't feel awkward and then I drink and I feel better. It's a crutch, like a habit, like people have cigarettes. After they quit they have to have something in their mouth like, I always have a beer in my hand, or generally. If I don't — the thing is, like, we have DJ parties at my fraternity all the time, late at night. And when the beer runs out, you go from 300 people to 50. The 50 people are the people that actually want be there, and then beer was like a perfunctory thing. That's me. But there are those other people that are like, the party's over if there's no more beer. But no, I don't feel that way. So yes, I do drink, but I don't drink for any medicinal or social benefit.

How important to you are drugs at a social event?

Drugs are less important. I've never really been into drugs. Generally unimportant. That's something that except for a select few crowds, generally doesn't enter into the equation. There are drugs here, like, now it's more fun, but the alcohol correlation is definitely there. It's probably like 2% with the drug thing whereas with the alcohol thing, it's probably 99% or above. It's like there's no drugs at parties it more effective.

*Has that been a part of your social life?*

Drugs? I've experimented with them, but is it a part of my life? Not with any regularity.

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

A lot, I guess. I was social chairman of my fraternity, sophomore, junior, senior year. For different reasons I ended up having a pretty significant role in the whole — as far as people coming to me, the same way you would a president, though I never had that role. And then I was on the IFC in a rush committee, then I was IFC vice president from last year until this year. So I've had a lot of involvement.

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

They've been very positive, very rewarding. There's the fun aspect of the parties, and that's the big thing here, 'cause you kinda need that. But, especially sophomore year, when I lived in the house, that was good, being with all those people and being that close with them. But I was in somewhat of a unique position, I joined my fraternity because there was a lot of basketball players in the fraternity, and a bunch of the freshmen did too, but looking back on it, when people look at me, they say "You don't fit in that fraternity." So, that's been somewhat of a unique situation for me. Not uncomfortable. It's just that there are people in my fraternity that, if I met them outside, in another circumstance, I wouldn't probably be friends with them. I wouldn't have any significant relationship with them. But yet I have very close friends in the fraternity. I feel like now I don't live with anyone but — I live with three Pi Kappa Phi's and that's like become my second fraternity. So in a way I lead a double life, really. Definitely positive.

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

My athletic team experience was pretty positive. Basketball was good. I enjoyed it. It was a long sports year, really. It was a little more difficult than high school, but it was more demanding than high school and the atmosphere was more serious here. My high school team was actually very good, but there wasn't as much pressure, I guess, to succeed. So that was somewhat of a negative. But I had a very positive experience with it. As far as the facilities, they're fine. The school is small, obviously they won't have the same facilities as a bigger place. I lift I guess 5 or 6 times a week, and it's never a problem. Phys ed has been OK. It's a badminton taught by my old coach, and weigh lifting, which is something I do anyway, and I'm taking tennis.

*Going back to the team, you said that it was kind of hard for you sophomore year, when everything else was hard. It sounded like it got to be too much. Was it time commitment?*

Yeah it did. It was a lot of time. That was in the period when I was unhappy. The way that it went was that I go depressed and I did less. It wasn't like I didn't have the hours in the day. Now, in my current state of mind, if I were playing basketball in season right now, it wouldn't be a problem. I wouldn't say I don't have enough time to do what I have to do. I would have plenty of time to play.

It's when you're in that state of mind, it seems as if you're overburdened, but you're not really.

*Is that when you decided not to play basketball anymore? Your sophomore year?*  
Um-hum, yes.

*Did you actually make that decision?*

It was an enjoyable experience. The fact that our coach was fired or forced out was a big factor, too. If he were still the coach I would still have been playing. So that was a big part of it. I felt a loyalty to him. I liked the way that he treated us. I thought what had happened was pretty wrong. Three best friends were freshmen on the basketball team with me, and one of them ended up playing basketball, Chris, and he finished his career. But Scott, that same year when I was a sophomore, decided not to play when we were juniors. And my best friend Matt, now goes to Rutgers, he decided not to play. The motivation wasn't there anymore. The guys that had been in my fraternity had all graduated so that the team wasn't the same anymore.

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

Well, I didn't date for a year and a half because of my girlfriend. But since then I've had plenty of opportunities to date. That hasn't been a problem. I've dated girls from here and not from here.

*Why did you laugh?*

It's a funny question. Dating isn't really a big thing here. People generally don't date and have pretty limited interaction. You hang out with someone a couple of times and then it's over.

*Why is that?*

I think a large part of it is because this school is so interconnected as far as the rumor mill, people talking, this girl that you just met, you might like if you met her at Michigan because you had just met her, but the reality is that she probably dated someone you were friends with or was with someone you were friends and that creates other problems. So people are so interconnected here, that they're like, you can't be with that person because of this and that person because of that, and that's part of it. I think the other part is that at a smaller school you don't need to meet more people. At a bigger school you would think that you meet more people, but that's not the case because they generally go to the same place every weekend. I go to a different place every weekend so I meet people all the time, and I think that people are less likely to grab and feel like they need to be with one person, because it's one of those things like the grass is always greener on the other side. Why settle down? At another school people might think they might find a husband or wife, but that's generally not the attitude here. I know very few people who are engaged and going to get married. As opposed to my friends from home. A lot of them are in that situation because they go to bigger schools.

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

No, even at that time, sophomore year, just because of the money, I wouldn't make my parents pay that much money. Because my unhappiness was transient, I realized that it was something that I could get through and it wasn't because of the school. Sometimes I've wished that I had gone somewhere like Georgetown or Yale, someplace in the city. That's fairly minor. Yeah, I never really considered it, because of the money. My parents would have been very supportive, and would

have dealt with, but I didn't want to burden them because I really didn't have that strong a reason.

Why/why not?

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

26. Have you had a paid job on campus (including work-study)? No.

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

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

Yes, I would. Networking, or calling people, or meeting with them, like doing interviews. I would have no problem doing that. I feel like I owe something to the school, I feel that the school is a big part of me now, so I definitely would do that actively. I have not done any done any yet.

Now we ask some background information:

28. In what geographical location did you grow up:

Country:

State: New York

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

Urban From youth to 6<sup>th</sup> grade I was in the city.

Suburban Then from 7<sup>th</sup> to now, suburbia.

Rural

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

Urban

Suburban X 2 years Catholic high school, and last 2 years public school on Long Island.

Rural

Predominantly

Black

White X

Mixed X in the private school there were more blacks, maybe 4% as opposed to 0.x in the public school.

30A. Please describe the kin relationships between you and family members in your home when you were growing up.

My mother, father, brother.

30. 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 is an RN, has a masters and has a BA. My dad has a BS.

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

My dad's an electrical engineer and my mom is a nurse and my brother is a JD, just took the bar.

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

I would consider myself — there are some super wealthy people here — in the wealthy part of it. There are people who have to take financial aid. I mean, if I hadn't gotten a scholarship, my parents would have paid for college. I would consider myself in the upper class as opposed to upper-upper class.

How do you think this has affected your experience?

I think as far as the people who have monetary problems, there's a lot less worries for me. If I want something, not a car because I'd have to buy that, but if I need something, my parents can give me the money and I don't have to worry about that. I know my roommate this year, like we had to pay the rent all at one time, \$1800, and his parents couldn't pay it right away. For me, I didn't even think. I was like, Dad I need such money. It's weird to take such stuff for granted. So that kind of thing has made it easier. My parents have never forced me to work. They were always worried about my getting good grades.

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

As a student.

Please explain.

I guess whatever I am, black, Haitian, male, I haven't put myself in any group where I am just with those people or I haven't had anything to put me into that category. Whereas if you were gay, you might answer that question "gay," because it's obviously an oppressive environment for someone like that. But for me, I haven't experienced that. I would say just a student.

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

I guess there's a kind of dichotomy, because there are the black kids who assimilate and those who don't. I guess there are two guys, Kingsley and Parker, they both play soccer, Kingsley is president, Parker is on IFC and they are like in that system, so am I. But then when I think of the other people I think generally they kinda do their own thing. They associate with other black people more. Not that the three of us don't associate with them, but we kinda associate with everybody, whereas they tend to be a lot more isolated. From what I can tell, some of them like that, some of them just feel that is the position that they've been put in. It's understandable and for me is directly related to where I grew up. If I'd grown up in New York City where everyone around was black, I would say it's just a different world, a different culture. Then you come here and it's all white kids and they're all going to frat parties and you've never done that before, there's obviously a problem. And you know that there are people that are racist here. I know it, but I deal with it in a different way. A lot of times it's from insecurity, people that don't feel good about themselves so they feel the need to hate everyone else. I understand that. Sometimes I feel more sorry for those people than I do angry. There's black people like that, too. I would say Farakan is racist, he just doesn't like Jewish people

too much. Today I was watching my roommate and he's like confronting old ... and these people were screaming at this Klansman and raising their child to hate already. He was like, doesn't that upset you, don't you just want to kick that guy, punch him, and I was like, "No, because I'm not that kind of person. I don't feel like having aggression towards people." I don't know if I feel contempt for those people, but I feel that it's something that I don't have to worry about. But there are people that I've actually had some success with, people that I know, in my fraternity that I've interacted with that had certain stigmas about black people, and they're not against black people, it was just how they felt. Wherever they grew up, that's what they were taught. And then through conversation I've been able to sway their opinion of us, or at least have them consider another opinion. So that's been pretty good. I guess the way I go about it to deal with the people that I feel want to learn or teach them a little bit. Some people I would never dialog with, there's others, for the most part here, they're like good people, but were raised in a place where black people were "those people over there." They are a product of their environment, and I don't fault anyone for that.

*It sounds like you're saying in terms of this homogeneous question that there's two groups: one is fairly small that interacts a lot with everybody and the other group sticks together. And would you say they are homogeneous?*

I would say so. Well, not entirely homogeneous, I guess. There's a group of girls that's always with each other while some of them obviously are less extroverted. I don't see them out as much. The ones I see out all the time, I guess they're not in the same group or they aren't the same kind of people. But you could group them together in the sense that — I think it has to do with the fraternity thing. If you are not in a fraternity or a sorority, you are automatically excluded from a certain part of social life. In light of that they seem to be in a different grouping than the two people I mentioned. Because they're in fraternities. They are fraternity guys, whereas someone who isn't it's like, "well, who is that? Well, I don't know him, what is he?" Generally here the first thing they'll say is their fraternity or he plays soccer. So, if that's not the case then, if you're not in a fraternity, it'll probably be "he's black" that would be the first descriptive. Whereas, with Parker, people will be like, "He's a Kappa [?]" They wouldn't say, "He's a black kid."

*It sounds like the more you think about it the more you're finding ways to even think of a group that hangs together as opposed to some groups that are different from each other in some ways. Yeah, definitely. What I'm saying is that if you were to get an objective observer to map out the demographics of the school, it would end up being one population.*

*So you would have to call it homogeneous, then.*

Yeah, as opposed to like, these are the artsy kids who are in the Lenfest Center, and these are the southern frat people, these people are the athletes, whatever you cut into here. You would probably find a large chunk of people in the same place. If you examine the people within the grouping, you would think they are homogenous, but that they end up being grouped together — just like independents do. You can have independent students, people who live in Gaines, entirely different people. One could be super conservative and one could be totally liberal.

*I think that's why they're asking this question. I think they're wanting you to say if you think they really are homogeneous. That's why they want you to think about racial identification and political perspective, etc. as categories. Maybe it looks like they are, but maybe they aren't really.*

*So, what do you think?*

If I think of all the people, there are subgroupings. There are one or two girls that are in sororities. So it would seem they grew up in a different area with different socioeconomic background, but

they happen to be in sorority. I don't know if there's a correlation there. And I grew up lacking. I know there's a gap even among people who are not in fraternities or sororities, in that some of them have expressed that they prefer to be separate. And others don't. They just are by default. That's obviously a big difference. And that's probably directly related to the kind of environments they grew up in and their conceptions about who they should be.

*Then again I have to say, listening to you it sounds like what you are saying adds up to the fact that there are differences among what looks like a very similar group.*

Yes.

34. How similar or different do you believe blacks and whites are on this campus? Consider the same categories that are mentioned in number 33 above and add any other factors that you deem important.

I think generally there is a huge difference in terms of culture for black students, as far as the white kids are concerned. The white kids here are not like in New York. In New York City, let's say, a white kid and black kid have generally very similar experiences. But I think the black kids that come here for the most part have entirely different experiences than the kid who went to private school in Atlanta, whose dad and grandad went here, etc. Very different. However, there are also those people who haven't had much ..... like me, or people I was talking about before, so they end up fitting into it. So it's not just in virtue of being black, it's in virtue of who you are when you come here. Have you had experience with the Washington and Lee community, which is white students who are fairly wealthy, etc.? If you are that, then you'll probably just jump in and not have any problems. But if you're from the other category, then there's a bigger difference than white and black at some other schools. Because I think there's a certain type of kid that comes to W&L, as opposed to a big state school, where everyone from the state goes there for different reasons. I think W&L attracts a certain type of preppy, frat guy kind of guy, and same thing, sorority girl. That's a huge generalization, but there's definitely some things that you could hold onto.

*So you're saying that there are big cultural differences and that at W&L the differences may be more magnified than at some other schools because of the cultural backgrounds of the students that end up coming here..*

Yes, but I also think that there is also something that confuses that in that the black presence is so small here that it's not really a voice to cause a shakeup of the system. From what I experience at the other schools, that if you are in a certain minority, the minorities are so big that you almost end up being in a separate college. You don't really have that here. Some of the blacks might not be as assimilated as I am, but they still go to all the parties and do the same thing and their own parties that they may have on occasion, MSA parties or whatever. But it's rare.

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

I would say inadequate. There's very few black people. Just look around. I think it would be a better place if there were more black students. However, there's obviously a Catch-22. Because there aren't enough black students, other black students don't want to come here. So unless you lure them in with scholarships —

*You think that's a major reason that it's hard to recruit black students to W&L?*

Oh yeah. I remember I met a kid during Honor Scholars who said I am probably not going come

here because of the minority community here. He said, "How do you feel about it?" I said it wasn't a plus, but I'm going to get a scholarship here so that's going to determine it. I'm sure that's an issue for a lot of people. Just the social life, they don't come here for that. Like I said, if you come from a city kind of environment, you don't see yourself fitting in here.

*So, it's definitely inadequate in terms of numbers, in terms of recruiting we can't attract because being so small we can attract decent numbers because we already have such low numbers. What else?*

It would be a better place just that I think the kind of input that you can get just makes you a better person. That's part of college and what learning is. You don't just learn from books, you learn about people's culture. And I'm thankful to have been exposed to a lot just because of the way my family is, especially my mom. But I look at other kids that I know, that I am friends with, but yet I've never been and maybe if W&L had more people, and there weren't one or two gays kids out of the closet, that may force people to deal with that issue. But the reality is that W&L they can not ever deal with that issue. Whereas most kids in college have to deal with that issue, so you are less of a well-rounded person, you're less complete when you leave here because of things you haven't been exposed to, which are very important because you're going to have to interact with those people at some point in your life, whatever group they are in, at work or whatever.

*So you think more diversity would be a good experience for the University in an educational way?*

Yes. Right, but I don't think it would ever happen here, just because there still won't be enough to support a separate community because the school is already too small. Now we have 40. If you get 80 that's a fair amount of kids, but it's not enough to have their own parties every weekend or their own entirely different social life or housing or whatever, which happens at other schools. I would prefer not to see that happen. I am against that for the same reason, because that's equally as — the same way that right here right now there's the lack of learning, that would be too. I think there should be a mix. That's fine. You can hang out with whomever you want, but you should also be able to hang out with other people. That's not really the case here right now.

*Are you talking about for both black and white students?*

Yes.

*So if we had more people exposed to each other more and they did get used to more hanging out with each other?*

Right. There are Asian students here, but yet I never interact with them. I interact with a few, but like I said, the same few that are in fraternities or whatever in the social scene. And then there are others I potentially might meet in a class, but I haven't met them. Although there's no actual physical barrier that says you can't come in here, people feel uncomfortable at the fraternity parties. If you've just come from Thailand and you're at school at W&L, you feel more comfortable and you're going to hang out with same as you, and I'd do the same thing. I understand that. This place isn't great for allowing those people to at least get into the scene on some level. It's like these people are totally separate.

*Do you think that's mostly because of low numbers?*

I think a lot of it is because of low numbers but I think a lot of it is because there's only one thing that goes on here, fraternity parties. If you're the kid from Thailand that may not seem appealing to you, so why would you go? You wouldn't feel comfortable there and wouldn't know how to act. It's nothing active on anyone's part. But those things are definitely barriers. I can see myself being

a little tentative about going to a fraternity party if I'd never been to one or never been in a place where drinking was the centerpiece activity.

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

I would say inadequate, too. I don't know. There's one or two? That's pretty low.

*So you'd like to see it be more for similar reasons as above?*

Yeah, I think so. Maybe to a lesser extent. I think with a teacher, the way you interact with a teacher is less of a priority than it would be with students. But I think it's important to have different people that represent different views. You may not get a black person who has views that much different from a white person. You have Clarence Thomas, and that's not going to help you. That's assuming that you get people who are bringing something to this school.

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

I don't know the answer to that. How many are there?

*Dean McCloud who is in the Dean of Students' office.*

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

I suppose. I'm not against it. But I don't know. I think the tendency is for them to be brought together, and because of that impetus you see that other phenomenon of kids that are not really comfortable at this school, black kids being unhappy here, because they don't like the scene. I don't think that any kind of activity like that would hinder people doing that. I think the reasons are a lot more deep rooted, as far as why someone goes in one direction or the other. I think they would naturally come together because of the circumstances. There's really no need. That's not the problem here. I don't think that it's that black kids aren't meeting other black kids, since there are only 40 of them on campus, and most don't feel like they're a part of the social setting.

If not, why not?

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

37A. Has the Chavis House played a role in your life at W&L?

Yeah, I go there fairly often to hang out with friends.

Has the minority student association played a role in your life at W&L?

Small. I wouldn't consider myself a part of it I guess, but looking back on it, I regret it. I was told by Phil, my brother, that there's no need to be part of MSA because it's going to be a bunch of people complaining about how they are black and unhappy at W&L, and that's not you, so don't go. It's going to upset you and you're going to say, well, why don't you do this, and they're going to say, well that's not for me. So, I never really gave it a chance, a serious chance. That's something I regret. To see what people really felt or to try and change how people felt in my own way. I don't think it's good to form opinions based on what other people tell you. A kid on the basketball team said the same thing to me, which was odd. Remember the categories we were talking about before, he was in a black fraternity house in Richmond, some of them go here and are in a black fraternity

in Richmond. He was somebody that you would consider totally assimilated. You would always see him at parties, but he told me that I didn't want to go and hear people complain. That just reinforced it, I guess. I generally avoid hearing stuff that's going to upset me, just because my tendency to argue. If that were the case, I would be arguing with the whole group.

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

Yes. Well I think they should include — like literature survey should incorporate all different kinds of literature. But like the English course I took last term, that was the case. We read up to Whitman, Frederick Douglas. There were a few people, black American authors.

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

I would say adequate, based on my experience. That's the way it should be, There shouldn't be any preference or anything against them. If that subject or those works make sense within the context of the course, then they should be dealt with appropriately. It shouldn't be "We have to put a black author in." Based on merit.

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

No change in climate. The same as for anyone else.

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

39. What is the role of the Office of Minority Student Affairs?

Do I know it? I do not know.

How can the role of this Office be improved?

The black population. But I don't know that that's anything they can do.

40. 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.)

I would say my roommate, who is white, Italian, male, who is a fellow student, in every aspect of my life, if I have anything that comes up, whether it's with a friend or with my family. He would be one. And then I have a best girl friend who happens to be white, but I have no idea what her — I think she's German, a woman, and she's a fellow student. Same type of support. I have never gone to anyone for crisis help. And then other people, in varying degrees.

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

A friend is someone who is more than an acquaintance, someone you'd call up or go around with

somewhere. So I would say about 3 out of 40 would be black, and then the rest would be white. I wouldn't say I have any close friends that are international students.

41. Have you experienced any discriminatory behavior on campus directed against yourself?

Oh, yeah, actually. It was a girl who made some comments. She didn't go to school here. She went to Southern Sem. Some guy in my fraternity was dating her, the president last year. She made some kind of derogatory remark, so she got expelled from my fraternity and never came back. I didn't really care, well, I cared but it wasn't someone I wanted to deal with. But my fraternity brothers dealt with it. She came and talked to me and I talked to her about it, and I told her I didn't think it was a good idea you said that, or whatever. But I didn't particularly like her before or after.

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

Who was responsible for that behavior?

Individual students

Student groups

Greek

Non Greek

Faculty

Staff

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

No, not beyond what exists in the larger society. There are obviously differences and people that are racist. At W&L there's a lot less tension in general. The whole thing is laid back. So I think that would create less tension than where people are high strung, like in New York, where everyone is kind of in a rush. I'm sure that accentuates problems and violence, and that doesn't happen here. People may have their views, but they keep them to themselves. And people here don't usually have strong enough convictions to do anything about them. Like they may not like gay people but they're too apathetic to say anything about it or protest. There probably would never be a protest here. Unless you take away spring term, or something like that.

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

42. 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?

Yes. I've never heard of anything that would have ever been an issue.

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

Yes I do.

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

I think black students have an opportunity to participate in all those things, but I think that, just because there are fewer of us, you have less representation. You may not see a black voice in the Phi, just because there are 40 people as opposed to 1500 others.

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

I've never seen anything I've objected to. Some guy wrote an article last year that was pretty misguided about some racism disguised in some other stuff. Then someone wrote a letter. But in general it's not a problem. The gays have more of a problem. That's a group that's actively discriminated against. People come out and say "I'm anti-gay." They may feel anti-black but they're more hesitant to say anything.

45. 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?

Different from — they have similarities with relation to school, but there's a huge difference as far as — well, there again is the disclaimer that the people that don't feel very comfortable, those people are obviously dealing with different issues that they are in an environment that they are not used to and that they might not be happy in. So that's an issue that the other kids don't deal with.

*So again you are going back to their background experience?*

Right.

Please describe in what way you feel they are different or similar.

Similar in ways that directly pertain to school and problems that 20-year-olds have, but the main difference would be that the one group is with people that they are similar to, whites with whites, and it's easier, not an issue, as opposed to blacks who are going to school that is predominantly white.

\*46. Sex Male

\*47. Age? 21

\*48. Year in college? Senior

\*49. Cumulative grade point average [as of Fall 1996]? \_\_\_\_ 3.342

\*50. How do you identify yourself in terms of nationality? Born in US but parents Haitian

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

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

I think we've covered it.