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Toni King Oral History

Toni King

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Dr. Toni King, Oral History
Associate Professor of Black Studies and Women's Studies (1997 – 2012)
Associate Provost (2009 – 2012)

Recorded: August 25th, 2010
Interviewed by Vanessa Butler
Transcribed by Ashley Johnson

Part 1

[INTERVIEWER]: Hello, my name is Vanessa Butler and I'm a member of the class of 2011 at Denison University. I am interviewing you to gain a deeper understanding of how marginalized groups use protest to create social transformation by gaining power and influence. In particular, this study seeks to explore and document the historical origins and dynamics of periods of student protest at Denison by conducting oral history interviews with alumni, students, faculty and administrators who were a part of these periods. We are interested in learning about the factors and conditions that one, brought about protest on campus and two, determined your participation or lack thereof in protest to create social transformation.

Our data collection goal is to complement Denison's existing special collection in archived materials on student protest by collecting oral narratives from students, faculty and staff that participated in Black empowerment protest, the Black Student Union, and the development of the Black Studies Center at Denison. Based on our research thus far, Kent State University is the only other college that has a digital archive of oral narratives related to the Kent State shooting.

Your interview will be tape recorded, transcribed and placed in a digital archive available at the Denison University library. This interview will take no longer than two hours. You may leave the study at any time. If you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

At this point, you can read over and sign the consent form, which you've already done. To participate in this research, you must agree to have your interview tape recorded, transcribed, and placed in a digital archive available in the Denison University Library, through its online web site. Do I have your permission to participate in the online database?

[Dr. KING]: Yes.

[INTERVIEWER]: Audio recordings will be transcribed and will become a part of this research data along with my notes. The audiotape will contain appropriate attributions to your preferred name and title, as well as your affiliation with Denison University at the time of protest activities. Upon your request, portions of your interview may be labeled confidential and separated from the remainder of your answers. You may make this request at any time during the interview by telling me to keep your answer

to a particular question or portion of the answer confidential. Once you have finished making your confidential statements, please inform me so that I can turn the audio tape recorder back on.

Did you have any further questions before we get started?

[DR. KING]: No, that's great; I love the professionalism going through all this.

[INTERVIEWER]: Thank you. Your portion of the interview, being that you are faculty and administration, contains two separate sections: the introductory and general profile information, as well as reflections about periods of political action among Black students at Denison. So, to get started, when did you decide that you wanted to become an educator and an administrator?

[DR. KING]: I decided I wanted to become an educator probably in my, probably in maybe about the 10th or 11th grade. Maybe before then when I was holding school at my house and I would have all the little neighbor kids over and I would host school. And I know I taught several of them to read. I taught one little girl when she was about four.

[INTERVIEWER]: How old were you?

[DR. KING]: I was about 9 and 10 and on up. I got in trouble because I thought I should serve lunch and I served the food that my mom had bought for my sister and my lunch, and she came home and it was all gone because I had a big group that day. But I was going to be a clinical psychologist and an educator so I saw myself teaching at a college and having clients. That's what I thought I was going to do for quite some time.

And I never decided to be an administrator. I didn't want to chair Black Studies; I wanted to just be a professor. Only because the chair became ill and I was asked to chair temporarily and I thought, wow, I like this.

[INTERVIEWER]: Was working at Denison your first experience of working at a predominantly white institution, and if yes, how did...

Part 2

[INTERVIEWER]: you anticipate this experience?

[DR. KING]: My first predominantly white institution was SUNY Binghamton, a state university of New York at Binghamton. One of their four flagship research institutions. And I forgot what the other part was.

[INTERVIEWER]: If it was how, being that you worked at another PWI, predominantly white institution, how did you anticipate your experience at Denison?

[DR. KING]: I thought it would be different because it would be a smaller college with a teaching emphasis, and I did not know the liberal arts college culture. So I was pleasantly surprised, or pleasantly

confirmed that the small teaching college you would have more encouragement to build strong relationships with students, and this whole promise of a different level of mentoring. That was confirmed, and what surprised me that was different from SUNY Binghamton is how the culture, how different the culture is. I thought most of academia was going to be far more similar. And there's something very distinct about the liberal art culture, and it took me quite a while to begin to understand it. And that surprised me.

As a PWI, it seems like more of a closed off, somewhat elite, special domain of the academy. Much more a part of the sacred grove, you know, it's not this open access, public thing. It seems to me to be like a pillar of the private club of the academy kind of a setting. That surprised me.

[INTERVIEWER]: What departments did you teach in at Denison and what roles do you serve as an administrator?

[DR. KING]: I taught in Black Studies and Women's Studies. I served as the director of the Center for Black Studies for I think, for four years, or about four years. And I currently serve as an associate provost. I completed one year of a three year term of service. I have oversight over a lot of the faculty diversity initiatives, programming, institutional change, and some other general responsibilities.

[INTERVIEWER]: Had you served in one of these capacities at other institutions before coming to Denison?

[DR. KING]: No. I was only a faculty member. I taught at about five colleges, by the time I taught my way through graduate school and the like. And what I think is interesting is I taught at a predominantly girls college, I taught at a historically Black college, I taught at what one would call a private research college, an urban state college, and a research one institution. Of course not all of those were full time.

[INTERVIEWER]: What types of courses did you teach, not only at Denison, but just to add more fluidity, but at your other schools as well?

[DR. KING]: Well my doctorate is in organizational behavior, so before coming to Denison I was teaching courses in organizational behavior, org theory, and group dynamics, and race, gender and institutional change. It was all kind of grouped around organizations.

And because when I first started out in the 80's teaching, the...

Part 3

[DR. KING]: women, primarily white women, had really, really increased in the labor force, so there was a need for a course called Corporate Politics for Women. So I taught that and that gave me a bit of a Women's Studies background.

But at Denison, because I moved back to Ohio - that's where my husband's from, and his family was here, and his parents were getting older, his father passed but his mom was getting older. I moved back

here because of his career. I needed to find a position wherever I could because I didn't want to do the long distance relationship, because a lot of academics do that but that was not for me.

So I was lucky to find that Denison had just created a position in Black Women's Studies, and that brought together my research in leadership and gender and race. And it was the perfect thing, but it put me in a Black Studies Department and a Women's Studies Department rather than something dealing with organizations.

[INTERVIEWER]: Outside of, you mentioned being involved with faculty diversity programming, are there other areas that you're responsible to as an administrator?

[DR. KING]: As you know from our work, human subjects is what we call it, human participants review. I sit on the personnel committee. I'm the liaison for Posse, our partnership with the Posse Foundation. I have the responsibility to carry out the Presidential Medalists and process. And the academic awards convocation, as well as commencement.

And I just learned this week that I'm the Title IX coordinator. So I'll be at home reading a lot of policy.

[INTERVIEWER]: That sounds exciting.

[DR. KING]: It does. I'm really interested in learning about it. So it's fine with me because it kind of merges with the interests I have.

[INTERVIEWER]: Well, that kind of covered the general profile. Did you have any other comments that you wanted to make before we moved on to the next section?

[DR. KING]: No, that was thorough. I liked that.

[INTERVIEWER]: So we'll move forward to discuss your relationship with Black students on campus as a professor and as an administrator. In your opinion, what was the climate at Denison like for Black students when you arrived in, I guess kind of in general?

[DR. KING]: When I arrived in 1997, it was just after, maybe it was a year after there had been a big protest. There had been racial incidents. I don't remember exactly what they were, but they were still in the consciousness of faculty, staff, and students. And apparently there had been a big forum in Swasey Chapel. It sounds very familiar to the most recent round of protests that we've had, where we had a big forum. I was still hearing stories about this big forum at Swasey Chapel and how moving it was and how student after student spoke about their own marginalization and how that affected their ability to be a student at a college such as this.

And so, I'm trying to think of how else that affected the climate. So the campus was still in a mode, I think, of responsiveness to that. And you know those are windows and they close fairly quickly. But I think when I came they were still fresh enough that the faculty were talking about and participating on various committees to use that opportunity to push for some things that they felt would make the

college more responsive to the student body across different identities. So that stands out in my mind when I came.

[INTERVIEWER]: In your personal view, were there events that were occurring nationally and/or internationally that...

Part 4

[INTERVIEWER]: mirrored what was occurring on campus, and not necessarily when you first arrived but just looking at the whole span since you've been at Denison?

[DR. KING]: Well, I'm glad that you opened it up. I don't remember specific incidents, but I know that the 90's, I would say, the late 80s and 90s up until about '94. You know, I'm going to say the late 80's and 90's.

So when I arrived there were still some substantive interest in the academy in diversity. And, so nationally I think in higher ed, we saw colleges grappling with both how to build and sustain a diverse student body, as well as how to build and sustain a diverse faculty, and how to respond thoughtfully, intentionally, to incidents that just continued to happen because its woven into the fabric of society, and its going to happen in higher ed.

So when I arrived and throughout the time that I have been here, I have seen that groundswell of attention diminish in what a lot of people are saying is the post-affirmative action era. Some are saying that, I think, without understanding the political lay of the land in a sophisticated way. Some are saying it as a dream fulfilled, and others are saying it as a critique; that we've moved away from the very policies that allowed us to make a lot of progress in terms of diversity in major public institutions. That we've moved away from it either thinking the work was done, or because the heat was not on, because the time had passed since the civil rights act.

So I'm saying that as a form of critique that the systematic, policy-driven attention to institutional change has waned. And it is particularly distressing to me because while that attention has waned across the nation in all the major institutions I can see, you know from minority set-asides, to small businesses, to higher ed, to social services, the public institutions get more government funding, so there are things they're still held to and held accountable to.

The private institutions, and the smaller liberal arts colleges, their affirmative action is more in the spirit of good will, you know, unless they've had a lawsuit and they have to comply. Their approach, while it lagged behind the public institutions, their approaches to diversity, without legal pressure and in the wake of challenges to affirmative action in higher ed, the liberal arts colleges, I think, have really subsided in systematic efforts and aggressive use of best practices and even progressive measures, that their faculty champions and administrative champions on the campus would push for.

There just isn't any weight that makes administrators, unless they personally carry that investment, move in a strong and progressive way and deal with the heat that always arises in response. So I've seen that major pattern occurring at Denison as well. I hesitate to say that because I'm an administrator. I want to describe it as part of a larger pattern, you know. I want to speak responsibly as an administrator. And in my diversity role, I don't mind saying that, I'll try to search for ways to speak and be multi-tongued but still have a critique that bears some weight.

Part 5

[INTERVIEWER]: Did you find that Black students were distressed about some of their experiences here at Denison? And what, in your view, were some of the things that Black students were most dissatisfied with or distressed about?

[DR. KING]: Those things that Black students were distressed with and distressed about have not changed significantly. We may have changed and tried various responses as a college, or in parts of the college. But by in large, the issues remain the same that Black students discuss.

They discuss their daily life with the college and how there is this ongoing, erosive quality of life on a daily basis in terms of what happens within and outside of the classroom; it's like a daily, grinding, you know, it's like nature's, just wind on a rock. Just eroding, and they have to keep putting energy towards those things, energy to disengage, energy to engage, energy when to engage, energy about feeling why didn't I engage.

And so those things look like this - it can be comments made in the dorms, students speaking in class but then not speaking afterwards like they're totally invisible. It could be overt incidents or comments or subtleties that show that you're being seen not for who you are, but in a way that reduces you to your group; inaccurate and invalidating impressions of your group.

It's dealing with professors where, for whatever reasons, there's not inclusive teaching, not inclusive teaching efforts, so that the ways that other people speak, produce knowledge, get support for carrying out the work of academia, somehow your experience is in the margins of that. So your contributions are not heard when issues pertinent to your identity are raised. There are experiences where they are not supported or validated enough for substantive, analytical and intellectual discussion.

Information that's somehow conveyed about how to perform for the class to the expectations is more intricate to come by. Whether it be the way you're responded to when you meet and ask what should I do for this assignment, or whether it's the informal circuits of communication that students pass on to one another because parents are alum, because they're in the right fraternity or sorority, because people will work with them in groups in class readily or whatever those circuits are.

It's not having enough faculty of color or faculty who are diverse in various ways who are more likely to get it in terms of what a marginalized person's identity is here, or have the competency skills to cross the border, the psychological cultural border, of how to relate regardless of identity.

It's not, it's being in a residential world where there has to be extra resources to get the stimulation of a more complex environment. Like get to the city, get your hair done, get your social and religious and cultural needs met, find your foods. And so while you ask me about Black students, I think these patterns hold up intensely for Black students and some first gen students, but they perhaps are true in some ways for a lot of groups whether it be international students or gays, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual students. But anyway, it's those kinds of things that have not changed; they just seem very, very present.

Even though our numbers have changed, I feel like – you know, I can only speak for myself - but I feel like if you sat down with a student, you're going to hear this today, you would of heard it five years ago, you would've heard it ten years ago. The critical mass piece is very different from what I understand in terms of when we had just three Black students on campus, then ten, then twenty, you know ,...

Part 6

[DR. KING]: but for many years now, since I've arrived, we've had over a hundred African American students, and I think if you ask from the time that we broke that barrier and had over a hundred till today, there's going to be a lot of consistency in what you'll hear.

[INTERVIEWER]: Did you ever serve as a mentor or counselor to students, specifically in times of heightened racial conflict on campus?

[DR. KING]: Yes, and please note for the record how my eyes bugged out when you asked that because the tape recorder won't pick that up. All you had to do was say the word mentor and that has been my most gratifying experience at Denison. It's been the place I've given my life's blood, I would say in the classroom, of course, but that's mentoring - collective mentoring and educating.

But mentoring Black students, and particularly during times of crisis - and I say mentoring because there is an ethical boundary around advising students during times of racial crisis. Because a grassroots movement where students feel strongly about issues and want to move on those issues, they can definitely consult with faculty, I mean, of course.

At the same time, one never - and I know I guarded that carefully, and every colleague I know guards that carefully - one never actually tells students, you know, what to do. And I think we're very, very careful about the ethical line in terms of what's the appropriate way to be consulted.

It has to be the student's agenda, it has to be framed by the students, and yet there are - some of us are in fields, I mean actual academic disciplines, like organizational studies, political science, and Dr. Jackson's social movements expertise. Some of us are in fields where we can give students the benefit, what the literature says, what's effective, and some faculty simply have had experience in higher ed and have seen protests and the fallout; the advantages and disadvantages of particular strategies.

And we don't mind sharing that when students have a strategy in mind, or maybe saying here's a spectrum of strategies. I say this because I think this is worth bearing that it go down in history cause I don't think we're perceived that way by people who fear the power of faculty-student alliance.

But I think it should be said that we, that I and others that I've worked with, that we probably err more often in our mentoring of students on the side of caution because it's natural, I think, for generations who come after us, who are not as old as we are, to think in terms of the strongest thing that could be done.

And I think many of us would encourage students, if you use your strongest thing you don't have another thing after it, so even if it's just a matter of us seeing things that's most effective we often erred on the side of encouraging students to see the pros and cons of using the strongest thing.

I think we would not be likely to encourage a campus shutdown or a sit-in that closes things down when there are so many more things that could happen before people got to the point where they felt nothing else is going to work but the strongest thing we could think of. I kind of wanted to get that in but absolutely yes, I served in that role.

[INTERVIEWER]: Okay. It's apparent that you do have special training in the area of diversity. Did you receive this training at Denison or was it through other avenues?

[DR. KING]: Well, I received some really good training at Denison. My actual training, my training at Denison I'm referring to is experiential. What I've done here has taught me a great deal that I don't think I could have learned any other way. This has been my best experiential site for training.

But my actual training came from my doctorate in organizational behavior, came from my masters in counseling, where we had to think and study ethnic...

Part 7

[DR. KING]: and racial identities and how one supports growth and development of those individuals.

At SUNY-Binghamton I was involved in a lot of diversity committees, but by it being a larger college and me being on the tenure track, I wasn't really involved in the politics, aside from my support of students. I wasn't pushing for policy changes in any strong manner other than to be a voice on various committees, and often not a very important voice but sometimes a window dressing voice.

[INTERVIEWER]: Describe a time of political and/or social change at Denison, and would you tell me about your role in this moment among Black students on campus?

[DR. KING]: Of course, the most recent thing I can think of would be the fall of 2007, when there were a series of incidents that created unrest for several groups - for gay, lesbian and bisexual and transsexual students, for women students, for black students - I can recall incidents that affected all three of those

groups specifically. And in that moment, while there's so much to describe, can you give me a little bit of some of the directions I might take?

[INTERVIEWER]: I guess maybe you could describe the mood, maybe, different avenues of conversation, what the direction in fixating different issues to move towards social change.

[DR. KING]: Okay, that's really helpful. Well let me start out by saying, and I'm sure that you'll hear this from others, that one of the key precipitating events was, that effected black students, was a poster...a flier for an event by a singing group on campus, an all white, male singing group in which they used the image of a noose in their publicity and students saw the posters or fliers up in public space and recognized the issue with the noose being used.

And there were not other images, even though it was in the context of Halloween, there were not witches and goblins and ghosts, there was just a border with nooses, and this was in the recent wake of an event, a national event, in which students at a high school in the south had protested very, very publicly across the - in their area - but it got nationwide attention about the problematic of the noose: what it signifies, how painful it is.

And this event was in the public eye on a frequent and whole basis and Denison students had done some educating on campus and some protesting in camaraderie with that group of students in the south. And so, in close juxtaposition to that national event to have a noose appear on our campus created a sense of injury, emotional pain, and I would say disgust and outrage from our students.

Just an immediate, I think it just felt like sort of being punched in the gut because you could feel the visceral pain when students talked about this; how could this happen? This is an educational institution, and it's an institution where we have classes that deal with these issues every day. What must people think of us to publicize an event in this manner?

So as, when you say some of the conversations and directions that occurred as this event unfolded, I was immediately contacted at home by students that I work with as leaders on campus. I was, I believe I was...my mind is going bad; I believe I was advisor to the BSU.

The first contact I came was with a student who just had my home cell number and wanted me to know. It was an informal student; they didn't hold an official position in the BSU. They just said you need to know this: Here's what's happened, here's what students are talking about, here's what the BSU plans to do.

I think that this student was not being secretive. I think BSU members knew this person was going to contact me,...

Part 8

[DR. KING]: but by the time I arrived on campus the next day, the students had organized themselves and a representative group, appropriate in terms of being BSU officers and leaders in the BSU, had set up a meeting with Dale Knobel to express their concern, to ask for redress, and with the full expectation that the institution would take a strong stand with them in rectifying the situation.

The students, I believe, had also contacted the group of students themselves - the students who were singing and planning an event and had begun to work through a very interesting process of speaking openly with their peers about here's what we saw, here's what we did, here's what we think and feel, and we would like for you to take action in rectifying this situation.

The meeting with the President, the students did not feel good about that meeting. They felt that they had not been fully heard; that there was some defensiveness, as well as their experience of the President's comments to pick their battles, I know, was one of the phrases used, that they felt invalidated with that response, and didn't get a sense that emotionally there was a sense that this was public injury to us.

And so, so you can see that, from the institutional response, that was going to create a deeper need in the students. And I think one can also see that, while it could maybe get worse before it got better, that the action the students took to deal directly with their peers in dialogue had great promise for resolution. And everything that happened had promise for resolution at some point, but you can begin to see how things would unfold from there.

My role was to sit in on the meetings the students had with their peers which were held in the BSU lounge and which were conducted extremely well. Other faculty and administrators came to those meetings and, not everyone of course, they were held late; they were held on student time.

So for me that began a series of meetings where I wanted to know what was happening. And I thought it was important enough, and the students' emotions were running high enough, that I should know what was happening and that it would be remiss for me not to be-not to consider myself as advisor, a consultant to that process, and also a faculty member who loved the students.

And other faculty felt the same and held forth in their behavior in the same way. And students were respectful of us as faculty, considerate of our time, appreciative, even in those raw emotions. And I think we did our best not to consult. We didn't say a lot on the meetings. We kind of sat Ella Baker style as she sat with SNCC, forgive me, I'm getting my history mixed up.

So, and then we also met sometimes when the meetings were over, with the student leaders because they had a lot of information coming at them, a lot of groups wanting various kinds of approaches, a lot of feelings running high because you would hear other things on campus and you would mishear, be mad about this, that or the other, because people were running off of misinformation and there's always hotheads in any group. That wouldn't be college, that wouldn't be life. Hot heads in the faculty.

And there's people who talk a lot but aren't going to do anything, then there are doers who get up early in the morning and get the information out to everybody and what have you. It's behind the scenes, it's frontstage, backstage and everything in between.

Students also organized forums and made some really amazing action plans so that the student body could get accurate information, could be apprised on what was happening. And amazingly, the - I'm still impressed by this, it still is one of the stories that inspires and guides my life, that, you know, that you learn from students. The students of the BSU came up with a plan of reconciliation, if you will,...

Part 9

[DR. KING]:...and redress themselves where the group-why can't I think of the name of those boys?- Those young boys that sang...

[INTERVIEWER]: Hilltoppers?

[DR. KING]: The Hilltoppers! The hilltoppers was the group of white males whose poster had gone out, and that poster had gone out by a first year student member of their group who did not have all of their approval to put that poster up. And one has to wonder why that new member felt the need to get that particular poster up without the consent of his group. But that's an aside - one must wonder these things.

But anyway, so the students came up with a plan where the Hilltoppers would go forth with holding their concert and rather than singing once everyone came, because they were a very powerful presence on campus, as student leaders and athletes and scholars and artists and performers, and they draw a good crowd. A crowd that is not the converted - a crowd that does not always do things related to diversity, and a mixed crowd of all kinds people.

They thought, once the group had gathered, they would open the floor for diversity discussion. They did that beautifully. They understood from the BSU - the BSU had to hold their feet to the fire cause that was a bold move on their part, and while they wanted to do something, I don't think they initially wanted to be that public. But they came to, I think, understand the importance of it and they acted in concert with great integrity; not just like, well we're doing it because we have to - they really did it.

And it was an amazing and powerful forum that evening. Lots of faculty, staff, administrators and students, and I think it served its purpose and the students carried that off. Thought it up, worked it out, carried it off, and I will remember it all my life because of the way it happened. So, I don't know what else I might add.

[INTERVIEWER]: I mean, I think your description of the entire account of the incident, I think, was, from your end, very insightful so. If you didn't have anything else you wanted to add to that.

[DR. KING]: Since we were both here, you wanna add something? You need to go down on this, we need to interview you! What kinds of things that would enhance that story for anyone listening to this tape 15 years from now.

[INTERVIEWER]: I think it was an eye opener as a first year student, I think, to see.

[DR. KING]: your first year, huh?

[INTERVIEWER]: First year, yeah. So it was, it was huge. A group of us was just so new to this atmosphere, to see the level of political activism, if you will, I mean, and social activism. I had never been, you know, exposed to anything like this before. I've been exposed to incidents such as these, but not to see it rectified in the way that it was.

So to see the different levels of leadership among students and really seeing on our end, this is what we wanna see happen, and we will fight until we see something happen, that was very encouraging to me. I mean these became people that I definitely looked up to and, you know, had many, many conversations, and I think that it doesn't always take times like these to have these types of conversations.

And I think that's where I often get so aggravated because, in times when you are underneath the fire, then everyone wants to congregate together, but no, these are conversations that are a part of everyday life and should take place every day. Now certain people do have these conversations everyday because they are- it's important to them.

[DR. KING]: Yes, but not campus-wide.

[INTERVIEWER]: Not campus-wide

[DR. KING]: Not class-in all these different classrooms that don't always have this topic. Yeah, it was amazing. Wow, to be a first year student. So this is great; so that means the last group who experienced those events are seniors now?

[INTERVIEWER]: Mhmm. Yep. So I mean, we've —we've been through a couple of, a couple of—and it's kind of interesting to just kind of speak with students from the eighties and, you know, kind of see their different methodologies when approaching times. It's not always the same, even though it's the same types of things happening and I think it's kind of like...

Part 10

[INTERVIEWER]: a generational difference, so it's kind of tying everything together.

[DR. KING]: I totally agree, because when I was in college, even though it wasn't here and it was a big public institution, our strategies would've been different because it would've been the seventies. And what the culture could bare and what the culture would respond to nationally and in higher ed changes.

And the strategies that occurred around this event we're talking about at Denison, a lot of those strategies involved relationship building as a piece of it, less confrontation, coalitions - coalitions were a part of the seventies but the discourse is different.

We had a more-it was more normative to have a more in-your-face discourse because it was like getting the nation, in the various contexts you were in, getting the attention for the first time. And this was kind of in this multicultural era where people want to talk about race in a different way. They don't want to fight. People wanna talk about race.

So while there were intense emotions, when conversations were perceived or even protests were perceived as confrontational and combative, people usually got sanctioned and I'm thinking of [name] - I'm not speaking confidentially but if you feel I shouldn't mention the name-in my mind it's okay.

[INTERVIEWER]: Okay.

[DR. KING]: It was a public situation and it's in people's minds. I'm just talking out loud to make sure what I'm doing is okay.

But I know when [name] had her meltdown, got really, really upset, and [name] was a student, [redaction], very bright, active student leader, well-liked by faculty, staff and administration and students across all races and ethnicities, [description of student redacted].

But when she - we were having the big, huge gathering, spontaneous gathering outside on the quad and the helicopters from the news media were flying overhead, there were journalists on campus with microphones and cameras, interviewing people, what's this about.

Hundreds and hundreds of students poured into the quad. The mic and platform set up and students were speaking from the heart after the confounding incident in which a flier with the swastika was placed under the door of a black male student, an RA, resident advisor, which said was threatening him to stop participating as a leader in these protest activities on campus.

And the flier slipped under his door had a swastika on it, and when students saw that, everybody on the campus was outraged and the student body, somehow they got that connection to the Holocaust and the silencing and intimidating and hostile behavior. So when students learned about that and were pouring onto campus, there were some-there were classes in session and [name] and a small group of students, took it upon themselves to go to the doors and say look what's happening right outside your class, and right outside your window. Do you know this is happening? Do you really just wanna sit in class?

I mean it was confrontational, it was combative. They burst in the doorways of classrooms, they burst into my classroom; my FYS class was sitting there like what should we do, Dr King? And I said - I asked the protesters - well first, when they saw me they were like oh, we can skip this door but when I saw them and I knew my students would be startled and perhaps misinterpreted, I said why don't you come in and really say what it is you're encouraging cause I would like for my students to hear what you have

to say. So they kind of wanted to get as many classrooms as possible so they didn't really want to come all the way in and stop the flow of things.

Also, I thought it might break the emotion which I felt could go high. In fact, it doesn't bother me when emotion goes high. Students don't become irrational; they might become less rational but nobody, in my view, was gonna be hurt or harmed.

Like I said, in the seventies that discourse was the discourse. You know, you shouted. The women's movement, we shouted, - you know, I didn't shout in the women's movement; as a woman of color I had a different role but...

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[DR. KING]: people shouted in the women's movement, during my era.

So the students said a bit about what was going on outside but then they kinda kept moving. And so then my students were looking at me and I said okay, this is something to analyze, let's talk about what this means.

When students - first of all, when a group that feels marginalized and gets worked up to this point, this is what we've been talking about all semester, what do y'all think? And then I said, before we analyze it, let me ask anyone here, do you feel compelled in your soul to go outside and be a part of it? And if you do, then there will not be any penalties here.

And so one girl jumped up and she said I have to be there and I'm like, best wishes to you. The other, I said for those of you who wanna sit and analyze this just to get a better perspective, if as we talk, you decide, oh I get it, I need to be there, no penalty for you here.

For those of you who feel like that's no the way you wanna make your contribution to justice even though you get it, that's just not for you, no penalty here. And that's diversity, that's pluralism - let's talk about that. Lets talk about how one makes those choices and decisions and that will be amazing learning for us.

But when I said the discourse is different each generation I uh, [name] after that day, that was one day, and that was maybe an hour in one day; she did anger one professor who's name I don't feel it would be good for me to mention. And that professor shared it with other colleagues and the colleagues were outraged, the professor was outraged and the fallout that came back to [name] was very intense.

She did a public apology in person, she went before the mic at one of the events on campus, or maybe more than one, and said that day I handled myself based on emotion and I really apologize and there was at least one professor who felt I had disrespected and disrupted her class and made it difficult for her here at the college, by doing that.

And it just seemed that time and time again, people kept coming to that student, as well as others, [Name # 2] was another one, and although there was some expectations from people who knew [Name # 2], because she was a more confrontational voice on an ongoing way, and people expected or maybe projected onto her, well that's just [Name #2].

But for [name], she had a soft spoken but powerful transformational voice, and so people were using that against her and this goes into my Black women's leadership theory but, people were almost saying not you, aren't you a good one? You know, how could you raise your voice? How could you? And it just seemed to go on and on and on, so I guess I point that out to say, students, when I talk to people of different generations, they do seem to use different tools, partly because they think what will work, what's the tone of the country, what's the tone of the college, and you get different fallout and you don't wanna spend all your time dealing with fallout. So you almost choose what discursive tools, along with other tools, you need.

[INTERVIEWER]: I think it's important to just - you just have to handle every case individually and not just kind of lump everything together. Although you see a lot of these incidences very cyclical, you're dealing with, like I said, different generational and it's just, I don't know, I guess kinda start with the seventies, I've interviewed a couple of alums from that period, these are individuals who had a first hand in being a part of the BSU in its first originate, origins and everything. And one thing that one individual noted, how we were able to be successful is we handled our business within the classroom. Once we mastered that, we were able to move outside and handle everything else to make everything full circle and make every - to create more of a social change and we saw, but until that point, what were we gonna do? Cause first and foremost, we are here to handle our business academically. Then you move on...

[DR. KING]: And outreach from there...

[INTERVIEWER]: Exactly. My dad, he was an alum in the eighties...

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[INTERVIEWER]: group and himself, along with others, we came. It was a time where we needed to survive, take care of business. It wasn't necessarily - there were things internationally that was going on that they did kind of contribute to, in terms of the divestment movement and things like that, but in terms of things on campus, it was a lot more subtle.

[DR. KING]: Yes, the eighties when it got subtle, modern day racism, yes.

[INTERVIEWER]: So when I got there, you know, and I would call him and I would talk to other individuals, Gary Simpson, that's my uncle, well that was one of my dad's good friends. So yeah, that's my uncle, so I'm talking to my dad, I'm talking to him, and I'm like these are things that are happening and I wanna be involved and you know, they're like that's great but how are your grades? And so I just think that that was very interesting to hear that but now that I've talked with them about these certain things, now I see where they're coming from.

[DR. KING]: So do you think there was a greater conscious effort to make sure the academics was solid and that that was a part of the political strategy more so than today?

[INTERVIEWER]: I think so because that's a way of- it's a battleground, if you will. That's just kind of another, the major forum on campus where people see your validity.

[DR. KING]: It sure is. And nobody can dismiss your politics by saying, well they're not good students but they cause all these problems, or they're not good students so perhaps they shouldn't be involved in any committees or involved in this or that. You can say they're holding their own, look at the data we have on those who graduated on time, who kept a good GPA, those who qualified to pledge sororities, go abroad, etc, because they're in good academic standing.

[INTERVIEWER]: But at the same time I think you have to evaluate the classroom setting. Not everyone is conducive to everyone, so its like if you- if a student is struggling because of their classroom setting and the structure, then yeah, their success rate is gonna be lower. So then that may cause them to seek out other forums, try to create more of a successful, I guess, environment for themselves so that they can excel like their peers.

[DR. KING]: That was well said, so nobody has a tendency to reduce it down when it's complex and interactive.

[INTERVIEWER]: Exactly. So did you have anything else you wanted to say to that piece?

[DR. KING]: No, and I like the dialogue. Let's do that. Improvising as a researcher.

[INTERVIEWER]: How did you view the BSU as an organization whose purpose was to advocate for the Black community at Denison - or how do you view?

[DR. KING]: I view the- at that time, during the protests- we can make it context specific. I viewed the BSU as a very complex organization with a complex history, but absolutely essential to the college politically. And for all that I have seen of the BSU over the time I've been at Denison and all I've learned about it, I don't think there's ever been a time where it wasn't politically viable and where the BSU didn't respond with efficacy to crises, racial crises on campus, and it was the same when I was a part of that, this fall of '07 events.

It was particularly, I think, enhanced by Romero Huffstead's leadership. I thought he was extraordinary. While I wanna say that and contextualize it, in the sense of, I saw a lot of extraordinary leadership amongst students. He was particularly effective in his role of leadership, but the quality of leadership I saw was high across the board. He had a particular style that lent...

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[DR. KING]:...itself to, even before the crisis, to alliance building coalitions and relational leadership where people just wanna work with you. They wanna work with him as a person and if he has a vision, he articulates it well, and people wanna get on board. They wanna be a part of it.

So he used that- he maximized that during those events. Now the BSU was also fortunate to have people, perhaps across the years, but in this year maybe things that stand out so starkly because the BSU was fortunate to have people who knew how to voice and articulate issues and create the emotional connection with overall constituency.

And I'm thinking of Joseph Butler and the way he can pull at the heartstrings and still use the knowledge, the research, the literature. He was particularly effective when a group of representative students from the BSU came to our general faculty meeting and symbolically they came in, Darren Collins, carrying a noose in his hand, stood before us, dressed professionally, and Joseph Butler was the chosen designated speaker.

And he put in context, intellectually and emotionally, for a faculty of over a hundred people, exactly why Black students were upset and the implications for the broader student body. Did it all in what, five minutes? So they answered a few questions and then they quietly filed out so we could conduct business.

There were people who were in tears, lots of people had teared up, but the BSU was blessed to have people where the roles they filled were just timely, like in any good - like in my field, organizational behavior, in any group dynamic situation, if leaders are allowed, and if there's synergy where people can bring their particular talents to the fore, that's what I saw in the BSU at that time.

So I had a very high esteem for the BSU and their response to that situation, and I thought it was not just- not just a public affirmation, but they received the award, the Martin Luther King Award from the state of Ohio. It really- It was public affirmation but it was also true on the ground in real life that that award was given in the spirit of what King, I think, would've like to see us do when faced with a crisis of identity and the race. So yeah.

[INTERVIEWER]: Were you in agreement or disagreement with how the administration as a whole dealt with concerns of the Black community at this time, and can you explain an issue with which you agreed with the administration, disagreed, I don't know?

[DR. KING]: Okay, on the tape let it be known that I'm raising my eyebrows. I, as an administrator currently, who has - is having an extraordinarily affirming experience in my year as associate provost, and who sees the vision that our provost has for the college in terms of diversity and that our president has in terms of diversity, in ways that I was not able to see before as a faculty member, I can only honestly say I was disappointed, in spite of this context, I was disappointed at our institutional response.

I understood our institutional response and I don't think there's a perfect institutional response and- but I have to say I was disappointed at our initial response. And our response since then, I think, could be

more, I would say, aggressive. I wanna do everything! But progressive, or proactive or bold and strong. So I'm disappointed.

So I have to own that in terms of - I have high expectations for what we can do. I think there's a lot we can do that would not necessarily cost money. Although putting money into institutional transformation is a sign that it is a priority. I do understand there's always some budgetary limits. But I think there's a lot we could have done and could still do.

Some institutional change has to come from the faculty - curricular change. But here's...

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[DR. KING]: what I would have liked at that time, I don't wanna hedge. What I would have liked at that time is for us to have clearly validated the students' concern as worthy of our institutional backing. If we fail to do it, because I had to laugh, I don't think I told our president this, but when the student told me what had happened, I said the same thing our president said; I said I don't know, better think about this, we better pick our battles cause there's always some thing happening at Denison. Are you sure this is the one? A flier, really?

But the - so I certainly understand that response and people of my generation not being there, not seeing the flier, not seeing the hurt, that's a natural response. And I guess with diversity, there's no perfect responses. It's not what I teach in class, it's not when we mess up, cause we will mess up. If you have any guts and if you're really living, you will mess up, unless you put yourself in a bubble and don't interact. You will mess up.

You will intend to validate and you will invalidate, you will intend to back somebody and they won't feel backed by you. I make errors everyday in my GLBT relations because I just- I do, and my colleagues help me and trust me. I remember a colleague calling and saying, you know, you said this in a meeting and I was hurt by it. I said tell me about it. And I said, well I'm hurt knowing that I hurt you.

And just the other day, with the diversity advisory committee I asked about something and some members of the committee said, I don't think you get that yet. I said, tell me about it. So when we mess up- if in meeting with our president, students felt the comments didn't really get it, I think we should come back and say I did not get it. You know, okay, lets work it out.

And I have to give our administration credit. They did come back and work again over time, but I would have liked to have seen us step up. I was reading a lot of these incidents that were happening across campus and there were a lot of things with nooses. And I noted when I read an article that said the president of the college stepped in that space and said this is unconscionable, this shouldn't happen, this college will not allow this to go uncorrected. You know, you step in there and you show that group that they- that you're there with them in that fire.

And I believe that we got there, but I feel early on we were weaker there. I think from what I heard from our GLBT faculty, since one of the incidents- we've said there were a series of incidents that led to this campus wide protest scenario- but I think that with our GLBT faculty, at least the couple of folks that I talked to, when they went to the provost about an incident where slurs were written in the dormitory regarding GLBT identity, and directly - I think directed toward a particular student, not just generically toward the group but because a particular student was being harassed, verbally disrespected.

I believe their experience was that the provost heard that plea. Again, whether actions were appropriate or whatever, people initially wanna know, are you in here with me, with my pain? You know, there was a joke, when Clinton said, I feel your pain, I don't even remember the context now, but I think we joke about it because I think the first level of responses, people wanna know, do you understand me? Do you understand what my group feels about this?

And then, of course, people wanted that followed up with action. But human to human, I think the discourse in this era is, do you understand why this hurts my group? And that was initially- I think we could've been stronger there. If that responsibility could be shared then, you know,...

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[DR. KING]: I would put myself in there. At the time I wasn't an administrator but it doesn't need to be located with any particular person, but as an institution; in the culture for those who could have made that existential human response, we could've been stronger there and then with the action, that shows we mean it.

[INTERVIEWER]: I guess that your comments kind of hones in on the next question which deals with your personal involvement. How important did you view your involvement, as well as other staff members, within the student protests?

[DR. KING]: I thought the faculty involvement was really, really important and my involvement, I thought it was central. I think students need to know they're working hand in hand with faculty. And I think history nationally, in higher ed and at Denison, has born out that whenever - the most significant changes have been made with faculty, students and administrators hand in hand.

And so I felt my role was crucial and not any more so than any other faculty. Because I was advisor to the BSU, that was a specific role but that didn't make it a more important one because, had I been a faculty that wasn't an advisor, I probably would have still participated in the same meetings, said the same kind of things.

And even faculty who couldn't be at particular meetings, we always touched base with each other and shared the information, called special meetings among ourselves, call students in to make sure we knew what had happened, asked students to come meet with us, tell us what happened and what your plans are, tell us what you think is going wrong, tell us how you've been responded to.

So it was always a collective; crucial in my role, equal to the cruciality - just made up a word- of other people and their role.

[INTERVIEWER]: Overall, are you pleased with your involvement in these events?

[DR. KING]: Yeah.

[INTERVIEWER]: Is there anything you would change about it?

[DR. KING]: I don't think so.

[INTERVIEWER]: How do you currently view the faculty, staff and administration's participation in times of racial conflict on Denison's campus? Is it substantial, more passive? If you could describe that.

[DR. KING]: Our current involvement in specific events or on a daily basis?

[INTERVIEWER]: We'll talk about both.

[DR. KING]: I think faculty are sufficiently involved. Faculty and staff - We have a black caucus on campus; we stay apprised to things as best we can. I think we learned from the recent events of the fall and the subsequent events of the DCGA - conflict between the BSU and DCGA. I think we learned to be more involved or to structure that involvement. We have a liaison- the BSU helped us with this; proposed a liaison between the Black Caucus; a formal liaison- a student that will have that contact with the Black Caucus, will come to our meetings and inform us.

And then there's a student that serves on the Black Studies Committee, when we can find someone available, but I think it heightened our need to make sure we have that. If the designated person isn't available, we ask the BSU to help us find someone else. If their schedule changes or what have you, they go abroad, we make sure we have that. So we tightened up the linkages and I think the involvement is still an interest among faculty, staff, administration, support staff is very high, very present.

[INTERVIEWER]: Do you think that - just to kind of broaden it across many different fields; I mean, I guess in current conversations I've had with some faculty. Some, and maybe I'll narrow it down to [redaction]. They feel as if it's very diverse in terms...

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[INTERVIEWER]: of students that are majors, the conversations that have taken place in class. And I just found that kind of interesting. So if there is a high level of interest among faculty, in terms of creating these linkages, to make sure that it is verbalized and communicated to students, that these types of things are of interest to them. How can faculty members do that?

[DR. KING]: I'm really glad you brought that up. I, by being a Black Studies and Women's Studies faculty member, I work with people who are extremely passionate about the issues of justice and politics of that [go on] on our campus, so my perspective is very biased. There are faculty who perceive their level

of involvement in diversity as sufficient and that may not be the case. And there are faculty whose interest is not there and they're okay with that.

And I think students are experiencing that whole gamut and I'm experiencing a very specific population. It's a big population – Women's Studies and Black Studies and Queer Studies. Those are my colleagues that whenever I'm in a meeting, some of those colleagues are there. Whenever I'm talking about those issues, those colleagues are right there.

But you have students participating in- across the campus- and they're taking courses outside of Black Studies and Women's Studies. And so I think your point broadens the issue beyond what I am dealing with on a daily basis. And to have a [Name] Department that is not, as a whole – you know, not speaking to individuals but speaking to the department as a whole - perceived as involved in the [redaction] framing and interrogation of domestic issues. One, that's a critique I hear.

And then two, at a level of daily experience rather than abstract theory, three- was that two out of three? That's two. And three, not - I have to say things that I know directly - not conveying to their majors and minors the importance of domestic issues and the importance of learning through the politics in your own daily context, whatever. That's what I know directly and that has to have a bearing on the students of color with these kinds of issues.

[INTERVIEWER]: I guess I kinda look at it as Denison being a white liberal arts institution; if you look at how different student protests on PWI campuses have evolved, they're tackling not necessarily the more closer to home issues. But, on a broader scale- because I feel as though people are afraid to focus in on issues that are more closer to them- It's easier to focus on things that are abroad. And it makes, I guess, more of a self-gratification for them because they're more aware internationally and, you know.

[DR. KING]: Yes, and that's got good capital- cultural capital now across the nation now. To say I'm familiar with the issues in Serbia, Bosnia, and whatever. But you're absolutely right; there's a level of abstraction removed from daily life. It's a huge issue affecting our campus with the de-emphasizing of domestic racial politics in particular. It's huge; it cripples our students and to me it detracts from our excellence as a college.

[INTERVIEWER]: That was just something I've been thinking about and, you know, seeing some certain courses...

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[INTERVIEWER] offered. Again, it's not just [redaction], but I feel as though I've taken a wide range of courses in my time here but, I don't know, in terms of seeing how things are evolving politically, you know seeing more students wanting to become more politically aware and more politically active and seeing the types of students that are involved in these types of things. You know, I'm just trying to tie everything together.

[DR. KING]: [redaction] I agree with you. It could be an example that also applies to other departments. I mean, you have to wonder- I wonder about economics. I think it's also - there are a lot of issues- In fact our provost is an economist and he was saying that- I think I was asking something about the discipline, and he was saying that most economists do a more theoretical form of economics and even nationally there's not that many that do the economics of race.

[INTERVIEWER]: But why not?

[DR. KING]: Well, I don't know, because I would like to see those kinds of courses- even one course at Denison. We got such issues with employment, I forget the category of economics it is but, yeah, why not? Why wouldn't we want that to prepare our students in addition to the theoretical dimensions, so - and you're in touch with a lot of students and I can imagine that being a critique in the different fields they're in.

[INTERVIEWER]: Okay, well, I don't know. We could have a conversation about that, but.

[DR. KING]: I'm sure we will.

[INTERVIEWER]: What advice would you give current students and prospective students when racial incidences occur?

[DR. KING]: I don't remember that being on your... What advice would I give? There is something that I have been learning that I like to keep in mind when those kinds of things occur, and I think when students come to me or if students come to me, or even just in my imagination of this.

I would like for students to think about what did they want to be the outcome once one processes their feelings, and what this means and how they're affected. I mean, we're not just mechanical people who go immediately to some linear set of steps. But I would like for students, as they think about an incident and they realize it's important enough to take action and take concerted action, I would like for students to think about what outcome - so what do you want if you were to address this? Even if it's, you know, we're gonna go talk to the vice president of student affairs, or we're gonna go do this.

I would like for students for everything they're thinking of doing, think - so you want the outcome of that conversation to be what? Are you on a series of conversations with key persons and you want the outcome to be what? And I have to do that myself if I'm thinking about action, political action in any arena.

But the other thing- advice I give students is - I would always ask students to think about the trade-off. Is this the time? Is this the thing to put energy in? Cause I have that dual model as well. Your academics is a form of protest. It's a form of resistance. And so, whenever you want to put energy in another direction, think about whether this particular situation warrants that cause you can't- you know, it's not possible in hegemony to address everything. And so, that's always a piece of my advice.

Another piece is think about how to get collective action going, both internally in any group you're a part of, and across groups or in other groups that have an interest in sharing this fight, or this action

plan or this strategy or this initiative; whatever it might be. So internally, because one difference sometimes in the narratives from earlier groups and current groups is sometimes the student thinks in terms of...

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[DR. KING]: I'm going forward, rather than we are going forward. It depends on the student of course. And often people who have the resilience to really get out there are also people with ego strength and they think in terms of I; you know, I'm getting ready to do this. And I'm like, with whom, for whom, and who ought to be involved with you, and what others have experienced this? So your voice can be a part of that. And, can you cultivate, bring them on board- I mean that's more.

And when something hurts or oppresses or pushes against things that you need and want and have maybe needed for sometime, and this is just the one that broke through and you're like, I'm not taking this anymore, to find out whether that is shared and get people on board and find out if there are others, or if you can go forward as an organization. It's a longer, more unwieldy, more complicated, uncertain, ambiguous process. So that's the trade-off. But I think it's a better move and so I usually - I would advise students to do that.

And then there are times where simply on the students own, they would want to express themselves in an email or have a meeting, an initial conversation - not everything has to go to a group. There are things that should be handled as an individual, at least initially.

And sometime several people need to speak to it. Do you know if other students have experienced this? Should they also write their own letters? So I try to get them to think through, at what level- what's the simplest level at which this can be handled.

But If it is an issue with implications that are fairly broad and its ongoing and intense and its cumulative, then how do you work with others rather than, I'm just gonna get out there and fight it.

I try to give students advice as to whether there's a vehicle on campus that carries these issues forward. Is there- for sexual assault- is there a group that deals with sexual assault? If it's related to Greek life, is there a group that deals with Greek life? if it's related to campus climate, is there a group that deals with campus climate? So that there's a group that says, we as the group represent all these issues.

So, interestingly, students at Denison have been good in thinking through many of those pieces, so I don't have to start from scratch. Those are things that I raise.

[INTERVIEWER]: Well, we're gonna now move into the concluding segment of the interview, which is focusing more on some of the broader reflections about the periods of political actions among Black students at Denison. So what do you recall as the most impressive about the kinds of political action you saw students engage in on campus? You shared the story you said you would take with you for the rest of your life. Is there any other impressions that you were like wow, you know.

[DR. KING]: I would have to say the courage that I've seen, more so than me speaking about actual skills, and competencies and leadership styles. The sheer courage and the ability to withstand the heat because when you're in political action, you revisit all those feelings of injury.

And if you decide not to take something on, you can push your anger away and use it for another day. Or you can get it off you so you can take your exam. But to study and to be in a demanding and rigorous environment, and to have to keep your connection to the world of your mind body spirit, because that'll keep telling you why the issue is important and how it makes one feel when they have to live life with that issue. So you can't completely divorce from it and carry out your social change. So we live in that heat and that fire.

A lot of times when you're already under stress to perform, I have to admire the willingness to live in the middle of that intense crucible. That is more than a notion, and our students- they will walk right up in there and sit down. And I have to be inspired because that must have been what it felt like- I was sort of the baby end of the civil rights movement, in the sense of, around middle school, so there...

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[DR. KING]:...were adults kind of leading some of those charges of protest in Oklahoma in the sixties, and so- and then it lasted all up through college and the first years of my career. So I became an adult in that heat.

But seeing students now take that on when the culture of the liberal arts college is the culture where you have to use so much energy to find your place daily, because the culture is- and any culture we haven't lived in, so you're like in a new culture that's not quite designed for you to feel like there's a fit. Even when you've got lots of skills, unless you're extremely middle class; well, I can go into all the things I think make for that, but culturally it is designed for, I wouldn't say for mainstream but the upper echelon of the white cultural sphere.

And so it's new for many people of color and for first gen students and the like. So it's a bicultural intensive, and then when you add to that, social change, there are- I can't see how people don't burn out. And they do burn out and the other part [inaudible]. I guess I just want to convey how intense that is.

So that is my impression, that students willingly walk right in there and say, I believe I can contribute to changing this. And no student comes here wanting to fail academically, but the fact that students may underestimate the toll it will take on academically, psychically, emotionally, psychospiritually, that doesn't surprise me. Who could estimate it? But the fact that knowing that and it's amazing that students still walk in there, that impresses me; that's some courage.

[INTERVIEWER]: As you think back, what do you feel most affirmed about in terms of the role you played in during periods of political action?

[DR. KING]: Well, I guess it's like that character Cinque - Cinque I think- in the Amistad, at least in the movie, who said something such as, all that has gone before has brought me to this place. And I feel that everything I learned, every part of my education, all my organizational or career experiences. It brought me to the place that when the moment of protest arrives, I have something to bring to it. Something, no matter how seemingly small or seemingly big. I have something to bring to it. Even if it's to say I was there and when I looked into the eyes of my students, I said I'm here. You know, you're here, I'm here and we'll make the best of whatever change we can make. Even if we don't control the outcome, we will know we stood. That gratifies me.

[INTERVIEWER]: Is there anything else you would like to share that I haven't asked about?

[DR. KING]: You've done a beautiful job with the interview. It felt like a conversation in the living room. And you have such a lovely home. [inaudible] I liked the insights that you shared because it could draw out different perspectives and it could counter my vantage point as a faculty member to hear, as a student, how you were seeing things or areas of the campus you were seeing that I don't see. I really, really enjoyed it and if this is your interview style, it is magnificent. You have a great career in gathering in depth research data on sensitive political areas. You just drew me out.

[INTERVIEWER]: Thank you, thank you. Well that concludes our interview, so thank you again for taking time out today.

[DR. KING]: This is perfect.

[INTERVIEWER]: Thank you.