

#30 INTERVIEW OF BLACK STUDENTS ENROLLED AT WASHINGTON AND LEE

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

If yes, what?

Yeah. Journalism and Mass Communications

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

Um, no, well I've only had a couple of classes, so.. I'm a little behind..

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

BA

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

[]Advertizing, or I was thinking a little bit maybe in the music industry. Undecided, something in communications.

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 / No

If yes, please give the denomination, and the type of church activities in which you participated.

Yes. Pentecostal. With the young people. I was in choir for a little while.

How would you characterize your church involvement in Lexington?

I've only went a couple of times. Not really involved here.

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

a few more extra-curricular activities here, cause there's more offered. In high school it was more academic - Latin club and stuff like that.

What are you involved in here?

I'm in LIFE, the Peer Counseling group, SAB, the Minority Student Association, I help with the minority recruitment, we call people and things, and the Freshman Orientation Committee, and the Wind Ensemble.

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

W&L literature

W&L admissions counselor

Relative

Adult friend

Peer

Other

It was a college fair, and alumni was there. And I filled out a lot of cards, and then he got back

with me and one week he came to our school and talked to him there, and he brought me and a couple friends up and we did a interview, and that's all.

Who was that?

Howard Capito.

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

He really helped me a lot.

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:

You already said you did. Just that one time?..

I came that time with him, and then we came the accepted students weekend. Thursday through Sunday.

Would you describe those two visits?

Well, the first visit, I guess it was during reading days, so there was no one here. And we stayed for the day anyway, but it was a quick little visit that time. But the other one was really fun, Thursday through Sunday. I met a lot of people.

What sort of activities?

We didn't do a lot of em, cause we just all stayed together, like prospectives with current students at the time, and we did a few of the things, like the required ones, like financial aid administrators and then different classes in our majors, stuff like that, that was really it, but, we all became really close. People I met. One I got to be roommates with freshman year, but she left, and [], she's still here and we're roommates now. Met a lot of nice people.

Please describe your reactions to this campus visit.

I really enjoyed myself, and met a lot of nice people. That was fun. We didn't do a lot of the activities. We were together more with other black students, but we didn't do a lot of the activities.

What kind of feedback did you get from other minority students that were here already?

Well, they said it was hard. I mean, we didn't get a lot of negatives, really. The small amount of minorities, and things like that, but it wasn't really anything bad.

10a. Was W&L your...

First choice

Second choice

Third choice

Less than third choice

Less than third.

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

No other

One

- Two
- Three
- Four
- Five
- Six or more

I think it was four or five.

10c. How many other colleges accepted you?

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

All of them.

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

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

Financial Aid, and then the people I met, cause we kept in contact and everything after we came, said "are you coming. If you're coming I'm coming" so, make sure we had someone here, and we all decided we were coming.

How many of you were there?

It was three of us. And that was it.

What were the other schools like that you would have preferred had it not been for the financial aid?

Some weren't giving enough money, that was really it, and another one was a little further away, in Ohio.

Well, what I meant was, what was it about them that would have made you prefer them?

Oh, more minorities. I guess one of them was a larger school, but size wasn't really a thing for

me, really. Wasn't really looking for size, just a good place to get an education really.

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?*

They were all happy and wondering why I was going away from home cause there's a college at home, in the same town, so everyone was wondering why I was going away from home, but everyone was happy for me. And I went off to school.

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

No, just that it was away from home and so small in a small town. That was really all that made me not want to come.

What was it about being in a small town that would be..

Not much to do. Can't really get away. You're stuck, no where to go.

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

No, it was a little bit harder academically, and socially it was hard. Cause on our weekend we were always with the minorities, and that helped, and that still helps now that we're all together, but we didn't see how the other students were.

Would you describe that to me?

Now, we're separate. Even if we try to mix in it just doesn't work, I don't know why. It just seems we're outcasts, you could say.

Is that a sense you get, or are there specific things ...

It's a sense, and then things that happen. I think I'm flashier, like we had a lot of freshmen that came in, and the first weekend or so we all went to a party somewhere someone told us about, and a guy came out and asked us if we were all W&L students. A fraternity person asked, were we all W&L students, and he goes "Can I see your ID?", I mean.. It's a little hard. There's not many of us. You're not going to see everyone who goes here, but you shouldn't really ask that question just because there's a whole bunch of us. Maybe they haven't seen all of us at once.

Was there much of that stuff that happened?

Yeah. It's happened before, we were at another one, it was like parents' weekend, and a girl was talking to her friend and said "My dad said why are all these black people here?" And it was just like five of us there. And we weren't staying for long and it was even a black band that was playing. And it just makes you feel uncomfortable.

So, it was different in that it was harder academically, and much harder socially.

Yeah, that's really it, I mean I came from a high school that was fifteen percent minority, and I was used to being like the minority, but it's really different here. This is like a big frat. High school, was like a lot of different people, here it's like a certain set of people, everyone's so the same.

Among the white community everyone's the same?

Yeah. In high school everyone was different, everyone had their cliques, but each clique would blend in, it wasn't so separated, everyone would come together, and here it's so separated. Just like one large group of people and two or three small ones, here.

What are the two or three small groups that you would identify?

I think, I don't know, there's like - minorities is one, then international, and then the other students that are just not - I don't know how to describe them.

Other white students that don't fit in as well?

Yeah.

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?

Being in a minority, cause here it's really put in your face, to me it feels like it's always put in your face. I just feel I don't fit in. It's just like people will look down on you. Like you don't know what you're doing. "Why are you here?" Things like that.

Do you get that feedback directly?

No, I guess it just feels like sometimes. It's just really uncomfortable sometimes.

So do you hear things that have been done specifically - specific behaviors, where people have said things like that to other people?

Yeah, I haven't heard it, but one of my friends freshman year she was hearing people on her hall saying something about nigger this, nigger this. She said something to the Deans, I think one of them said something to the girls, but I don't really know what happened with that.

So how do you deal with it.

Well, stay with my friends. We're all going through the same thing. It's just like, everyone knows, we always talk about it, so. It helps when we're all going through the same thing and we're all stuck together, so..

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

Terrible. It's very terrible. Um, it's a lot harder, it's asking a lot of me. And I do try hard but sometimes I want to give up cause I try so hard and I'm just not doing good, and I mean, in high school, I did well, And I didn't do everything every day. I could do my homework in class and get away with it. And here you have to work so much harder. Just really different and I have to apply myself a little bit more. It's hard.

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

- x Undergraduate library
- Science library
- x Computer facilities.
- Writing Center.
- Tutors in the disciplines.
- Study groups.
- Public lectures on academic subjects.
- x Language lab.
- x and the professors have really helped me out a lot.
- Study skills courses

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

No, I don't think so.

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

Promise of earning a handsome salary after graduation,
Interest in the particular academic discipline,
College friends recommended this major,

Adult relative recommendation etc.

Other

Didn't know what I wanted to do. When I came here I had a science major, and that didn't work out freshman year I figured that out and I didn't want to continue with something I wasn't doing well in, so I just tried different things, and this one really caught my eye, so I'll try that one.

So, probably interest, and eliminating other things?

Yeah, see, the science department kills a lot of people here. Especially minority, that's what I notice. a lot of people this year have changed their majors from science departments. Just like last semester everyone did terrible in chemistry, so decided to change at that point. I figured it out last semester, cause I failed it freshman year, so I took it over last semester and did really bad again, and I really tried, I really studied and everything. Everyone did. and a lot of people quit then.

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

If yes, please describe that change.

Is there any more you need to say about that change?

Nope. I'm glad it's over. But it's hard here. I think if I was somewhere else I probably could have went through it for some reason, I don't know. Cause my friends, at public institutions, cause my friends, they're all... That's what I wanted to do at one point, cause some of my friends, we're all like I figure the same ability, cause we had the same scores and everything, and they're doing so much better. I guess the school is asking a lot, but I don't know. I think I maybe if I could have gone ahead and done that.. I think maybe I've been robbed.. Not really, but ... I probably should have gone somewhere else. But I'm gonna do what I have to do now.

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

Hmmm. I don't know about this. I don't know. cause I've never really witnessed it, I guess.

What is it that makes you hesitate? By the way, there's no right answer to this, they're just interested in how you feel about it.

I just don't even know the answer to it. If I would even tell.

What would keep you from telling?

If I wasn't sure what it was, I guess that was...

I think that when the question was written they meant to try to phrase it that would imply that you would know for sure. So there's no question that it happened and you know who did it, and then you would need to make a decision about whether to report it.

I really don't think I would. I mean It's like, I love the honor code and everything, cause it makes it really safe here. But it's like some of the things that happen it makes me not respect it. Like if some guy can get away with like assaulting a girl, and they just get maybe social probation or something, but if someone looks over on my paper and sees I have a A for a multiple choice and they have a B and they change it, and then get kicked out for that, I think that's a little much.

Cause I think that should[n't?] be for the Student Conduct Committee. I mean, cause if they actually rape a girl, you're taking something from her, so that to do me is an honor violation in itself. Like if someone's been charged with sexual assault, they get social probation, stay away from the freshman dorms, things like that. I mean, I'm just saying for example, I'm not sure of any real case.

So you're saying you have a sense that punishments are unevenly given.

Yeah.

So that's one of your reasons. You like the fact that we have it, but you're not sure that it's

working very well?

Yeah, like the alcohol things too.

Tell me about that.

I think it was earlier this year, talk about alcohol, with underage drinking and everything. that in itself, you're breaking the law if you're drinking underage, and they have it at the parties. If they get caught with it, they don't get in trouble, things like that, social probation once again. things like that makes it seem like it's not really working. Why does it need to go to the Conduct.

You're lying, you're giving it to them. You said you didn't know they're not 21, but you know the person you're giving it to is not 21. Things like that.

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

Please describe in what way they are easy or difficult.

Some of them are easy and some of them are difficult. Sometimes in class, they seem so like you would be afraid to approach them, but once you do you see that they're so much different out of class. I guess it's just [pretend?]. Usually they're not hard, you just come to class and you don't know, you don't feel comfortable going in, but once you go in there, I feel comfortable after a while. It's really nothing that bad.

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

Not really.

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

Not very good at all. There's not really much that we have, like we have had parties here and everything, as far as .. we had em at the Chavis House. Cause, ... some of em were through the Minority Student Association, we had to get a place to have it. The one's we had at the Chavis House, they had my birthday party, they had one for my 21st, and they had another one the night before, and the house is small, its got carpet and everything, and there's no basement for a party room or anything that we have, so it's hard, but we have got the Felt House, we had that this past weekend, and then the GHQ, but we have to clean that up and then they said recently they've had problems with ..Dunlop. It's nothing bad, it's like saying things were out of place, and things like that, just simple things, I don't know, I'm not sure about all the story about that, but we'd have to pay to do that and all this stuff is really hard. We don't have the money to rent out everything, get a great DJ and all this so, it's really hard. And, the social, the fraternity parties, we don't want to go every weekend. It's something to do when we're stuck here and we don't want to drive somewhere else, and we're just bored and just want to go out. But usually we just leave.

Where do you go when you leave?

We went to UVa, JAU, went to Richmond, Roanoke... just away.

to other schools?

Yeah, [], to get away from here. I mean sometimes, we're in a five person suite, and we're all just entertaining each other, just sit there and talk really loud anyway, so we just have fun up there and .. *make your own fun?*

yeah, usually what happens.

What is your impression of the fraternity parties, .. you obviously don't enjoy them all that much...

Drunks, filled with drunks, everyone's drunk. People are really nice sometimes. Cause they're drunk, You see em the next Monday, they act like they don't know you. You'll be at the party, they're drunk, they'll talk to you, 'how are you doing' 'do you like this song?' whatever. They're talking you to death, they're probably in one of your classes, maybe, and they're talking you to death. In class Monday they act like they don't know you. And things like that. I don't like that at all. You're going to speak to me, while you're drunk, speak to me when you're not. I guess, if you're drunk, you're a little tipsy, you're going to speak a little more, but still, you're going to remember something about speaking to someone.

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

It's not important at all.

Do you drink some?

Yeah, I do, but it's not an important thing. I can have fun without it. I've been having fun without it for a while, so. It's just something extra, if you want to, but it's nothing that is needed.

How important to you are drugs at a social event?

Very not important. They're not me. I don't understand drugs.

Sounds like you don't use them.

Yeah, not at all. I think it's pretty [], so I don't understand.

Have you run across it very much?

Not here, I mean I've seen marijuana, but that's really all I've seen here.

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

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

Just going to the parties, being asked if we're W&L students. We went to one this year. We had some friends here, from VMI, they came with us, and they didn't have their uniforms on, they were with us. They had went in before us, cause we were supposed to meet some guys there, they went in. The guy told them that 'you can't come here cause you're not a student.' and then he told him to leave and the guy called me and I said, 'well just meet us there' but he didn't meet us back, cause I guess he just didn't feel comfortable going. And then there were some guys with us also. We came in, the guy told them to leave, and we were downstairs and said 'no you don't have to, you're with us, and this is a W&L party and we can stay.' Then the guy came down there and we said 'why are you asking him to leave? he's with us.' He said, 'we're trying to get out all that are non W&L students.' And we said 'Well who're you..we know there's a lot of people in there, white people, that are not W&L students.' and he said, 'Well I don't know that.' I said, 'well it must be a black thing, if you're just pointing out all the black people.' He said, 'I'm not a racist. I'm not a racist.' He screamed, and all this stuff, and it was just terrible. We said we're going to go to the deans about this. He said 'I'm not a racist.' as soon as we said that. and we hadn't called him a racist. and we asked 'Is it a black thing? It seems that you're always pointing out all the black people, telling them to leave.' He was all upset, but he got over it, I guess, so I don't know. We haven't said anything to the Dean about that. It happens, I guess.

So is that indicative of the kinds of experiences that you've had?

Some of them. Some we've gone to and had a good time and they were Wednesday night. The one's that stick out are the one's when we've had this type of experience where people were asking 'are you W&L students? What are you doing here?' The rest of em, they just, I don't know, leave your mind I guess, just gone. The other ones you just don't remember, the good ones. But if you're there.. there's not really even any good ones really. It's just somewhere to go to get out of

the room, cause we've just been in the room so long, just don't want to be there anymore and you just go on out just to get out. It's not something you enjoy.

What's the difference between something you would enjoy, and the way it is that you don't enjoy?
The people. Everyone's drunk, and the music's not very good, and things like that. When we have our parties we, there may be some people in there drunk, but everyone's not tore all to pieces and things like that. and then there's people that you may be interested in, people that you would like to dance with, but at the fraternity parties it's not like that.

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

They're fine. I have one now, it's basketball. I'm the one of the only girls, there's two, and we're the only black girls so there's two of us. But it's not a bad class. Everyone's really nice, so. Classes like that, I guess we have more contact, more reason to speak. There's a few people that don't, but still it's not that bad at all.

What about the facilities?

They're all right, I guess. People were thinking that maybe the gym could be open all night and things like that, but I don't know, I don't see it as a problem right now. I thinks it's great.

And the teams? do you have any experience with the teams?

I just went to the basketball, the girls and the guys. It's fun sometimes. [] Something to do.

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

There's not many opportunities at all. We have guys at VMI. That's really it. That's where all of our friends are. The guys here, they're are all friends, but there's nothing interests any of us to date. So very limited.

25. *Have you ever considered transferring from Washington and Lee to another college/university?* Yes. I did my freshman year. My roommate, she was gone, she was leaving, and we were really close. My grades were horrible and everyone else, my friends at home were doing great, and I was trying my best and that just wasn't working. ... Being a minority and everyone looking down at you was just uncomfortable situation, social and everything.

So who'd you stay?

Other friends. They were like 'you shouldn't go. You're here, You made it this far. You made it through one year. It was just your first year. Everyone doesn't do their best the first year.'

Were these friends freshmen with you?

Yeah.

Why/why not?

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

26. *Have you had a paid job on campus (including work-study)?* Yeah, I have work study.
If so, has this influenced your level of satisfaction at W&L?

Not really. It's just something extra to do. Nothing really.

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.*

Yeah, to get the numbers up, but in October, whenever we did calling for students... I was just doing horrible, about the school, and everything was not, it's just uncomfortable. and I wasn't

really good at it. I called and I tried my best, I remember one guy I talked to I talked to for a while, and he said 'I'd hate for people to get me there just cause my grades are good, give me a great packet to have me there and then I'm not going to enjoy it.' And I couldn't say anything to him. I said that's basically what it is, because he was saying 'I don't want em to get me there just because I'm black', and sometimes that feels like what it is. I didn't know what to say. I said 'that's maybe what they're doing and there's a very small number of minorities here.. And he said he'd been transferred around cause his parents were in the army, and I'd just hate to be there and not enjoy it and have to go somewhere else.

So you've done it but it was difficult.

Yeah, freshman year when I did it, it was no problem and I enjoyed talking people telling em... it wasn't that bad freshman year. It seems to get worse as time progresses. Last year it got a little bad, but freshman year we had fun, and we understood what was going on, but we didn't go out to fraternities that much. Last year we did a little more cause we needed to get out a little bit. Freshman year wasn't that bad. I guess we stayed more together and we didn't have to experience it. And last year we got out more and had to experience it a little bit more. This year we've gone out a little bit but we've gone away a lot more this year too. So that helps. It makes it worse sometimes when you go away, cause we've gone to the black sororities and fraternity parties and step shows and we're sitting around with all these black people and it's great. It just feels good, and it makes you come back sad. Like, why?

Feeling lonely..

Yeah, like why did I come here. I could be doing this too, having this experience, and then I'm here experiencing this. It's just hard.

Now we ask some background information:

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

State: Tennessee

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

It was not a big city, but .. maybe suburban, not urban. Small city. Not much of a downtown. No tall buildings.

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

Same

Predominantly

Predominately white - 15% black.

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

Up until high school it was me, my mother, and my grandmother and one of my great aunts lived with us, but she passed away. and then me and my mother moved out when I was in high school, and then just me and her.

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

Grandmother, elementary school - I'm not sure how far she went.

My mother, she did one year of college.

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

She's in a factory.

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

Very low. Very low compared to everyone else.

How do you think this has affected your experience?

I really don't think it has effected it. Because I don't really have a lot in common with these people I don't get everything I want. I don't have a car on my sixteenth birthday, things like that, but I don't really think it has effected me that much at all.

Why's that? You're saying you don't have much in common with them because they get everything they want...

Yeah, my mom's not able to pay for my college, she's not putting a lot in. A lot of the time it's late. She's putting a little bit in and what she is she's working hard for. Their parents don't have to go out and work in a factory and bust their asses...

To hear you describe it, it sounds like it makes a difference, because it's another big difference between you and them.

It's just a difference, I don't feel it makes... I don't feel that I'm any worse off or better than them.

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?*

Please explain.

First as black. Everything .. it's like first of all I'm black. You see me you know I'm black, you don't know if I'm a student, you don't know what I'm doing and that's just like the first thing that you see. I know I'm a student, but I know I'm black first.

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

I think most we are al homogeneous. We have a lot in common. We know where everyone's coming from. There are different types of black people, but we all have the same roots. We all have the same way, if one person does something here it usually happens there. Things like that. We just know more about each other from our own experience. There are a few different one's that come from different backgrounds and they may not feel comfortable around black people, but they may have been around white people all their life and they felt comfortable, just like maybe some of the whites []. I think we're all pretty homogeneous.

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

Seems like we're very different. I think a lot of us are more carefree. Cause, we're all relaxed, I think, in my room. We're here to get an education, but we're not going to hurt ourselves trying. We're trying our best. We do all we can, but we're not going to hurt ourselves to get a 4.0 I know a lot of white students press themselves a little bit harder. We don't want to give up but we try as hard as we can and have to stop at a point. Socially too they have more to do, and they enjoy

what they're doing so we don't have many social outlets. They probably enjoy it a lot more here than we do for that reason. We're pretty loud too. Everywhere we go.

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

Very inadequate. There are very few of us. Like in the Greek system, we were trying to get a sorority or fraternity, and we don't have enough guys to do a fraternity. All we need is like 5 - you have to have 5 interested for the guys, and like 7 or 10 girls for a sorority and everyone maybe didn't want to do the same sorority. So we don't have that choice, like there's four of each, I think. There's not enough people to make that choice, you have to choose one, everyone has to agree on that one, and it's really hard cause people have family that come from one and then another, and it's hard. We were thinking about that outlet. But we can't have that cause we don't have the numbers, and numbers aren't seeming to go up. We've been having meetings with Dean Manning and admissions, so we'd like to get the numbers up but it's really hard. We're not really trying to get people to come cause we all feel when we called that time that it was really hard. We were telling em 'yeah you have a free weekend you can come, and they'll pay for it.' and now they're trying to cut back that weekend, so they won't come but for like Friday and Saturday and leave. And that whole weekend did have an impact on the few that did come cause you got to meet people that .. see the social life - cause when we were here they had parties for us, so you were thinking they really had that all the time. But freshman year when I was here they did have that all the time. The guy that was at the Chavis House he just had a system and he would hook it up and we would have parties all the time. And now they have carpet down there and that guy's gone and no one wants to do that and it's just gone down hill ever since. That's why we wouldn't tie our lives to fraternity parties then because we had our own parties to go to. And that's declined, so that's really hard. It's really inadequate. It's not enough, cause usually black people, we stick together, but just like any other type of people, you have little cliques. There's no room for cliques. There's few, but everyone comes together. That's good, that's really a great thing, but you need more diversity.

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

That's inadequate too. There's one, right. Delaney, and then there's two that are here for just one year. That's really inadequate, because there's a lot of people that need jobs and you can probably recruit these people, and W&L does have the money, I'm sure, to get these people. But sometimes people don't want to stay because the student representation is not good. They don't want to just be teaching one black student every semester. That may happen in big schools, but usually there's more than one black student in three of your classes. So they don't want to see just that. They want to be a mentor to someone, and we need mentors for us to go to and see 'Oh, there's black people that do this too.' and you'll have someone to talk to, understand where we're coming from, what we've gone through and things like that.

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

Same thing. Someone to look up to. Feel real comfortable. More than just one.

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

If not, why not?

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

Yes. Well, what they did for us was they let us stay with black students when we came, that was good.

- as prospectives.

Yeah. They're coming in April, the prospectives, and we're having a party for them. That's good to bring em together. They were saying that that was bad, that we were coming together, that maybe you shouldn't keep em together, and .. but we need each other really, so it's really hard here, we need each other. They can experience other things, but this is just something to let them know there's other black people here if they need support they will be there. Even if that's not who you want to be close friends with, there's someone there you can talk to if you want to. Cause, before, freshman year we had this problem. One of my friends, on her hall, and maybe our dorm counselor talked to her, whatever, but they were saying that we were together too much. That we should do more stuff with our hall and things like that. But we didn't have anything in common with our hall. Our hall mates weren't coming to us saying 'hey do you want to go out.' and we weren't doing that either. We didn't know where we could go. They were saying we should do things more with our hall, not be together so much, cause we were together, we were loud, and I guess they didn't like that either cause we always got in trouble for being loud, but we were just talking we thought, but it was loud, and so they were saying we spent too much time together. But that's what makes us strong. If we didn't have each other we wouldn't have anything. I don't think any of us would have made it.

So do you think the university should be doing more to bring the freshmen together right when you first come in the fall?

Yeah, I do. Do they do things like that when we got here? No I don't think they did? The freshmen orientation committee.. I think they did have something at the Chavis House, but I don't think they had anything for them to do.

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

Not really. Just a house. Cause we've been talking, me and my suite mates and a couple of the guys, we were complaining about the new housing plan that they had. That they had changed it that all upperclassmen were going to live in Woods Creek, and we wanted our room back. Each year they changed the plans. Freshman year we turned in our thing early, we had five people and we wanted the loft, and we didn't get the loft. And then in the loft we found that there were two people in a five person loft. And we got thrown in this little room for five people. And then we got our room this year and it changed again and we're supposed to be out in Woods Creek. But we got our room back, but it was a whole thing. And from that we were complaining to Dean Manning how hard it is for us to be minority students here. We don't have the money to live off campus, and it said when we came here that we were offered to have housing every four years if we wanted it. Then on this housing it said 'housing may not be available for everyone.' You know, what were we supposed to do. We were wanting our room, and if you did all the drawings for Woods Creek and there was no room left what were we supposed to do, cause you were putting all the sophomores in there. But we got our room and that's a good thing, and then we told him that we needed a house, cause Chavis House wasn't doing it, and we're talking about a new house. And I don't know if they're going to do it, but a lot of the Deans try to put it off, like saying yeah, but they said they would give us money cause we needed a house for us to have social functions. Something where we could all gather, cause Chavis House is really little. There's four rooms. Why can't we have anything the same size as fraternity houses? And Dean Manning was saying that if we had something like that we would probably need a Greek system. Something that would make it have a reason for us to have the house, not as minority students, cause I guess we're segregating ourselves, but as something for us as a Greek system so it would have a reason for it to be here. So I don't know, they're going to work on that. They were talking about remodeling the Chavis House, but there's not much you can do. It's an old house, really squeaky, and all that stuff, and we just wanted a place where we can all come together. We've

had ideas from others - maybe calling it a cultural center - having history, arts and all kinds of black history in there, just cultural differences, cultural things over there, from just Asian history, anything like that over there. But we'd need to have more classes offered - more courses. Have a house of all the studies and then we're learning about anyway, cause everyone's not gonna come over there. If we could have something with departments where they would have history, politics, and things about African Americans, Asian Americans, ..everything like that, they would have a reason to go there and look, they would have a library and things like that. And that would be good. So I don't know if they're gonna do it.

Were these meetings that you were going to, was this the new Black Students for Campus Change group?

Yeah.

You're helping to start it.

Yeah

Is this something you think you're going to continue?

Yeah, I mean I hope to, but sometimes I think we're being thrown around sometimes. We talked to the Deans. We talked to Dean Manning first, and that was about the housing thing, and that's when we decided to come up with something. He said, 'well you can meet with me every week, if you really want to do something.' And we met with him again. And we met with Dean Howison, and with the Treasurer, talking about the house. And Dean Howison, he seems like, he's really nice, but he seems like he wants to put it off. He's like 'we'll take care of this, we'll do this later, come see me before spring term is over.' And that was like three weeks ago. He's like, "Come Later." Like he didn't want to deal with it now. That's really hard for us too. We know we can't have everything now that we want when we want it, but that's like putting us off. That was not really nice. Everyone felt that he was just brushing us off, just he'll be quiet if you just leave him alone.

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

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

Yes.

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

We do have the classes like Black Politics, I'm not sure what it's called, Black Institutions or something. And then the other one, the History of African American Peoples. But they're offered every other year. That's really hard - have one class each department every other year. That makes it. That makes it hard for us too.

As a class itself, like the history, I think it was adequate, but in other classes, it's not the same. Like in history you hear about slavery history, and then ... We do need more classes that focus on things like that, not just every other year.

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

Sometimes uncomfortable. It depends on what you're talking about. In journalism classes it's no problem. At one point we were talking about music and rap music, and sometimes it feels uncomfortable and people don't know and they're asking questions and it seems a little strange.

In what way does it seem strange?

I don't know how to describe it. I guess questions I know the answers to and I would expect everyone else to. That's really it. I just feel uncomfortable anyways cause I really don't know anyone else in the class, and it's really uncomfortable that way too.

In most classes?

Yeah. You may know someone, but usually I don't. There's no one I really know, don't know names of everyone, cause teacher's not calling role, or teacher's not calling on anyone, and I'm just out of it.

So how do you deal with those difficulties?

Talk to friends. To people who've had the class before, people I know that are, know about the class, or I'll go see the professors if I'm really having a problem.

I think what they mean is how do you deal with the feeling, the difficulty of the feelings you have

...

I just say I'm getting an education. Really what's keeping me strong is you're getting an education, don't worry about the social things, I have my friends..

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

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

I have no idea.

I think that's Dean McCloud's office.

Yeah. I don't know. I really don't have any idea.

OK. Well, what would you like it to be?

A place where we can go. It would have more. Cause we don't have a cultural center, somewhere where black students could have a place, maybe a [], maybe a little library, a place where we could have African American history, things like that. There's a room in the Chavis House, but it's not very nice. There's not much over there at all. There's supposed to be a library, but couldn't really tell you what's in there.

You've been there but it didn't seem interesting?

Yeah, it's not. Not at all. Some of them are just old books, pictures from the 70s when some of the black people were here, some of the black students that were here. A place where we could all come together, feel comfortable, maybe study, cause the Chavis House is not comfortable.

There's people come there, but it's not really a place you want to be, cause it's not big enough.

Just a place we can go study. Open all night. If we have questions she'll be there. Even if it's not her, have more minority professors in there we could talk to.

How can the role of this Office be improved?

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.)*

My friends here. And they're all black, and female, and they help a lot cause they're going through the same thing and they know exactly what I'm going through and they help me get through it. And my mother. I can call her any time and she helps me, tells me to hang in there, just helps me out a lot. And some of my friends at home. I have, at home half my friends are black and half are white. But here it just really hurts, cause I'm a person - I like everybody and it

just really hurts whenever people are just not receptive. ...[] they just want to do with their own, they don't want no one new, ... At home it was no problem.

You're saying they stick to themselves and they don't respond to you when you make overtures?

Yeah, It seems like that. I'm not going to throw myself at anyone if I want to be your friend. I'll talk to you, but if you don't feel like you want to talk back I'm not going to continue the conversation.

So those are the kinds of things you talk over with folks that support you.

Yeah, things like that, and just being here, being away from home, nothing to do. It's hard. I want to come home. Things like that.

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

At home basically half and half. Here, it's like 90% black, 5 white and 5 international. Actually, I'd say 2% white and 8% international.

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

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

Who was responsible for that behavior?

Individual students

Student groups

Greek

Non Greek

Faculty

Staff

Security

Just like at the fraternity parties. And, sometimes like freshman year, I don't know, maybe it was because I was hating it here, security sometimes. I had friends here, and they are black guys, and when they came here, security asked them where they were going, and things like that, and I was at the computer lab and they were on one while I was doing my work on the other. A girl came in and she left and security came so they had to get off the computer. It seemed like security was always there every time a black person came on campus, it seemed like someone was always calling security trying to figure out who these people were. And that felt really uncomfortable. No one can walk on this campus. I see many white students, white people that come on this campus and I know for a fact that they're not students here, and they can do whatever.

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

I think it is like the same as in the larger society. I feel like if I can deal with it here I can deal with it anywhere. It's gonna happen. I feel it's everywhere. People are not going to come out and say "I'm a racist." or "I hate you." But sometimes you feel it and you know that they don't really like you.

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, yeah. I believe so.

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

white students?

Same thing.

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

I think that really depends on the student. I don't think there's - I really don't feel there's any discrimination. I'm on the radio. I'm a director now. I really don't think there's anything wrong with it. It just depends on the student. If they want to do it and get involved they can do that. I don't think there's anything holding them back.

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

They made a big deal about the whole Spike Lee thing, and the D hall people that were arrested. Seems like they made everything bad - if there's something bad, it's there, but if there's something good it's usually back page a little bit. I think that's really what it is, I'm not sure. I don't really read them that often.

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 problems are both different and similar. It depends on the problem. Being black is a problem that we face. Not really a problem, just things we have to deal with here, being black, it makes it hard. All of the students are similar just cause we're all students and we're all struggling to make it. And that's really all. I think the difference is that we're black. Basic difference in the problems we have to deal with here. Social differences, being left out, things like that.

*47. Sex F

*48. Age? 20

*49. Year in college? JUNIOR

*50. Cumulative grade point average [as of Fall 1996]? 2.351

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

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

You mean, black? Just black.

Some people prefer to say African American.

Yeah, I don't like that, I don't know why. Everyone comes from different places. I have a roommate whose parents are from Panama, and things like that. But she's black, ... but black people come from so many places. Africa may have been the starting point, but everyone's been in different places, so I think black.

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

I can't wait to get out of here. That's one. It's really a learning experience. Help me grow a little bit, but .. I've matured a little bit. I don't want to mature, cause I'm a childish person, so it makes me see the differences that people have and some people will treat me different cause they notice my differences, things like that. Some of the tensions, not really tensions but, you can feel like that you're black and

everyone knows it and everybody thinks you're different and things like that. Just have to deal with it and overcome it.

In terms of recruiting..they need to make us happy first, the ones that are here. I mean they need to recruit cause they need to come here, but if they're coming there needs to be something here for them to come to. They don't need to come to a place where everyone's already upset, being sad. Cause they said that the last honor's weekend somebody left crying from our panel cause we said a few negative things. Things that have happened.

One of the prospectives?

Yeah, Maryanna from admissions said that one of the prospectives was almost in tears from the things we said. I don't even know what we really said. We were just saying about things that happen. Not all at once, but things accumulate. You can sometimes come in here and feel comfortable and make the best of it, I mean you're going to make the best of it regardless, if you really want to get an education and [] this is a good place to get an education. But if you can't really deal with the social aspects, if you don't make good friends, it's really hard. Cause I have people who are sophomores that say I don't know what we are going to do when me and my friends leave that are juniors, because they are with us all the time, and they'll have one more year without us. I'm glad that I have made the friends that I have here. Being in the small environment as black people has made us all a little closer. and we learned a lot about each other. In a large school you would have more friends, it would be more drama I guess, cause there would be more people. I guess that would be good, though, cause you would have more friends, you would have more guys, and you would have more things to fuss about - not really fuss about, you know, just like 'that's my man.' Not that I really want to see, but it's something I would be involved in. It's just something that you miss. Here it's all just quiet and calm. Things happen, you get over it cause there's only so few of us, why do you want to argue with each other cause there's really no one else you can go to. Guys are not a problem, you have guys at home, and there are guys at VMI that are friends, but there is just not enough people. You need large amounts of black people. That really helps. When I go home, it's like 50,000 people, and the university's there. My cousin just graduated in December and she said it's the same, but I don't feel it's the same because they have - it feels great to me because they have the black sororities and fraternities, they have parties, and social... I was telling her... I'm not trying to be, I'm not racist or anything, I'm just saying I'm starting not to like white people because of the way I'm treated here sometimes. I mean like the fraternity parties, I mean 'you don't believe I'm a student. I've seen you before. You were probably in one of my classes, and you ask me if I'm a student? That really hurts.' Makes me just like 'What is wrong with you? I know who you are, and there's more white people that I could get you confused with, and you can't really get me confused with too many people. We really don't look that much alike." And that really bothers me. And I tell my white friends and they understand too, cause they know how some white people are too, so that's good, I can talk to them about that too. I don't think there's anyone here I can have that relationship with - tell them about how some white people are treating me, or things like that. The international students, I talk to them and they understand. I haven't found anyone or know anyone that my roommates are friends with that they could just talk to them like that, and tell them the problems they are having as a black student. At home I can, and of course my black friends at home are going through the same things, just not as bad. So, it's really everywhere, but here it just seems so much worse cause it's such a small environment.

Do they use affirmative action?

You mean in admissions?

Yeah, cause it seems like all my friends and all the black students we've known have had - everyone had SAT scores that are lower than everyone else. Everyone else had 1500s and all of us had an average of probably of 1000.

So how do you feel about that?

I really support affirmative action, but if it's going to bring me here and have me fail, that's not - I don't like it that way. I want affirmative action to be used to put me somewhere where I deserve to be and I can make something of myself, and I have the ability to do that on my own. I don't want you to bring me here and lower standards for me to be here and I'm not going to have success. Cause, I did a report on this before, in a politics class, and his had examples where, I think it was Rutgers, where they didn't have very many minorities, and they lowered standards and brought all kinds in and a lot of them failed. That's

really hard when you bring all these students here and they fail. They're not ready, or the social is not in sync for em, and they're just not enjoying the place at all. They need to have outlets for us. You're bringing us here, there's nothing for us to do, what are we supposed to do? We're not into the Greek system, its not something for us, and it's not getting better. I've spoken to an alumnus and he was saying it hasn't changed. For black students. He was here in early 90s. He was going through the same things. He had his friends, that's what made him strong, what made him stay. It just really hasn't gone anywhere, just lagging behind. Hard to recruit people. The recruiting is bad too. They just go to Maryland, Virginia, up there at that one fair. They don't send people everywhere else. It was just luck, I guess, that Mr Capito was doing that for me, and he helped me out to get me here, but that's not happening everywhere cause there's not very many people from where I am, everyone's from Maryland, Virginia. And there's some from New York, and that's cause they had a good guidance counselor that had someone that went here and they knew about the school. And a couple people from the south and that's because of our alumni too.

Affirmative action, I thought it was, I believe that it was made to give me an opportunity where once I was discriminated against because of my race. Don't put me somewhere where because I'm black I'm getting that position and there's some white person is getting left out to give me the spot.

So, I hear you that you plan to stick it out because this is a good place to get an education, but are you feeling now that this would probably have not been a good place to let you in, you would have rather.

I would have rather been not accepted.

Because you think you weren't really prepared, this wasn't the right place for you academically?

Yeah. I'm not sure if my grades did that for me. I had pretty good grades, and my test scores were all right, but I believe that maybe the standards may have been lowered. Cause the guy that came up with me, he, I don't know what his grade point average was, but he was a good student, and he was class president, and he didn't get admitted at all. I'm not sure how good his grades were, but I'm sure they were halfway decent. He was in AP classes and all that stuff, so he was up there, and he wasn't accepted.

Do you know what his test scores were?

I have no idea.

So something was different that you got accepted and he didn't.

Or for affirmative action, and I'd hate for that to be the reason.

Oh, he was not black.

Yeah, he was a white student. And my friend, she didn't get accepted, but her grades were a little bit lower and I think her scores were too.

Don't lower the standards and bring people here that are not prepared. I mean, we do need the numbers. My year we had like 17 or 18 and last year they had a good number too, but this year all they had was 4 black students. And they had a lot of international black students. The seniors this year there's three. I don't know if it's a pattern or something, every two years bring a large group in, or what, but they have to get the numbers up. I'm not sure if it's about recruiting, or people just don't want to be here... It's really hard to recruit because they're not doing a lot except in Maryland and Virginia. They need to go other places. You can't just stay in one area and expect everyone to come to you that you give an application to. When we call, it's like we're calling people that have gotten good test scores. And we just call them and ask them have they gotten the application information that they have sent. But they know nothing about the school. There is no one there to tell them, they just got this information - they're receiving information every day, so it's really good to talk to someone. Have someone there so you can ask questions, not on the phone. People called me I didn't have questions, but when they're in front of me, I would ask them a couple of more questions than when I was on the phone. When you're seeing them face to face you know who you're talking to and it makes you feel a lot more comfortable. So, they need to do a lot more recruiting. You need someone out there.