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N.7 Undergraduate Internship Program: Fall 2015

Interview N-0039

Walter Jackson

23 November 2015

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ABSTRACT – Walter Jackson

Interviewee:	Walter Jackson
Interviewer:	Devin Holman
	Monique Laborde
Interview Date:	November 23 rd , 2015
Location:	Front Room of Love House, Chapel Hill, NC
Length	1:39:

Walter Jackson, a native of Kings Mountain, NC, is one of the first African Americans to integrate to the University of North Carolina. He graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill in 1969 with a Journalism degree, and is a member of the Black Pioneers group. In the interview, we discussed his experience growing up in Durham, N.C., his coursework at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, his work as founding editor of Excelsior, his work at the Campus Y, his feelings on the Vietnam War, and a tense school trip to Florida. We went Jackson's life after Carolina includes earning a Masters of Public Administration at Harvard University, and enjoying a long and varied career as a journalist, corporate manager, public administrator, and business entrepreneur.

FIELD NOTES – Walter Jackson
(compiled December 2nd 2015)

Interviewee:	Walter Jackson
Interviewer:	Devin Holman
	(and Monique Laborde)
Interview Date:	Monday, November 23 rd 2015
Location:	
	Front room of the Love House, Chapel Hill, NC

THE INTERVIEWEE.

Walter Jackson is one of the first African Americans to integrate the University of North Carolina. He graduated from UNC in 1969, and is a member the Black Pioneers group.

THE INTERVIEWER.

Devin Holman and Monique Laborde served as an undergraduate interns for the Southern Oral History Program in the Fall of 2015

DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVIEW.

At the time of the interview Walter Jackson was recovering from a cold and had to pause to speak at certain points. Especially towards the end, he struggled with shortness of breath.

NOTE ON RECORDING.

At, 1:30:29 we had to pause the recording to get water for Mr. Jackson.

TRANSCRIPT—WALTER JACKSON

Interviewee: WALTER JACKSON
Interviewer: Devin Holman and Monique LaBorde
Interview Date: November 23, 2015
Location: Chapel Hill, NC
Length: 1 file; approximately 1 hour, 46 minutes

START OF RECORDING

DEVIN HOLMAN: Hi. So, my name is Devin Holman, and I'm here with Monique LaBorde, and today we are interviewing Walter Jackson at the Love House in Chapel Hill. Would you mind starting by telling us a little bit about your childhood, where you grew up, and what that experience was like?

WALTER JACKSON: I'd be glad to. I was born in the small town of King's Mountain, North Carolina, in the western part of the state. I spent my first nine years there, and then moved with my family to Durham, because my father got a job where he would be working for a radio station in Durham. I continued my elementary and high school years in Durham, graduating from Hillside High School in 1963. Of course, living in Durham in the [19]50s and early [19]60s, I lived in a totally segregated environment, where generally the only white faces I saw were occasionally at a grocery store, or a mailman, or an insurance man, or a police officer, or something like that. But it was a very different world back then, and it was an okay childhood for me. Neither of my parents were high school graduates, but they believed strongly in the value of education. I have two older sisters and all three of us attended and graduated from college.

MONIQUE LABORDE: I have a question about King's Mountain.

WJ: Sure.

ML: It's a predominantly white area, I'm from around there. So, what was your experience like being a black family in King's Mountain?

WJ: It was very interesting. Again, the times were rigid segregation. But interestingly enough, and I don't know how common this was, it's probably uncommon, I lived on a street where there were white families on one end, a few black families in the middle, and then white families on another end. I, of course--as children do tend to do, it seems to me--accepted the world as it was, without too much question during their early years. And for the most part, the segregation was not an issue for me. We had a pretty happy little family life with my grandparents living next door--one set of my grandparents--and other relatives nearby, and attending our black church, and black school, what have you.

DH: So, growing up in Durham, especially when you were at Hillside, did you witness or participate in any activism efforts?

WJ: I did. Again, up to a certain point, one accepted the status quo. I didn't rebel against it in any significant way, for the most part, most people. But then, in the mid-[19]50s and early [19]60s, the civil rights movement took incubation with the events in Durham, and Greensboro, and Birmingham, and other places. And by my senior year in high school, the civil rights movement was in full swing. And I--. And by the way, I was president of the student body at Hillside, so at some point, I certainly became involved in the civil rights movement. I was not as involved as a lot of other people, but I did do picketing and boycotting and what have you. And very notably, I think in the spring of 1963, I was among hundreds of students and others who were arrested trying to integrate the Howard Johnsons restaurant on the Durham-Chapel

Hill Boulevard. That was a very momentous event for me. So many people were arrested that in fact, they never tried to prosecute those cases, and the charges were all dropped. But we literally filled the jail in Durham on that occasion.

ML: Do you know who organized that boycott, that protest?

WJ: The key leader of that movement was probably Floyd McKissick, who was a prominent attorney in Durham who later went on to become the head of the Congress of Racial Equality. But there were a number of other leaders in the Durham community who were involved in it and, to a large degree, students from North Carolina Central University.

DH: How did you get involved?

WJ: Well, I don't really recall how it came to be; it seemed rather natural. By that time, I had a social conscience of one kind or another, and like many others, was determined to do what I could to stop the gross inequalities of segregation and racial discrimination in public accommodations, and what have you. So I assume that I heard that a demonstration was going to be taking place at a certain time and a certain place, and showed up as part of the crowd.

ML: Did you have siblings growing up?

WJ: I have two older sisters.

DH: How did your parents react when you started picketing?

WJ: Good question. My parents were not the most vociferous or aggressive, if you would, in terms of the civil rights movement. But at the same time, they were not the kinds of parents who would forbid their children to become involved in the movement. So, if I had to pick one word to describe how they were with regard to my sisters and me becoming involved in the civil rights demonstrations, I would say supportive. The night that I was arrested and spent the night, or most of the night, in jail, my sisters were also in jail. And I recall very clearly that

my mother came downtown, along with numerous other African Americans, to demonstrate their support and express concern for those of us who were in the jail.

ML: The high school you went to in Durham was an all-black high school, you said?

WJ: It was in fact, yes. And during my junior high school and high school years, were the early years of desegregation of the schools in Durham. So, Hillside was an all-black high school, and at that time, Durham High School was the high school for white students. And perhaps a half dozen or so black students were enrolled at Durham High School at that time. Maybe a dozen, I don't remember. I certainly don't know how many, but only a few then, it was the very early stages.

ML: What was your social life like in junior or middle high? Or high school?

WJ: Well, let me think about that. I had parents who were very strict in terms of their notion of parenting, and what was proper for children. I always spent a lot of time in church, I tell people that I was in church on Sunday morning, again Sunday night for what was called a Baptist training union, on Wednesday night for prayer meeting, maybe another night for junior choir rehearsal, what have you. So a lot of time in church. Certainly missing church on Sunday was either a no-no or a rarity. And with regard to thinks that a lot of other children were doing, going to dances at community recreation centers and whatever, my sisters and I were never involved in that kind of thing. But, I don't know that I particularly missed it. I had my friends in the community and whatever, and the family support system. So, it was an okay time for me in that regard.

DH: What was the response of community leaders and teachers and educators to all of the activism in Durham? Were they supportive and involved, or were they condemning the demonstrations?

WJ: There was, of course, a range of reactions and thoughts about it. Clearly, there were those in Durham, as around the rest of the country in the African-American community who felt like, "Oh, these people are causing problems, they ought to let well enough alone. And why are they doing that? They're troublemakers," or whatever. That was the minority opinion, but that certainly was a point of view. And in fact, of course, a lot of people's economic well-being was tied into not rocking the boat. Because they may have been working as domestic workers, or any number of other kinds of jobs where if their employers found out that they were involved, or supporting the civil rights movement, they could lose their jobs, or be penalized in one way or another. The predominant view, however, was one of support for the movement and activism, and that support ranged from simple, if you would--, I don't know if non-opposition should be called support, but very quiet support to vocal support and encouragement, financial contributions, what have you. So, a range of things. But by and large, at that time the African-American community was ready to say, "We're tired of this, no more. We are going to get in line with the movement being led by the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King and other civil rights movements--, civil rights leaders to put a stop to some of the injustices that were clearly abundant. Discrimination, and disparities in all kinds of areas, from healthcare, to law enforcement, to employment, to public accommodations." And again, by and large, it was, "We've had enough of this. Even if there will be negative consequences, we're going to change this system."

DH: So how did you decide to end up attending UNC?

WJ: Well, my generation was a generation of social activism and commitment to our cause, and I say that realizing, of course, that did not apply universally. But that could be a general characterization. So many of us were determined to change the world. And I'm talking

about certainly in the African-American community, but in other communities as well, people saw things that were going on, economic inequality and all; war, what have you; and were committed to making a change. As a member of that generation, I also wanted to be a part of making a change in the world. And the combination of that kind of desire and the fact that I had been identified fairly early on, perhaps as early as about the fourth grade, and subsequent years, on through high school-- , had been identified as having skills as a writer, I decided that I wanted to pursue a career in journalism. If I wanted a career in journalism, I had to major in journalism. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill was the only school in the state of North Carolina at that time that offered a journalism degree. I wanted journalism, Carolina offered journalism. I did have some other alternatives, perhaps out of the state, but I came from a family without significant financial resources. So, those out of state options were not really very viable. I did apply to a couple of schools out of state, and was admitted, but when it came right down to it, after I had been admitted to Chapel Hill, with it being close by and economically affordable, certainly this is where I wanted to go. Now, I'm sure, looking back these fifty-some years later that the motivation of being among those to help bring down the racial barriers, although Carolina had been integrated on one level or another years before, but I didn't have a lot of knowledge about what was happening. I did know that, unlike perhaps the University of Mississippi and some others that were still battling segregation at that time, I did know that Carolina had been integrated for a while. At least there were a few African-American students here. But, certainly that was a factor. But, probably not the main factor in my decision to enroll here. It was, "I wanted journalism, I wanted a good school, there's Carolina. It has journalism, it's a good school. It's affordable. Or with a stretch from my family, it's probably affordable." So, this is where I got.

ML: You said your parents didn't attend college.

WJ: Didn't graduate from high school, right.

ML: Did you have a counselor for the application process to college? How did you--?

WJ: Yes, certainly there were support systems through the high school, and I had a very good counselor who helped advise me along with others in the community who were also supportive. As it turned out, the very first African-American students at Carolina--African-American undergraduate students--of which there were three, two of whom actually attended my high school in 1955. But when I came along in 1963, I had no knowledge of that, surprisingly. But, there was that precedent. And coming to Chapel Hill, I didn't really know how many African-American students there would be. I knew that they were few and far between. I didn't know exactly what things would be like as a student here. So, but I came on faith, if you would, on a wing and a prayer. Things worked out reasonably well, shall we say. Or acceptably well.

DH: Did you ever get to visit the University or Chapel Hill before you began attending the university?

WJ: I recall making one campus visit, my mother and my sisters and I drove over one Sunday and looked around. But I didn't really have much exposure to the campus prior to enrollment.

ML: Did your sisters attend college?

WJ: Yes they did. Both of my sisters attended North Carolina Central University, which was then North Carolina College, in Durham, within walking distance of our house.

ML: Were you concerned about going to a primarily white institution instead of a historically black institution?

WJ: Absolutely, there was both concern and anticipation. A number of mixed feelings, because again, I didn't know for sure what I was getting into. I did not know exactly what the reception would be. I had read about the opposition to black students enrolling at other southern universities. In some cases, there had been rioting and things thrown at people, episodes of violence of one kind or another. And didn't expect that at Chapel Hill, but didn't know exactly what I would encounter. And whereas I was reasonably confident of my academic preparation, I also didn't know exactly what it would be like competing against white and other students with whom I had had absolutely no previous contact. Didn't know what it would be like in terms of reactions of my professors and what have you.

DH: Where did you live your first year on campus?

WJ: I didn't live my first year on campus. My freshman and senior years at Carolina, I commuted from my home in Durham. During my sophomore and junior years, I stayed on campus. In my sophomore year, I stayed in Everett Dorm on the lower quad, and during my junior year, I stayed in Craige on south campus. I did also attend summer school one summer, and stayed in Teague.

DH: What was the environment in Everett Dorm like at that time?

WJ: [Laughter] Oh, the ROGA House. That was the little nickname for Everett at that time, and I won't explain to you what ROGA meant. But it was--. Let me see if I can describe it. The words to describe it don't really come very easily to mind at this point. There was a lot of spirit there. That's a good description. It was a pretty spirited place. But at the same time, in keeping with the general Carolina atmosphere, it was also a fairly studious environment. My roommate during my sophomore year was an African-American student named Jimmy Womack who became the first African-American cheerleader at Carolina. In my early years at Chapel

Hill, the university had a policy of African-American students would automatically be assigned other African-American roommates, so there was residential segregation, if you would, in that way. But, there was protests of that, and that was changed at some point while I was here.

ML: Do you stay in touch with Womack, with your roommate?

WJ: I was out of touch with him for 50 years or so. But recently, with recently meaning the last three or four years or so, resumed contact. I went my way, he went his, and didn't know a lot about what had happened to him. But when we finally got back together, and this was about three or four weeks from now, which is November of 2015, and he's dealing with some serious medical issues. I visited with him in a hospital, and, as we talked, it turned out that we had had amazing similarities in our lives, from of course we graduated from college during the peak of the Vietnam War. And we both entered military service, we were both in Vietnam, we both did work that involved moving around the country in different places, largely in the corporate world, private sector. A big difference was that he had never gotten married. I did get married, and have a son and grandchildren. And he has subsequently moved back to North Carolina in just the last few years. But again, there were some interesting parallels, if you would. We both faced some of the same kinds of issues as African Americans beginning our careers in worlds where there were few African-American predecessors.

DH: Was there a particular reason why you decided to move from Everett to Craig, which is on south campus? Or were you randomly assigned?

WJ: I think it was random assignment. That's what I assume at this point, although at about that time, a greater African-American presence was developing on south campus, so there was a little greater sense of community when I got to Craige, as opposed to life in Everett.

ML: Your first year, when you commuted, why did you choose to live at home?

WJ: It was certainly an economic decision, and it just so happened that my mother at that time was working as a domestic worker—maid--for a man and his family. The man's name was Sam Barnard, and he worked on campus in the cashier's office at Carolina. So, what I would frequently do in the mornings, would get up, my mother and I would drive together to his home, midway between Durham and Chapel Hill, I would wait in our car for him to come out, I would then ride with him to campus, and in the afternoon I'd catch a local intercity bus back to Durham. But it was all about the economics of the thing.

DH: Did you have a good relationship with Sam Barnard?

WJ: Yes, but it was not an extensive relationship. I've never thought of myself as introverted, but I was also, at that point, perhaps not the most loquacious of young people. So, we didn't usually chat a lot along the way. It was perhaps a fifteen-minute or so ride from his house to campus. So, I'd get in the car and we'd of course exchange greetings and whatever. And as I recall, I don't know if we listened to the radio or whatever, but there wasn't a lot of chatting along the way.

ML: What was it like making friends on campus, and was that easier when you were living on campus?

WJ: I'm not sure if it was or not. I would say both off campus and on campus, to a very large degree, most of my friends were African Americans. Certainly there were white friends, but by and large, it was African Americans. And the African-American student population at that time was small enough that most of us knew each other, or certainly, given my personality I knew most or all of the other undergraduate African-American students. With regard to white students, there were those with whom I both off campus and on campus, formed a good relationship, but by and large, at that point, most white students were very standoffish, if

you would, with regard to African-American students. It was part of the times. So, I was thinking about how to describe that kind of relationship, and I was thinking at one point of describing it was maybe as if as an African-American, I had a contagious disease that people tended to keep their distance. But what I decided would be a more apt analogy would be, it was more like as if I had halitosis or a case of body odor, or whatever, such that people tended to shy away. In the library, if I sat at a table--and I don't know what the seating is like in the library these days--but in those days, there would be tables at which a number of students could sit and study. Maybe eight or so seats to a table. If I took a seat at a table, then the rest of the seats at that table would not be occupied. Or the same would be true in the dining hall, or what have you. So, for the most part, there were not close relationships between me, and I think most of the other African-American students, with white students. But certainly there were exceptions, and some of those people are, at least one of whom today, I still have a close relationship with.

I'm sorry, I was thinking, there's something I'm forgetting. What I'm forgetting is that also, at some point during my freshman year, and I'm going to have difficulty reconciling this with what I just told you, but I formed a friendship with a white student named David Parish, who was also a freshman, who lived in Durham and commuted. And David and I would sometimes ride to campus together. I don't recall exactly how that worked. His house also was somewhere along the route between where I lived in Durham and Chapel Hill. And my recollection is that I would ride to his house, and then the two of us would ride on to campus together. Yeah.

DH: Did you have a favorite class or learning experience while you were at UNC?

WJ: I did have, I had two or three favorite classes and professors. Clearly, one of them was my introductory journalism class, which at that point was Journalism 53. I guess it was

introduction to journalism, taught by a wonderful man named Ken Byerly. And whereas I talked about having, if you would, somewhat distant relationships with white students on campus in general, in the journalism school, it was very different. Perhaps because the journalism school was so much smaller. At that point, perhaps there were fewer than 100 students in the J school. And we got a chance to get to know each other on a much closer basis. We got to know the professors better, and this man, Mr. Byerly, had a tremendous affinity, if you would, for his students, and a great sense of humor, and was entertaining and he could always talk about former students, said, "And so and so sat right back there," and he would point to the exact chair that a particular student sat in.

So that was one of my favorite classes. Another of my favorite classes was a course on religion in the solid South, taught by a professor named Sam Hill. And again, a wonderful person who could bring out the best in his students and make his subject matter very, very real and relevant.

Let me talk about something that you haven't asked me about yet. Which was, I'm going to call this what it was like coming to Carolina as an African-American student, and looking around. So again, the fall of 1963, when I entered, was a period when there was generally rigid racial segregation. Many of the businesses in Chapel Hill, movie theaters, restaurants, and whatever, were still segregated racially. Employment discrimination was the rule of the day, if you would. So, there were no African-American professors, or even graduate student teachers that I'm aware of, on campus. No African-American athletes competing for the university. There were African Americans who were employed as food service workers and people who cleaned the dormitories, but no African-American clerks in the student stores, no African-American secretaries on campus. African Americans could not work as supervisors in those areas in which

they were. And there was a culture of--, if it wasn't culture of racism, it was a culture of, if you would, white superiority on campus. Such that there were Confederate flags all around in dorm rooms, and on cars, and what have you. And at our athletic competitions, at halftime, what have you, the school's band would play "Dixie" and the student body would stand up and sing "Dixie." Everybody was expected to stand and sing "Dixie." And as an African-American, of course, I and other African-American students deeply resented that, and at some point, of course, down the line, that changed.

But there was no black student movement here at that point. And it was a very, very oppressive environment. My former roommate, Jimmy Womack, said to me that he's had some lonely times in his life, but perhaps never more lonely than his years here at Chapel Hill. And I can identify with that very strongly. As an African American, the environment here was not at all affirming, it was one that perhaps you felt yourself being questioned in terms of character and intelligence, and a lot of other kinds of ways at every turn. And I mentioned the university had no African-American athletes, at least in my freshman year. It turns out, by the way, that during my freshman year, the very first African American started to play--I'm sorry, not African American--the very first black person started to play for one of the university's teams. It was an African student, not an African-American student, who played on the soccer team and it was very low-key and out of the way, probably only a few people knew about it. But, on those rare occasions when a visiting team at Carolina, from someplace maybe the University of Michigan might have an African American, one or more African Americans on their team, probably I and most of the other African Americans on some level were rooting in our hearts and minds for that other team, and those African-American players, to make a good show, rather than for our home team. So it was a very unhappy experience in that regard.

Now, that said, let me mention that by the time I came along, at least for me, now this does not apply to every other African-American student, because we all had a different experience on one level or another. But I encountered few, if any, incidents of outright hostility, aggression, name calling, or what have you. That phase, by and large, had passed in Chapel Hill. And of course, Chapel Hill at that point was considered the liberal--maybe it still is--the liberal bastion of the South. So, in relative terms, the atmosphere here in Chapel Hill was far above other places. And again, little or no, for me, outright acts of discrimination or whatever. But again, a social isolation that was not at all affirming. In my freshman class of perhaps 2,000 students, I believe there were about seventeen African Americans. So sixteen male, one female. Because at that point, Carolina did not admit women as freshmen, unless they were in the nursing program. So there was one African-American student, female, who was in the nursing program. And one, or perhaps two or three others, who had transferred in from other schools. But in terms of a social life and dating, and what have you, with only a couple of African-American females on campus, and a much large number of African-American males, it was not a pretty picture for, if you would, guys like me.

So, as a consequence of that, what many of us did on weekends was go off to other places to date, whether that be to Durham, to North Carolina Central University, or to Greensboro, to UNCG, where there was an African-American student population, to North Carolina A&T, back to our hometowns, or what have you. And of course, there were rare and isolated instances of interracial dating, but very rare and very isolated.

DH: When interracial dating happened, was it kept really private? Or what was the response of the campus community to that?

WJ: It was pretty private. It was so rare as to almost not be worth the time to try to figure it out. Because it didn't happen a lot.

DH: So going back a bit, you mentioned that people were constantly questioning your character and your intelligence. Was that coming from just classmates, or was it also coming from faculty and stuff?

WJ: It was a feeling, and by the way, it was not overt, it was something that you just felt. By and large, I don't know that I ever felt it personally coming from professors. There were others who did. And there were stories told about as soon as we got to campus, there was one professor in particular about whom African-American students were warned by other African-Americans. If you get X professor who I won't name the professor, I assume he's dead and gone, but I'll name his course. He taught Modern Civilization. And I don't know if modern civilization is still taught by that name or not, but it was a very challenging course to start with. And this one, all African-American students were warned by other African Americans, "If you get X professor, drop the class immediately. You can't pass." And by and large, that did happen. I do recall that one student said he was assigned to that professor's class, and at the end of class the first day, the professor called him up and said, and I'll name the student, they were actually twins, James and Ron Cofield, from Raleigh. And I think it was James who recalled this. He said, the professor said to him, "Mr. Cofield, I want to tell you something." He says, "I want you to know, I'm not going to give you anything because of your race. I'm not going to take anything away from you, but I'm not going to give you anything, either." That was a clear enough message, and confirmation of what he had been advised. So he promptly went and dropped the course. But again, to the degree that that was overt, that kind of thing was pretty rare. And I never personally experienced it, or necessarily even suspected it. When it comes to things like essay questions,

and grading exams, certainly one does not know what's in the mind of a professor, or whatever, when he or she grades a course, and makes a perhaps subjective judgments of what's there. But by and large, a lot of times, in those classes, where there were essay questions, they were large enough that I wondered if the professor even knew my name, such that he or she could discriminate if he or she were inclined to do so. But again, for me, by and large, I didn't feel that that was a big issue, or an issue at all, during my years at Chapel Hill. Now some of the other African-American students, to this day, would look at me and say, "Walter, that's crazy, how could you be so naïve? Obviously that was happening, and it happened to me, it had to be happening to you too." But I'm the kind of person who has a tendency to give people the benefit of a doubt. So again, I never had issues in that regard, personally.

ML: Was there a particular spot or place that black students would convene and talk about their experiences?

WJ: Yes. And that place was in Lenoir Hall, which at that point was the primary dining hall on campus. So at lunchtime, and certainly for me it was lunchtime, I assume it probably also happened at breakfast and dinner, but usually as a commuting student my freshman year, it was only lunch that I would spend any time in Lenoir Hall. We would get together at our own tables and hang out, and talk about whatever. And of course, in dorm rooms at night, or whatever. And certainly some strong bonds were formed sitting around dorms at night talking and listening to music and what have you.

ML: Do you remember what kind of music you liked to listen to? What was popular?

WJ: Oh yes. We liked the R&B, rock, rhythm and blues music. And maybe it was rock and roll, I have trouble distinguishing the two, if there is in fact a distinction. But by and large, it was rock and roll and rhythm and blues. Some jazz. But this was during the period when

Motown was becoming big, so the Temptations, the Supremes, the Four Tops, Curtis Mayfield and the Impressions, those were some of the groups that we particularly liked to listen to. And on the jazz side, perhaps Ramsey Lewis, the Ramsey Lewis Trio. I recall when the Ramsey Lewis Trio came to Chapel Hill for a concert, and it was so wonderful.

DH: So you mentioned earlier that a lot of the black male students would go to other towns on weekends to socialize and to date. Was there a particular place that you went ()?

WJ: Well, since my hometown was Durham, and a lot of the people with whom I attended high school were still around Durham, I didn't have the need to go off as much as other students. So, I would go home to Durham. Well, of course those years when I was commuting I would naturally be at home in Durham. At some point, particularly during my junior year, I would go with other African-American students to UNCG to date, and what have you. But by and large, I don't know. Perhaps to a greater degree than most young men, I wasn't particularly into dating and whatever at that time. I guess I was a little nerdy by today's vernacular. But I did some dating, and again, by and large, it was either at home in Durham or at UNCG.

Let me talk about one interesting thing episode. I don't know if I can describe it well enough for it to be as interesting to you and other listeners as it in fact occurred. I think it was December of 1964, one of my favorite, one of my best extracurricular activities at Carolina was the student Y, with which I had become involved, largely as a result of freshman camp, which was sponsored by the YM/YWCA. And I became involved in campus Y activities. Again, I believe it was December of 1964, the student Y sent representatives to a YMCA conference in Miami, Florida. And we traveled there by--in the van, the Volkswagen bus, of the campus YMCA director, whose name is Norman Gustaveson, who's still alive and here in Chapel Hill, and with whom I still have a great relationship. I visit with him and his wife reasonably

frequently. But most of the students from Carolina who were attending that YMCA conference in Miami journeyed there with Norm, in his VW bus. There were two African-American students, myself and another young man, and perhaps four or so white students. This was a time, at a time when again, racism and racial tension was very high in the land. On the way down, I believe, we stopped and spent the night at a home in Florida, of one of our white colleagues. A fellow whose name was Doug Tilden. And he and his family put up the whole group for that night, which was exceptional in and of itself. That went well, and we went onto Miami, and even though the walls of segregation in hotels, if you would, were falling in the Deep South at that time, I don't recall any issues there at the hotel in Miami. On the way back from Miami, having had a very good trip, the van, the Volkswagen bus in which we were riding, developed a mechanical problem, such that we stopped in a little town, Lake City, Florida. And the way things turned out--this was probably coming up to the end of a holiday break--and the way things turned out, Norm Gustaveson stayed behind with his bus to be repaired, and the rest of us somehow or another found our way back to Chapel Hill.

Well, I don't know if y'all are aware of the Freedom Riders or not. But, we go into this small town of Lake City, Florida, a group of four, five, six, or whatever whites, and two African Americans. We were walking down the street, and as we walked down the street, it seemed like every eye in town was focused on us. "Who are these people, what are they doing here?" A big phrase at that time was outside agitators. "Is this a group of outside agitators?" As I recall, somehow or another, Norm went to a hotel to check in, and he was going to spend the night, and was greeted warmly by the staff, or whoever registered. He checked in, came back to where the rest of us were to get his bags, and then we all went to the hotel with him to get him situated. And while we're sorting out ways of getting back to Chapel Hill or whatever, all of the sudden,

after this group that included African Americans appeared, the reception he had gotten went from very warm to ice cold. And I'm sure it remained that way for the duration of his stay there. And it was the most intimidating kind of situation. If you saw the movie *In the Heat of the Night*, it was that kind of a feeling of being an African American in this small group, in this small town. I mean, it was a really threatening kind of feeling, without specific incident.

Well, the bus had broken down in this small town, and classes, as I recall, were starting in Chapel Hill probably on Monday, and maybe it was the weekend. And most of us needed to get back to campus for class. Funds were running low. So there was some discussion about what to do. In those days, people hitchhiked. I hitchhiked myself any number of times. These days of course most people wouldn't think of hitchhiking or picking up a hitchhiker. But back in those days, people hitchhiked. So somebody said, "Oh, well let's just hitchhike back to North Carolina." No way, given the repressive racial atmosphere in the Deep South at that time, and specifically, there had been a murder in Georgia of a man whose name I remember to this day, Lieutenant Colonel Lemuel Penn, who was in the Army, and basically shot on the highway for driving while black. And at least one of our white colleagues had said "Oh well, let's just hitchhike back." Nope, that is not an option for me. So as I recall, I and perhaps the other African-American student had enough money to get a bus ticket back to Charlotte. Now I was comfortable with the idea of hitchhiking in North Carolina, but not in Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina. [Laughter] So, we bought bus tickets back to Charlotte, and hitchhiked from Charlotte back to our respective hometowns, Durham for me, and it was High Point for him. And I think some of the white students did hitchhike all the way back from Florida. But that's the way it was in those days.

DH: So you mentioned being involved with freshman camp, and the campus Y. Were you involved with any other extracurriculars on campus?

WJ: Not to a significant degree. As a journalism student, I did some work with the *UNC Journalist*, and I did a few stories for the *Daily Tar Heel*, but I was not significantly involved in extracurricular activities outside of the Y. Now in the Y, I became the founding editor of a newsletter that we named *Excelsior*, and I think at some point I was secretary or treasurer of the campus Y. And my senior year, I was assistant director of freshman camp.

ML: So did you attend freshman camp as an incoming freshman?

WJ: I did.

ML: How did you find out about it?

WJ: The university mailed out flyers about it. And I recall that it said, "Freshman camp, your best introduction to Carolina life." So I said, "Hmm, this looks like something I would want to take advantage of." And in fact, it was perhaps one of the most wonderful experiences of my time here, sitting around the cabins and discussing, having discussions with other students, various speakers who came in, meeting other students. And to a degree, perhaps, I found the environment at freshman camp a little bit more welcoming, accepting, supportive, than the general atmosphere on campus. So, getting to know the other students and being involved in the aspects of that was something that I enjoyed very much, and it lead me to continue to act as a counselor through my sophomore and junior years. And as I said, becoming assistant director my senior year.

DH: I actually looked up your name in the *Daily Tar Heel* database, and I found that you were mentioned in an article that talked about a grant from the Ford Foundation to develop

pamphlets to be given to other African-American students in the South. How did you get involved in that?

WJ: I have no recollection of that. [Laughter]

DH: Oh, you don't?

WJ: Absolutely none.

DH: Oh, okay.

WJ: I presume that that was something through the YMCA?

DH: Yeah.

WJ: Okay. But again, I don't have a good recollection of it.

ML: Was the YMCA, at that time, more interracial? Or were there more interracial friendships and relationships?

WJ: Absolutely, absolutely. I don't know to what degree, if any, the students in the YMCA and of course, the YMCA, even though it was the YMCA, Christian, there were also Jewish student members of the Y. [Coughs] Excuse me. I don't know to what degree, if any, people's faith backgrounds lead them to become more involved with the Y, and whether or not, as a consequence of that, there were people who were more embracing of the idea of brotherhood and equality of men, or what have you. But by and large, the students who were involved in the Y seemed to me to have a much more enlightened vision of relationships with African Americans than others.

DH: Were there any particular organizations or groups on campus that you felt like you couldn't join, or were explicitly barred from joining?

WJ: Oh absolutely, and the very top of that was the fraternal and social--. Fraternities and sororities, which, at least during my first year or two on campus, had absolutely no African-

American members, and there were no African-American fraternities or sororities either. I think that we made some attempt before I graduated to establish an African-American fraternity, but we did not succeed in doing that before I graduated. And clearly, African Americans were not accepted into the white fraternities, at least initially. Perhaps before I graduated, one or two African Americans had been accepted into perhaps the university band fraternity, which I just learned about that in the last few years. And I think Charlie Scott, who was the first African-American varsity athlete at Chapel Hill, might have affiliated with a fraternity.

ML: So what were your feelings towards the fraternity system then?

WJ: No, of course they were very negative, and some of the fraternities in particular, and I'll go ahead and say it, as I don't like disparaging this group, but they chose the course that lead to this. The KA, Kappa Alpha fraternity, was overtly racist, and you can look in the Carolina yearbooks of that time and see some of the kinds of things they did to parody African Americans and whatever. So the KAs were perhaps the worst of the lot, but it was not uncommon for fraternities, even more so than sororities, to show an overtly negative antipathy towards African Americans. And naturally that was resented by me and other African Americans.

ML: What was graduation day like for you?

WJ: I didn't have a graduation day. I actually finished my degree requirements during summer school, and as I mentioned earlier, I graduated at the peak of the Vietnam War, and had actually been drafted during my senior year, and enlisted to go to officer's candidate school after I graduated. So what I say to people is, and this is not quite literally true, because of what I will explain to you, but I say to people that I graduated from college on a Friday and left for the Army on a Monday. In fact, I graduated at the end of the first summer session, but took another

course during that second summer session. So I finished that course on the second summer session, I believe on a Friday, and left for the Army on Monday. But technically I had graduated at the end of the first summer session, but I never participated in a graduation ceremony, or what have you.

ML: And when you say left for the Army, where did you go?

WJ: Well, the most interesting place I went was Vietnam, of course. [Laughter] But initially, I went to basic and advanced training at Fort Dix, New Jersey. Then I spent a couple of months or so at Fort Benning, Georgia, in officers candidate school. Dropped out of officers candidate school, and then was sent to Vietnam.

DH: How did you feel when you found out that you had been drafted?

WJ: Very unhappy. Now that gets into a longer story that I suppose I won't go into unless pressed, but the short version, I guess, is I had been involved in campus ROTC. I was not accepted into the advanced program that would have led to an Air Force commission, but was then later drafted for the Army. But no, it was not a happy time at all, because people, of course, were coming back from Vietnam in body bags, and maimed and disfigured, and all kinds of things.

ML: Did you consider going to Canada, or conscientious objecting? No?

WJ: No, those thoughts never crossed my mind. I grew up as a fairly patriotic thinking kind of person. Love of country, dedication, will do what's called on to do. And I will admit that initially at least, I believed that the course that the United States was following in Vietnam was proper and correct, that there was this--, I'm somewhat ashamed of it at this point in my life, but at that point, I believed there was this communist menace out there, that we needed to stop, if we didn't stop them in Vietnam or someplace else, there was this thing called the domino theory that

they would continue to march, and eventually wind up in California. So, as a patriotic--there's a great song that has a line in it, that said, "It wasn't me who started that old crazy Asian war, but I was bound to go and do my patriotic chore." So once I was drafted, the thought of conscientious objection or going to Canada and that sort of thing, never crossed my mind.

DH: At what point did you start reconsidering your thoughts on the war?

WJ: I'm not sure, it might be, it might have been years later. I'm not exactly sure. Certainly my experience in Vietnam did nothing to reinforce the notion that this is a good war, and something that we ought to be prosecuting. But I can't recall exactly when I decided, "No. That was not something that we as a country should have been involved in."

ML: What was the racial environment like in basic training or in combat?

WJ: [Pause]. African Americans tended to congregate with other African Americans, both in military training and in Vietnam. That was the order of the day, and it's just the way things were. I did, I was the only African American in my group at officers candidate school, and I did feel some, or perceived, felt that I--. I felt that I was feeling some absolute racism in officers candidate school, that there were those in the hierarchy who did not want me to be commissioned as an Army officer. But, during training, basic and advanced training, and as a soldier in Vietnam, I did not feel any kind of racial discrimination. Indeed, when the chips are down, as is the case in military operations, race becomes a lot less of an issue than it might be in other places. In spite of the fact that in Vietnam, there were racial tensions between African Americans and if you would, white soldiers. But I think that tended to occur more in other places than in the combat units. I think it tended to be more of an issue in support units.

ML: Do you remember Martin Luther King's Riverside address, or when Martin Luther King denounced the Vietnam War? Were you involved in that time, and did you know about that?

WJ: I did, and I don't know that I recall specifically that it was the Riverside address, or the name of it. But I do know that, and again, ashamed to admit it, but it's a reality, at that time, I thought Martin Luther King is wrong on this one. He is and has been a tremendous leader in many other aspects, but he ought to stay in his lane, if you would, with regard to civil rights and other issues, and not get involved, or not be making the kinds of statements that he's making about Vietnam, and whatever. And again, I regret that thinking now, but that was my view at that time.

DH: What was the process like transitioning back after you finished your time in Vietnam?

WJ: Well certainly the main thought and emotion was happiness at having survived, and coming home safely, mentally and physically intact. Now the mentally might be arguable to some people, but by and large it was an overwhelming happiness to be returning home, because I went to Vietnam as an infantry private. And the story, the legend among soldiers is that the life expectancy of an infantry private under combat conditions is seconds and minutes. So I was not optimistic about surviving that experience. And by the way, I went to Vietnam an infantryman because I had received, and again this would get into a longer story--don't want to take the time to go into that--but I had received infantry basic training, advanced training, and several weeks of infantry officer school, which perhaps made me an ideal candidate for an infantryman. But, in Vietnam, I spent about three months as an infantryman and then was able to move into the public

information office, which was a much better assignment. But again, happily having survived it, I was thrilled to get back home.

Now, a lot of Vietnam veterans talk about having come home to face a hostile public, if you would. That was not my experience, I don't know that I felt like the GIs were--I certainly didn't feel like what I understand was the feeling of GIs returning from say, World War II and a whatever, welcome home hero, or whatever. But at the same time, where I lived and the people I associated with, did not in any way greet me with negative feelings and castigation, or whatever. So, I just was happy to get back home.

Now, what I did feel, as someone who had gone off to quote, "Fight for his country," to the degree that I still encountered racism and segregation, I don't know that there was--that I encountered segregation after Vietnam, but certainly racism and feelings of prejudice and discrimination, or whatever. That was a very unhappy thing to feel that well, I've gone off and served my country and put my life on the line and whatever, and now I'm back and feeling discrimination. I talked about not having felt discrimination here as an undergraduate. The two most egregious incidents of feeling discrimination and racism that I associate with Chapel Hill, both occurred after I had graduated and gone off to college and come back. I remember that for whatever reason, my sisters and I had come to Chapel Hill, and one of my sisters was driving, and I was seated in back, and perhaps, I don't know if I could be--if I was visible from another vehicle or not. But something transpired, and a group of young white males-- [Coughs] Excuse me. And that's about a physical reaction, not about an emotional reaction. A group of young white males three or four guys in a car, yelled something at my sisters angrily. I can't remember, I don't know if it was outright racist or not, but certainly my feeling was that it was a racial incident. And again, I don't anger easily, but that was one time I boiled with anger. Again,

Vietnam veteran, back home, and happy to be here with my sisters, and on this campus, encounter that kind of racial incident.

The other one was probably that same year, 1969, when as a Vietnam veteran, I came to Chapel Hill on a date with an African-American lady. We were in a restaurant on Chapel Hill. I'm sorry, on Franklin Street here in Chapel Hill, probably on a Sunday afternoon. And we were sitting, minding our own business, when these three or four white males, probably a little older, who all of the sudden said to me, "Did you go see Wendell Scott run?" I said, "Wendell Scott? Who's Wendell Scott?" And they said, "If you don't know who Wendell Scott is, you must be a Yankee. Wendell Scott is the only nigger who runs in NASCAR." Again, just can't believe it. Four years in Chapel Hill, no racial incidents, nothing of that ilk that I can recall. I do think I was called the N word once trying to hitchhike out on Airport Road. Martin Luther King was then called Airport Road. Trying to hitchhike to Greensboro, and I think a passing vehicle did yell the N word at me once out there. But by and large, again, in terms of overt racism, little or nothing during my four years here. Gone off, served my country, sitting in a restaurant just trying to enjoy a meal, and all of the sudden, there's this unprovoked incident. Now, staff at the establishment intervened and kept that from escalating. But I was later thinking, what was that all about? Because again, at that point it was past the peak of overt racial incidents in Chapel Hill. And with regard to an African-American being in a public establishment or whatever. And on reflection, what occurred to me is that the woman with whom, who was accompanying me, was African-American, but she was a fairer complexion, and it could be that in the lighting in that restaurant, she was perhaps perceived to be non-African-American and the increased level of racism that accompanies that kind of thing, I thought that might be what triggered that incident.

But, oh by the way, at this point, I am at least somewhat into stock car racing. At that point, I certainly wasn't. And I had no idea who Wendell Scott was. And Wendell Scott was the first African-American to achieve any level of prominence in auto racing in the US.

ML: When did you meet your wife? When did you start dating?

WJ: Interesting. When I returned from Vietnam in 1969, again, perhaps in part because of the limited availability of African-American females here as an undergraduate, and it seemed to me as if all of my high school classmates and all had gotten married. I looked around, I said, "My goodness, everybody's married, there's nobody left for me." [Laughter] Of course in retrospect you think, "What a naïve statement." But, I had a sister who worked for the Department of Social Services in Durham, and there was an African-American woman who worked with her. Now, it turns out my sister was not the link who brought us together. It was, in fact, Roger Jolly, who at that point was my boss, but who was also a student at Carolina with me, who was instrumental in the chain of events that connected me to the woman who I subsequently married after I'd come home from Vietnam.

DH: So did you stay in Durham from the time that you were in Vietnam until now? Or did you go somewhere else?

WJ: Well now. [Laughter] That's interesting. Growing up, and particularly during the college years, I think I said I never want to live outside the South, I don't like big cities, and I don't like cold weather. Within months after coming back to Durham, getting out of the Army and coming back to Durham, I found myself moving to big, cold, northern Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. And in the years since then, I've also lived in Charlotte, Atlanta, Cleveland, Salt Lake City, and a school year in Boston, so I guess I made my peace with big cities and cold weather, and living outside the South.

ML: What made you want to stay in the South?

WJ: It was home. I alluded earlier to this big controversy over singing “Dixie” and Confederate flags and whatever. At some point during my years here, I recall someone having said that, in defense of the song “Dixie,” the person said, “Well for one thing, it’s a beautiful song. And it’s about my home, this is where I was born. It’s the land I love.” So, I liked, and continue to like, this region, the people in it, and it’s home. You may or may not know the song “Tobacco Road,” which I understand was written about Durham. It has a line in it, it says, “I despise it because it’s filthy, but I love it because it’s my home.” So, I love the South because it’s my home. And I like a lot of the ways and lifestyle, whatever, of this. And again, I don’t like cold weather. [Laughter] Although to some degree, I guess I made my peace with it. I was living in Cleveland, Ohio when Cleveland had its record cold, which was twenty degrees below zero. I never want to see twenty degrees below zero, or anything approaching it, again.

DH: Did you notice different racial relations once you moved north? Or were there similar issues present?

WJ: Some African Americans refer to the North as “Up South,” meaning in some ways there’s not that much difference. And to some degree, at least in 1970, when I moved to Pittsburgh, there was not, in some ways, that much difference. Clearly, it was radically different from the South in which I had grown up. But, growing up in the South, there were at least some African Americans who gave other African Americans the notion that the North was this vastly different place, where everybody got along, and there was no discrimination, and, you know, just a totally different world. Well it was a different world, and of course it still remains a different world in many ways, until today. But, what I found, of course, in moving to Pittsburgh and other cities, is that there are, if you would, good people and bad people wherever you go. And there are

was and is racial prejudice and discrimination of one kind or another in cities in the North, just as in the South. So, I don't know that at this point I see that big a difference in the two worlds.

ML: What kind of jobs did you do after you got back from Vietnam?

WJ: Hard ones. My undergraduate major was journalism. And I expected to spend my career working as a journalist. Life is perhaps what happens to you on the way to doing something different. So my life has turned out very different than perhaps I ever expected it to, but I'm generally pleased with the directions it has taken. And so for those who are listening to this interview, I'm struggling with the aftermath of a cold, and dealing with shortness of breath from time to time. I just thought I would explain that.

DH: Would you like us to pause for a moment to get some more water?

WJ: Please. [Pause]

ML: (). Okay. We were talking about your geographic connection to the South, and the South was your home. And you talked about considering going to schools outside of the state, outside North Carolina. So, are you, with retrospect, are you satisfied that you attended UNC?

WJ: Very much so. I'm very happy about that, for a lot of different reasons, and I might mention that the Carolina experience was not a happy experience for me, in general. People often talk about the fact that, "Well, the college years are the best years of your life, or should be." They were not for me. The social pressures of being African-American on campus, the general, if you would, atmosphere that surrounded being an African-American student here at that time; those were significant negatives for me. And then, I came from an economically disadvantaged family, and being from that, if you would, social strata, and here in Carolina, or at Carolina, where most others were from a more privileged economic background was not an ideal

situation for me, such that for a variety of reasons during my sophomore year, I decided I was going to drop out of school. I was going to take a year or more out and then come back. I had made an irrevocable decision that I was going to do that, and nobody could talk me out of it. But someone did. Norman Gustaveson, as I mentioned earlier, was the director of the campus Y, and I had a close relationship with him, again, which continues to this day. And Norm was perhaps the only person who could and in fact did talk me out of dropping out. And I don't remember exactly what the reasons, what all the reasons were that I was going to drop out. But my intention was to drop out and maybe work for a year and come back.

Well of course, in fact, that's the road not taken. If I had done that things might have worked out and my life might have been even better. But at the same time, it might be that I would never have gotten back. So, I am grateful to this day to Norm for having talked me out of dropping out of school that year. So, I had looked at other alternatives, including Howard University in Washington, D.C., which was a historically black college, and had the reputation of having a great social environment, or whatever. I looked at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, and I mentioned how things worked out that I did elect to, and in fact came, to Carolina. I never regretted that. Carolina gave me exposure to people and things that I otherwise wouldn't have gotten. It helped. It was a sword that cut both ways. In some ways, it helped me increase my self-confidence in terms of my own skills, abilities, ability to relate to different people and whatever. At the same time, since it was a non-affirming and if you would, non-welcoming--it was not a hostile environment, but it was a non-welcoming environment. And I think that on some level or another, that contributed negatively to my personal development. I think in another kind of situation and atmosphere, I perhaps would have had more leadership roles, or whatever, that would have contributed even more to my personal growth and development.

But again, by and large, because of the experiences that I had here. And I think the doors that it helped open up for me in subsequent life, for instance, earlier in the interview I talked about in Vietnam, getting out of the infantry and moving into the public information office, I think that things that were directly tied into my experience helped open the door for that. I talked about the fact that I worked for a newspaper for a period of time after having gotten out of the Army, and then I moved. I didn't specifically say that that's what happened, but I went into the corporate world. Again, I think that my background and degree from Chapel Hill was key in opening up the doors for me in a number of different ways, along the way, following my decision--, following my graduation from the university.

DH: So now that you're back in Durham again, what are the biggest changes that you've noticed the community has gone through? And what continuities do you see that still exist?

WJ: How much time do you have? [Laughter]

DH: Well maybe the top three, or top, number one.

WJ: There was a TV program, *A Different World*, and it certainly is a different world now than the world in which I grew up, and I also have to think about the Oldsmobile car commercial, "This is not your father's Oldsmobile." Well certainly the Durham in which I live today is not my father's Durham, or the Durham in which I grew up. The world is so different in so many ways. I talked about the fact that my generation was one that was committed to making the world a better place. And at a class reunion here in Chapel Hill some years ago, it might have been my fortieth class reunion, in talking with some others, I said, I raised the question, or maybe somebody else raised the question. At any rate, the question was raised, "Okay so we were going to make the world a better place. Is the world in fact a better place now"? And my

own answer to it is, "Well, I don't really think so." It certainly is a better place in many ways, the kinds of discrimination and bigotry that were prevalent when I was growing up, particularly directed towards African Americans, it's a night and day difference. And it's vastly better now than then. Of course, the changes in the world of technology are so dramatic.

We probably do have cleaner air and water, and in many ways, in terms of objectives that we might have had to make the world a better place, I think it is, in fact, a better place, particularly in the United States. And maybe or maybe not, across the world. But at the same time, even though things have gotten much better in certain ways, in certain other ways, things are much worse, worse or much worse. For instance, when I was growing up, both in Durham and many other places, people would leave doors unlocked. People felt safe in going out at night, and in walking around the neighborhood, or going to this place or the other. I remember that in downtown Durham, they would have newspapers for sale, and the newspapers would be on a rack with a little slot on the side that you could drop the money for the newspaper in. So you would drop the money in the slot, and take a newspaper, but you could take the paper without dropping the money in the slot. And of course, these days, you have to-- You can't do that. You have to put the money in. Now once you open it, you can get all the papers, perhaps you wanted. But there were also places where the newspapers would be stacked there. You take a newspaper, you leave your money, and the money wouldn't go into a little container, you'd just leave the money lying there. And anybody could come along and take the money. But apparently it happened rarely enough that, again, people did things like that.

Violent crime was nowhere near, at least it seems to me--if you did an objective study maybe it would prove otherwise--but violent crime was nowhere near what it is today. So, on balance, I would have to say I don't know that things are really better. But, clearly if asked,

“Well would you rather live in that world or this world?” No question about it, I’ll take today, thank you. And I’m happy for so many of the kinds of changes that have occurred, and happy to have been a part of the generation that brought about a lot of these changes to include tearing down the walls of segregation, and a greater commitment to clean air and water, to at least trying to bring about a greater degree of economic equality, or reducing inequality, to improving healthcare and education, and what have you. Sometimes, between the time a question is asked and the time I finish my answer, I realize I didn’t really address the question. But hopefully that got to what you asked.

ML: Do you have anything else that we didn’t cover?

WJ: The only last thought I have is to express the idea that with regard to myself, and my generation of African-American students at Chapel Hill, I think all of us had struggles of one kind or another here. We fought racism and discrimination, and prejudice, and people having a dim view of us and feeling that we shouldn’t be here. And for some of us, that was devastating; and there were some who dropped out, perhaps suffered emotional damage; some of whom still bear major animosity towards the university for that. But at the same time, there were those of us who came through quite well. One of my undergraduate African-American classmates, Mel Watt, went on to become a US Congressman. Another African-American student who entered the university the year after me went on to become chancellor of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Others achieved success in fields like law and medicine. One became an admiral in the Navy.

And others, success in arenas like the private sector, becoming presidents or vice presidents of financial institutions or whatever. So it was a range of effects of being here at Chapel Hill. Some, to this day, still have, as I think I said, great animosity towards the university.

And others, I think, almost universally if you ask us “Do you regret having gone to Chapel Hill?” We would almost all say, “No, I’m very happy and proud that I did.” But for some, like me, over the years, there’s been a love hate relationship with the university. Now both those terms may be too strong, but there are still some negative feelings, because of some of the things that we experienced here long ago. But at the same time, there’s a love of the university, a loyalty to the university, a hatred of Duke, and a good feeling about having been a part, having this university, having been a part of our lives, and a pride and affection, mixed with some other emotions for our association with Carolina.

DH: Thank you so much for sharing all of that information with us. We really appreciate you coming in and being interviewed.

WJ: A pleasure. Thank you so much.

END OF INTERVIEW

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