

sure. But it certainly was the class that Bill Hill was in, and I don't know whether you got a chance to meet him last week. But one of the things that's very, very interesting, is that Holt Merchant had a student, a black student, who studied desegregation of Washington and Lee a few years ago, in an independent study, and he talked to these guys, and they had nothing but good recollections of their four years at W&L. The thing that just blew Holt's mind and it blew mine as well, is that we remembered when they were here and how unhappy they were. So I think the years have sort of tempered their recollection of what the experience was really like.

**Warren:** What do you remember?

**De Laney:** Well, I remember students who – and to some extent this still happens – I remember students who came in who were eager, who were absolutely willing to do their best, who found that doors were closed to them socially, and that at least the academic door was open there, but the social doors that were closed made it very difficult to be a student here.

One of the things that you have to think about is that, first of all, it was an all-male environment. One of the things is that human nature being what human nature is, in an all-male environment, there was a need for a female element, and there were even

fewer black female students at the neighboring colleges, but the black students did not have the access to the female colleges that the other students had. The other students had automobiles, the other students had the fraternities as a vehicle for bringing, for attracting women to the campus for social events. So the black students didn't have that. They weren't in the fraternities. They couldn't get in the fraternities. So there was some frustration because the social outlets weren't there.

One of the things that I was very slow to learn about the black experience at Washington and Lee, and I was slow to learn because I wasn't in the quagmire that these students were in, was what their day-to-day experiences oftentimes were like with white students. I understand that a lot better today. I understand it from completely

different experiences, and with some of the experiences that I've had with black students more recently.

But one of the things that, in spite of the gentility that was always there, in spite of the civility that I always experienced, there was also an element that these students experienced that was not civil. I was very slow to come to understand that, and very slow to come to believe that that non-civil element was there. So the experiences that I had with students were very different from the experiences that some of these guys were having as students.

I suspect, however, one of the reasons that their recollections are more moderate today than the experiences, I think, actually were, is because of the doors that a Washington and Lee degree opens. When I finally got mine, I was really surprised to discover how receptive potential employers were to you when you said the college you went to, or how receptive potential graduate schools were when they found out where you had gone to school.

So I think that those guys, at least as I understand it today, had some really horrendous experiences that were mostly experiences between them and other students. Some of them got to the attention of the student body as a whole, others didn't.