I would have perceived WGE differently. In a classroom with a white professor, I never felt at home. Another college, I felt like home. I went to an all-black high school, I never felt like I grew up in an all-black neighborhood. I went to an all-black high school, I never felt like I grew up in an all-black neighborhood. My dad wanted me to attend Emory. He said if he had to pay for it, I said, "What if I got scholarships?" He said, "You can go anywhere you want."

My dad was always adamant about his kids going to college. He had attended Georgia Tech. I grew up in Atlanta, Georgia, went to the public schools there. My dad was always adamant about his kids going to college. He had attended Georgia Tech. I grew up in Atlanta, Georgia, went to the public schools there.

Abstract by Jane 14 August 1997
Interview by Name Warren 4 May 1996
DONE
WILLIAM MILLS
to like you.

were eight black women at Hollins didn’t mean one of them was going

had six or seven, sweet brown was just as bad. And just because there
were like Wellesley. Hollins had maybe nine black women. Mary Baldwin

W&L was an all-male campus, and the surrounding girl schools

maybe it was twelve or thirteen of us. Most of us made it through.

no black students in the class of 73, and in my class, the class of 74,

ever graduated from the undergrad. They graduated in ’72. There were
both lived here in Lexington. They were the first two black people that

black guys in undergrad here, Walter Blake and L. Woodward Smothers;

There were only a handful of black guys here. There were two

First Blacks

off just trying to make Cs. So the academic pressures were horrendous.

time. They were out on weekends. I was in the library working my butt

with very little new information. And they partied. They had a good

and for a lot of these guys, freshmen year at W&L, for them was review

foundation when I did, I found myself up at night reading to catch up.

weren’t smarter than I was, but they had a better educational

more when I got to W&L, because a lot of the guys in my class, they

we weren’t getting the best education we could get. I understood it

school system in Alabama. My teachers were consistently telling us that

everything I thought I had gotten a good education in the public

The problem with being eighteen is you think you know

substantial number of my classes I was the only black person in the

Social
majority, it was a non-issue. So focus on the issue of minority students on campus. Most of the students weren't here to students should be on campus. Most of the students weren't here to

minority of students who were adamant in their belief that minorities were apathetic. The only students you had problems with were a small

body population. It didn't mean anything one way or the other. They

black person in there than they were. For a vast majority of the student

When I walked into class, I was more aware of being the only

well at W&L, not just be here marking time.

wouldn't have access to. So it was real important to us to try and do

opportunity to try and acquire a key to open doors that ordinarily you

neighborhood, not as part of the ritual of growing up. This is your

W&L as an opportunity to make our lives better to get out of the old

because our granddaddies went to W&L. We were here because we saw

We weren't here at W&L because our daddies went to W&L or

mean?

If you're a black woman at W&L, where is your pool of available

a black woman at W&L.

different if you're a black guy at W&L. It's damn same different if you're

If I was a white guy at W&L, this would be heaven. It's real

very hungry.

neighborhoods or integrated schools. We were hungry, a lot of us were,

us came from all-black environments. We didn't grow up in integrated

each other, because unlike the black student population now, most of

So socially it was a challenge. We drew a lot of support from
that. You learn the rules of engagement.

He said, "Take your paper and go."

I said, "No, sir."

"I think we ought to continue this discussion."

I gave you as much credit for this particular answer as I did. Do you see certain things on your exams I missed the first time. I'm surprised you didn't read through my test papers, and he said, "Mr. What about getting a C? I went back and looked at him one time about my grades, and he was going through my test papers, and he said, "Mr.

"So what am I going to do? I'm going to go complain to him and gave me a pack of Tootsie Rolls.

only black person in the classroom, he gave everybody else hard candy. And I can remember one Christmas he gave out hard candy. I was in the 12th grade, and extra credit would push me over to B, I didn’t get a B.

We used to get extra credit for class participation, and I would have one biology professor, he just jumped my built.

I felt like to be a minority environment. All of a sudden they became more sensitive to what it being discrimination against for the first time in an educational.

announcing to see how white females reacted to feeling as if they were somewhat taken aback by the subtle forms of discrimination. It was somewhat.

The women were still having a difficult time. They were shocked.

The law school went coed in ’72. When I started in law school in
education. It's not about specializing for a job. It's about trying to
possible what you like, because college is about good liberal arts
here the Frosh year. "The key to it is this: find out as quick as
I told this to my daughter when she was getting ready to come
"to learn how to identify what it is you're supposed to read.
hours reading the wrong thing or studying the wrong thing, you've got
the library all night, that doesn't mean a damn thing if you spend six
learn how to maximize your time. Just because you spend six hours in
He said, "You're smarter than you think you are. You've got to

WELL.

have talked for three hours, to talk us into staying and not leaving
house. We were all talking about transferring from WEL. Blake must
be transferred out. Walter Blake, who was a senior then, came over to the
Halfway through the first semester, second year, I really wanted
piece of paper what my thoughts were so that they would make sense.
to waste my time reading. I had to learn how to listen for and what to read and what not
habits. I had to learn what to listen for and what to read and what not
what was wrong. And what was wrong was, I didn't have good study
that C. And I knew I could do better than that. I just couldn't figure out
academic abilities. By the end of my first semester, my GPA was 2.00.
Froshman year was tough. It shook my confidence in my own

Academics

comfortable on campus.

was bending over backwards to try and make the black students feel
like that because they were not a matter of race; the administration
I don't want to give the impression that everybody at WEL was

Admissions
Know whether he even realized that the laughter hit me.

That was a lesson I learned from Dr. Woger. I will never forget. I don't until I sit down and I talk to him and I know him as an individual stereotype anybody. I'm not going to make a decision about somebody is a white-thinking man. He was growing as I was growing, too.

The lesson I learned to this very day, I am careful not to ever entitlement to not like him and then slowly I began to understand that he just reminded you of a Kentucky colonel. At first I felt really hostile fall and him and distinguish with this real thick southern accent. He seductive. If it happens before you realize you're doing it, Dr. Woger was to be very, very careful, because the human tendency to stereotype is so

What I learned from Dr. Woger was, no matter what I do, I have that. I just didn't hear it.

sense because I enjoyed what I was doing. Blake was trying to tell me sudden things get better. Classes get easier. It started to make more to make myself better by trying to broaden my horizons then all of a once. Once I figured out that I wasn't prepared for a job, I was just trying it took me about two and a half almost three years to figure that

"Take professors, you see life, take every thing he teaches. Don't go there taking course, who can empathize with the way you write, and who sees the way you broaden your own horizons and soak up as much as you can. Once you
The weekends, we'd get invited to dinner. Marjorie Ponder later kept us hooked up with some of the Co-op kids. They worked at the Co-op, and the Co-op took good care of us. They looked out for us. On weekends, we were Freshermen, the black dudes who worked at the Co-op from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

When we were freshmen, the black dudes who worked at the Co-op were not really close. We were pushed together, so we were close. So you found a lot of the emotional support. We didn't feel like we were totally included in other activities, so we were really drawn to each other but pushed to each other. For one reason or another, we were there. I think we felt not really close. I had friends who were white, but they weren't really close.

Feels good. I like coming back.

They go from WEL to students here. Now, to talk to professors. It just is to see the University do well, which is to pass along what they think is important to be with people who truly have a common desire, which is an opportunity to be with people who truly have a common desire, which is an opportunity to be with people who truly have a common desire, which is an opportunity to be with people who truly have a common desire, which is an opportunity to be with people who truly have a common desire, which is an opportunity to be with people who truly have a common desire, which is an opportunity to be with people who truly have a common desire.

So I like coming back.
having a ball, and we're living in the Goddamn Library.
Great bands are all these nice women they meet, and they're just
things they're doing in the Free, about going to football games, how
they're telling us they're having a great time. They're telling us all the
Our buddies have gone to Howard or they're going to Morhouse, and
and consider this. I go. Here we are at West, West is all mine.

Motivation. You think you ought to be somewhere else. You
you got somebody telling you what's around that corner, you lose your
right here on the corner. Once you turn it, you'll be okay. And unless
to say, look, I'm telling you, you can get here. Trust me. I'm standing
and for these guys I was trying to do the same thing. I was trying

corner."

It's going to be all right. Trust me. I'm telling you what's around the
corner constantly telling me, you can get here, and once you turn the corner
couldn't see around the corner, and Walker was standing at the corner
West was a series of turns, I could only see straight ahead to the wall, I
for me, which was helping them see around the corner. If getting through
the problems I experienced, and I tried to do for them what Walker did.

Later Blocks at

These guys were a little different from us. They had gone to integrated
high schools. Some of these guys were really bright, but experiencing
When the class came in behind us, it was smaller than our class.

Famine Simpkins took good care of us.

a counseling service for us.

same, and the University needed to pay for that because she served
really care about the students.

school populated with good people in the faculty, good teachers, they
hesitation. That's how much I think of the University. It is a good
now, I'd do it in a heartbeat. I'd come right back. Absolutely, no

Given the opportunity to do it again, knowing what I know

uncomfortable. Never.

WEL. I have never been in a social situation where I was
academic education, you get a good social education. I graduated from

Go to some other school. For one thing, you not only get a good
minority student some advantages. However, that you won't get if you
conservative institution and that is what it will always be. It offers to a
change. It is a small, upper middle-class/upper-class, private, white,
WEL is steeped in tradition and the tradition is not going to

the Ivy Leagues wanted.

Because the minority students that WEL wanted are the same ones that

It's difficult to talk minority students into coming to WEL

Students

Minority

Recruiting
students shouldn’t be on campus. Most of the students weren’t here to focus
a small minority of students who were adamant in their belief that minority
athletic than anything else. The only students you had problems with were
population, if didn’t mean anything one way or the other. They were more
black person in there than they were. For a vast majority of the student body
When I walked into a class, I think I was more aware of being the only
important to us to try and do well at W&L, not just be here marking time.
its was real
so open doors that opportunity you couldn’t have access to. So it was real
as part of the ritual of Snowing up. This is your opportunity to acquire a key
opportunity to make our lives better, to get our of the old neighborhood, not
our Granddaddies sent to W&L. We were here because we saw W&L as an
We weren’t here at W&L because our daddies went to W&L or because
black guys here.
So the academic pressures were horrendous. There were only a handful of
weeks, I was in the library working my butt off just trying to make Cs.
little new information. They parted. They had a good time. They went out
up, and for a lot of these guys, freshmen year at W&L was really with very
educational foundation then I did. I found myself up at night reading to catch
The guys in my class weren’t smarter than I was, but they had a better
number of my classes I was the only black person in the whole class.
had no appreciation for what culture shock really would be. In a substantial
with a white kid, never had a white teacher. I was a freshman at W&L. I
neighborhood, I went to an all-black high school. I never sat in a classroom
They say ignorance is bliss. If truly is. I grew up in an all-black

A Non-Issue
— William H. III, 74, 77

from WEL to students here now, to talk to professors. It just feels good, which is to see the university do well, to pass along what they think they got to get away and relax and be with people who truly have a common desire. So I like coming back, because for me it's a respite. It's an opportunity the honor code and truth and intellectual integrity rule high. Where people enjoy academic pursuits, where in a list of priorities, things like and honesty. WEL is not the real world. It is an academic environment company of people with a strong sense of duty and responsibility and honor. summer. I still come back to WEL to get grounded. It is good to be in the my second year, WEL was home and Alabama was where I went for the end of At the end of my first year, I was happy to go home. Then by the end of didn't hear it, because I enjoyed what I was doing. The transition got easier. It started to make more sense trying to make myself better by trying to broaden my horizons, then all of a once I figured that out, that I wasn't preparing for a job, I was just how to identify what it is you're supposed to read. When the problem with studying the sophomore year thing, you've got to learn the library at night. That doesn't mean you spend six hours in the library at night. That doesn't mean you spend six hours in six for three hours. He said, "you're smarter than you think you are. you've got to learn things. We were all talking about transferring from WEL. Blake must have talked to transfer out. Walter Blake, who was a senior then, came over to the house. It happened through the first semester, second year, I really wanted to non-issue. on the issue of minority students. For the vast majority of students, it was a