

# A Guide to the Black Studies, Black Spaces oral histories SdArch.0046

Black Studies, Black Spaces oral histories

2019



## Title Statement

A Guide to the Black Studies, Black Spaces oral histories SdArch.0046

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## Profile Description

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## Descriptive Summary

**Unit ID**

SdArch.0046

**Unit ID**

/repositories/4/resources/779

**Unit Date**

2019

**Language**

English

**source**

Godfrey, Mollie, 1979-

**Extent**

22.1 Gigabytes 98 digital files

**Repository**

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

## Administrative Information

**Conditions Governing Access**

This collection is open for research. Agreements with the interviewees govern access to oral history interviews.

**Conditions Governing Use**

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**Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Gift of Molly Godfrey, 2024.

## Scope and Contents

This collection contains three classroom panel discussion sound recordings as well as forty-one oral history interviews with thirty-six narrators conducted during the Fall 2019 Black Studies and Black Spaces course offered by the African, African American, and Diaspora Studies (AAAD) program. The interviews comprise a diverse group of narrators, including community members, faculty (current and former), students, administrators, staff, and alumni, reflecting on their experiences and perspectives related to Black studies and the creation of Black spaces within academic and community contexts.

The materials include 98 digital files comprising audio recordings (.wav), corresponding transcripts (.docx), and supporting documentation (.docx and .pdf). Oral history interviews with Joanne Gabbin, Chervon Moore, David Owusu-Ansah, Jacqueline Walker, and Amanda Yankey were conducted over multiple sessions.

The interviews explore themes such as the historical development of Black Studies as an academic discipline, its impact on institutional policies, the role of Black spaces in fostering identity and community, and the intersection of scholarship and activism. Topics include curriculum development, advocacy for interdisciplinary programs, student-led initiatives, and collaborations with local Black communities.

Subthemes address cultural memory preservation, intersectionality (race, gender, and class), critiques of diversity frameworks in academia, and the challenges of sustaining inclusive spaces within predominantly white institutions.

## Keywords

oral histories (literary works)

Godfrey, Mollie, 1979-

## Arrangement

The collection is divided into two series. The oral histories are arranged alphabetically by surname of interviewee.

- Classroom Panel Discussion Sound Recordings, 2019
- Oral History Interviews, 2019

## Description of Subordinate Components

**Classroom Panel Discussion Sound Recordings**

**Unit ID** 1

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31135

**Unit Date** 2019

## **AAAD Faculty Panel Discussion on Black Spaces at JMU**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0001

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31139

**Unit Date** 2019 March 1

**Language** English

**Creator** Walker, Jacqueline Baldwin, 1949-

**Creator** Owusu-Ansah, David (19520801)

**Creator** Reich, Steven A. (Steven Andrew), 1965-

**Creator** Adams, Melinda, (Political science teacher)

**Creator** Porter, Rob

**Creator** Bishop, Kayleigh

**Creator** Adkins, Ant

**Extent** 2.23 Gigabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 1:04:37 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

### **Scope and Contents**

This panel discussion documents the institutional history of JMU's AAAD Studies program through the perspectives of founding faculty members, covering several key themes. The founding of AAAD Studies traces its origins to 1980s student-led initiatives that called for Black-centered curricula, with Dr. Jacqueline Walker detailing her 1976 arrival at Madison College, where she developed early African American history courses. Dr. David Owusu-Ansah recounts the collaborative efforts across departments to secure federal grants for African Studies, emphasizing the importance of interdisciplinary partnerships with art history, political science, and English. Faculty also reflect on the pedagogical challenges of teaching Africana content to predominantly white student bodies; Dr. Steven Reich discusses his approach to dismantling racialized medical biases through historical analysis, while Dr. Melinda Adams highlights her use of African novels in political science courses to counter Eurocentric scholarship. Additionally, Dr. Walker and Dr. Owusu-Ansah analyze retention strategies for BIPOC faculty, noting that JMU has relied more on interpersonal networks than on structural reforms for support. The panel further critiques JMU's fraught relationship with Harrisonburg's Black communities, with Dr. Reich acknowledging the resistance to archiving local Black history.

## **Black Women in the Academy Panel Discussion**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0002

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31140

**Unit Date** 2019 October 15

**Language** English

**Creator** Moore, Chervon

**Creator** Black, Iona

**Creator** Bryson, B. J., Dr. (Brenda Jean)

**Creator** Porter, Rob

**Creator** Bishop, Kayleigh

**Extent** 2.33 Gigabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 1:07:17 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

### **Scope and Contents**

This panel discussion features conversations among Black women scholars, educators, and institutional leaders about their experiences in academic environments. The panelists reflect on systemic challenges, professional achievements, and intersectional identities within higher education. Key themes include institutional barriers to advancement, strategies for mentorship and community building, and the impact of race and gender on teaching practices. The discussion covers topics such as tenure processes, interdisciplinary collaboration, and navigating visibility in predominantly white academic institutions. The panelists offer critical insights into the sociopolitical dynamics of academia during the late 20th century. Additionally, the recording includes audience questions related to policy reform and solidarity frameworks. While there is minor background noise, the audio remains clear throughout. This material serves as a primary resource for scholars investigating the historiography of Black feminist thought, institutional equity movements, and oral history methodologies aimed at preserving underrepresented voices.

## **CMSS Divine Nine Panel Discussion on Black Greek Letter Organizations at JMU**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0003

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31141

**Unit Date** 2019 October 1

**Language** English

**Extent** 2.47 Gigabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 1:11:20 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

### **Scope and Contents**

This panel discussion explores the history and significance of Black Greek Letter Organizations (BGLOs) at James Madison University. The discussion lifts up BGLOs' roles as cultural affirmations and service leadership engines and addresses challenges within JMU's diversity landscape. BGLOs arose in the early 20th century in response to racial exclusion. Dr. Joanne Gabbin notes the founding of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. in 1908 at Howard University, focused on combating poverty. Alexander Gabbin traces Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.'s founding in 1911, emphasizing its commitment to academic survival amid racial hostility. Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., founded in 1922, began under KKK influence, underscoring the need for community service. Panelists distinguish BGLOs from predominantly white Greek organizations, noting their legal commitment to community uplift. Esther Nizer illustrates Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.'s activism during the 1913 Women's Suffrage March. Panelists share transformative personal journeys shaped by BGLOs, such as Alexander Gabbin, who gained leadership skills through Kappa Alpha Psi, and Chervon Moore, who found mentorship in Sigma Gamma Rho. BGLOs have significantly influenced JMU's diversity, with alumni taking on leadership roles across campus. Despite their legacy, BGLOs face declining visibility and membership due to reduced Black student enrollment and resource disparities. Esther Nizer mentions alumnae initiatives aimed at fostering connections and a need for greater university support. Panelists discuss the tension between tradition and the evolving views of students regarding BGLOs. The alumni networks of BGLOs play a critical role in retention and support. Dr. Joanne Gabbin shares her long-term mentorship with JMU's Alpha Kappa Alpha chapter. Esther Nizer discusses how her alumni chapter focused on scholarships and legislative advocacy, exemplifying BGLOs as lifelong commitments.

## **Oral History Interviews**

**Unit ID** 2

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31136

**Unit Date** 2019

### **Ireti Akinola interviewed by Zenobia Lee-Nelson**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0004

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31142

**Unit Date** 2019 November 19

**Language** English

**Creator** Akinola, Ireti

**Creator** Lee-Nelson, Zenobia

**Creator** Medeiros, Megan

**Extent** 2.7 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:05:22 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

### **Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Ireti Akinola, a Black Nigerian American recruitment specialist at James Madison University, who recounts her work recruiting faculty and staff across units including the Office of the President, Student Affairs, and Access and Enrollment Management. The interview documents her navigation of intersecting identities as a Black woman of Nigerian descent, the challenges of advancing institutional diversity initiatives, and her trajectory from JMU alumna to human resources professional. Discusses broader questions of representation, cultural belonging, and the experience of working within a predominantly white institution.

**Lauren Alleyne interviewed by Qyaira Colbert****Unit ID** SdArch46-0005**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31145**Unit Date** 2019 November 12**Language** English**Creator** Alleyne, Lauren K.**Creator** Colbert, Qyaira**Creator** Chang, Angelina Ingrassia**Creator** Nemergut, Margaret**Extent** 522 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:30:12 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Lauren K. Alleyne, Executive Director of the Furious Flower Poetry Center (FFPC) at James Madison University, who describes the center's operations, programming, and significance as the first academic center dedicated to Black poetry in the United States. The interview documents her responsibilities as editor-in-chief of the online journal "The Fight and The Fiddle," including fundraising, grant writing, and planning seminars, reading series, and other public programs. Discusses major events such as the "Throw Your Head Back & Sing" tribute to Maya Angelou and the Furious Flower 25th anniversary celebration; community engagement initiatives including children's summer arts camps, school visits, and regional collaborations; and institutional challenges related to budget, staffing, space, and campus visibility. Addresses the center's national and international profile, its relationship to JMU and the Harrisonburg community, and tensions between local recognition and national prominence in promoting Black poetry.

**Mecca Baker interviewed by Ashleigh Williams****Unit ID** SdArch46-0006**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31146**Unit Date** 2019 November 11**Language** English**Creator** Baker, Mecca**Creator** Williams, Ashleigh**Creator** Snyder, Hannah**Extent** 778.4 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:22:31 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Mecca Baker, who reflects on her experiences as a transfer student at James Madison University and her leadership in Black student organizations at a predominantly white institution. The interview documents her search for community, increasing involvement in the Black Student Alliance (BSA), and progression from Parliamentarian and Treasurer to President. Discusses efforts to revitalize BSA from a small, declining organization with limited institutional memory into a more visible, active group; initiatives to redesign the logo, expand programming, and preserve organizational records through donation to Special Collections; and the broader context of Black student life at JMU in the mid to late 2010s. Additional topics include campus protests and marches addressing racial issues, attempts to bridge divides between Greek and non-Greek Black students through events such as "To Greek or Not to Greek," participation in Esteem Models, and evolving conversations about mental health and sexuality within the Black community.

**Rebeca Barge interviewed by Michelle Pineda-Hernandez****Unit ID** SdArch46-0007**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31147**Unit Date** 2019 November 15**Language** English**Creator** Barge, Rebeca**Creator** Pineda-Hernandez, Michelle**Creator** Crosby, Tessa**Extent** 244.3 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:14:08 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Rebeca Barge, an immigrant from Central America and long-time Harrisonburg resident, who reflects on community engagement, diversity, and relationships between James Madison University and the city of Harrisonburg. The interview documents her work at the Harrisonburg City Public Schools Welcome Center assisting Latin American families with access to local resources and her subsequent role at JMU's Center for Multicultural Student Services (CMSS) supporting student organizations and diversity initiatives. Discusses her former position as Program Director at Big Brothers Big Sisters coordinating mentoring programs with JMU students and considers how these roles connect campus communities, local schools, and families in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County.

**Daniel Beers interviewed by Mistire Kifle****Unit ID** SdArch46-0008**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31148**Unit Date** 2019 November 6**Language** English**Creator** Beers, Daniel J.**Creator** Kifle, Mistire**Creator** Crosby, Tessa**Creator** Nemergut, Margaret**Extent** 937.8 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:27:08 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Daniel Beers, Associate Professor in the Department of Justice Studies at James Madison University, who recounts his humanitarian work and academic career with a focus on Haiti. The interview documents the founding and development of Resources to Resources, a nonprofit organization supporting community-driven development projects, and his efforts to involve students in international humanitarian work through cultural programming and experiential learning. Discusses critical perspectives on traditional humanitarian aid, ethical research practices in Haiti, fundraising concerts, challenges of scaling community-based initiatives and countering poverty narratives, and the intersections between academic research and community service in international development contexts.

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Preservica Access

**Tiffany Brutus interviewed by Norman Jones****Unit ID** SdArch46-0009**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31149**Unit Date** 2019 November 13**Language** English**Creator** Brutus, Tiffany**Creator** Jones, Norman**Creator** Haupt, Amy**Creator** Nemergut, Margaret**Extent** 1,078.8 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 01:02:25 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Tiffany Brutus, Assistant Director of Student-Athlete Services at James Madison University and JMU alumna, who reflects on her experiences as a student-athlete and administrator. The interview documents her undergraduate and graduate years as a track and field athlete from Ann Arbor, Michigan, earning bachelor's and master's degrees in Health Sciences in 2004 and 2006, and her engagement with the Center for Multicultural Student Services and the Black student community. Discusses her accomplishments as a four-time CAA Conference Champion, transition from student-athlete to graduate assistant in Student Athlete Services, and subsequent professional role supporting student-athletes. Additional topics include her service with the Black Alumni Chapter as Secretary, challenges in fostering Black alumni engagement, and observations on changes in Black student experiences at JMU from the 1980s through the 2000s.

**Cannie Campbell and Carrie Combs interviewed by Norman Jones****Unit ID** SdArch46-0010**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31150**Unit Date** 2019 November 14**Language** English**Creator** Campbell, Cannie**Creator** Combs, Carrie**Creator** Jones, Norman**Creator** Snyder, Hannah**Creator** Nemergut, Margaret**Extent** 480 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:41:40 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Cannie Campbell, Associate Vice President for Constituent Engagement, and Carrie Combs, Director of Alumni Relations and Executive Director of the JMU Alumni Association, who discuss their experiences as James Madison University alumni and advancement professionals. The interview, conducted at Sonner Hall, documents Campbell's transfer to JMU in 1995, completion of a B.S. in Health Sciences, and progression from positions in the Health Center and Student Affairs to University Advancement, as well as Combs's move from Southern California in 2003, degrees in Technical and Scientific Communication, and work in the private sector before returning to JMU. Discusses their institutional support and liaison roles with the Black Alumni Chapter, founded by Deborah Johnson in the 1980s, partnerships with the Office of Diversity, Access, and Inclusion and the Center for Multicultural Student Services, and gaps in institutional historical knowledge about Black alumni organizing.

### **Erica Cavanah interviewed by Qyaira Colbert**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0011

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31151

**Unit Date** 2019 November 07

**Language** English

**Creator** Cavanagh, Erica

**Creator** Colbert, Qyaira

**Creator** Chang, Angelina Ingrassia

**Creator** Nemergut, Margaret

**Extent** 712.8 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:41:14 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

#### **Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Erica Cavanagh, James Madison University faculty member and alumna, who reflects on her undergraduate years from 1993 to 1996 and later academic and teaching career. The interview documents her B.A. in English and Art History, participation in Dr. Joanne Gabbin's African American Poetry course during the inaugural Furious Flower Poetry Conference in 1994, and the course's emphasis on the Black Aesthetic, including jazz, blues, spirituals, biblical allusions, and vernacular traditions. Discusses her graduate studies at the University of Chicago focusing on poet Rita Dove, her attendance at Gwendolyn Brooks's funeral in 2000, and her ongoing work teaching African American literature and food studies at JMU, highlighting continuity between her student experiences and later pedagogy.

### **Art Dean interviewed by Zenobia Lee-Nelson**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0012

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31152

**Unit Date** 2019 November 11

**Language** English

**Creator** Dean, Art

**Creator** Lee-Nelson, Zenobia

**Creator** Parker, Mone'

**Creator** Shafik, Marina

**Creator** Nemergut, Margaret

**Extent** 28.6 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:57:08 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

#### **Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Art Dean, Executive Director for Access and Inclusion at James Madison University, who reflects on his 27-year career at the institution as both student and administrator. The interview documents his work in faculty and staff recruitment, development of diversity and inclusion initiatives, and efforts to create welcoming spaces for historically marginalized communities on campus. Discusses the evolution of campus diversity, the importance of mentorship, the formation of Black spaces at JMU, and his role on the President's Cabinet in advancing institutional commitments to access, inclusion, and intersectional understanding.

### **Alyssa Elliot interviewed by TaLisha Hairston**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0013

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31153

**Unit Date** 2019 November 19

**Language** English

**Creator** Elliott, Alyssa

**Creator** Hairston, TaLisha

**Creator** Conrades, Jenna

**Creator** Nemergut, Margaret

**Extent** 95.2 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:16:31 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

## Scope and Contents

Records an interview with Alyssa Elliott, a member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., who discusses her experiences with the African American Divine Nine organizations at James Madison University. The interview documents her perspectives on differences between Panhellenic and historically Black Greek letter organizations, the role of the Center for Multicultural Student Services as a safe and affirming space, and ongoing challenges related to Greek housing, visibility, and institutional support for Black Greek organizations. Discusses her sorority's commitment "to bridge the gap" by building connections across communities and addresses broader questions of representation, inclusion, and campus climate for students of the global majority.

## Joanne Gabbin

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0014

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31154

### Joanne Gabbin interviewed by Qyaira Colbert, Session 1

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0014a

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31177

**Unit Date** 2019 November 21

**Language** English

**Creator** Gabbin, Joanne V. (Joanne Veal), 1946-

**Creator** Colbert, Qyaira

**Creator** Nemergut, Margaret

**Extent** 617.9 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:35:45 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

### Scope and Contents

Records an interview with Dr. Joanne V. Gabbin, founder of the Furious Flower Poetry Center and professor emerita of English at James Madison University, who recounts the origins and development of the center from the inaugural 1994 conference honoring Gwendolyn Brooks. The interview documents the planning and challenges involved in organizing the first academic conference dedicated to Black poetry, the transformation of Furious Flower from a single event into a permanent center, and the cultural significance of creating institutional space for Black literary voices at a predominantly white university. Discusses the importance of Black poetry in American literature and the resistance she encountered while establishing the center.

### Joanne Gabbin interviewed by Qyaira Colbert, Session 2

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0014b

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31178

**Unit Date** 2019 November 28

**Language** English

**Creator** Gabbin, Joanne V. (Joanne Veal), 1946-

**Creator** Colbert, Qyaira

**Creator** Kifle , Mistire

**Creator** Chang, Angelina Ingrassia

**Creator** Nemergut, Margaret

**Extent** 1,633.1 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:47:15 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

### Scope and Contents

Records a follow-up interview with Dr. Joanne V. Gabbin, who expands on the broader impact and ongoing development of the Furious Flower Poetry Center at James Madison University. The interview documents the integration of Furious Flower materials into university curricula, changes in the center's physical location, and community outreach programs such as the Children's Creativity Camp and Slam Academy. Discusses international collaborations, the role of poetry in international studies, and her vision for the center's sustainability through endowment funding, advocating for continued recognition and support of Black literary arts.

**Robert Lee Harper Jr. interviewed by Spencer Law****Unit ID** SdArch46-0015**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31155**Unit Date** 2019 November 11**Language** English**Creator** Harper, Robert Lee, Jr.**Creator** Law, Spencer**Creator** Crosby, Tessa**Extent** 250.1 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:14:28 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Harrisonburg resident Robert Lee Harper Jr., who reflects on relationships between the local Black community and James Madison University. The interview documents his early connection to JMU through construction work on campus buildings as a high school student in the late 1960s and his observations of changing town-gown dynamics over several decades. Discusses the history and demographics of the Northeast neighborhood, the significance of institutions such as the Lucy Simms School and local churches, and ongoing community partnerships, including the effects of university growth on housing, employment, and student volunteer engagement in the Black community.

**Karina Kline-Gabel interviewed by Zenobia Lee-Nelson****Unit ID** SdArch46-0016**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31156**Unit Date** 2019 October 24**Language** English**Creator** Kline-Gabel, Karina**Creator** Lee-Nelson, Zenobia**Creator** Marsh, Madeline**Creator** Nemergut, Margaret**Extent** 10.3 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:20:18 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Karina Kline-Gabel, Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the College of Arts and Letters at James Madison University, who explores intersections between Latinx and Black spaces on campus. The interview documents her bilingual, bicultural background; advocacy for Latinx students and families in Harrisonburg; and leadership in founding the Madison Hispanic Caucus and advising the Latinx Student Alliance. Discusses collaborative efforts among cultural organizations, challenges of visibility and accessibility for multicultural spaces, the need for sustained institutional support, and opportunities for cross-cultural programming and shared understanding.

**Thomas Lavenir interviewed by Mistire Kifle****Unit ID** SdArch46-0017**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31157**Unit Date** 2019 November 12**Language** English**Creator** Lavenir, Thomas**Creator** Kifle, Mistire**Creator** Nemergut, Margaret**Extent** 446.4 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:25:50 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Thomas Lavenir, Assistant Director of International Student and Scholar Services at James Madison University's Center for Global Engagement, who discusses international student experiences and recruitment. The interview documents his perspective as a former international student from France, challenges in recruiting students from Black-majority regions, and barriers posed by financial constraints and immigration policies. Discusses programs such as the Link initiative and the

International Student Leadership Conference, efforts to connect international and domestic students, and institutional obstacles to increasing representation of students from African and Caribbean countries.

### **Lawrence Marfo interviewed by Ashleigh Williams**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0019

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31159

**Unit Date** 2019 November 07

**Language** English

**Creator** Marfo, Lawrence

**Creator** Williams, Ashleigh

**Creator** Snyder, Hannah

**Creator** Nemergut, Margaret

**Extent** 660.5 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:19:06 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

#### **Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Lawrence Marfo, who reflects on his academic journey, professional development, and experiences in Black spaces at James Madison University. The interview documents themes of identity, belonging, and institutional culture within the context of broader diversity and inclusion efforts at JMU. Discusses academic experiences, community engagement, and perspectives on creating inclusive environments and support systems for students of the global majority.

### **Jacob Mayiani interviewed by Mistire Kifle**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0020

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31160

**Unit Date** 2019 November 19

**Language** English

**Creator** Mayiani, Jacob

**Creator** Kifle, Mistire

**Creator** Crosby, Tessa

**Creator** Nemergut, Margaret

**Extent** 362.9 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:20:59 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

#### **Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Jacob Mayiani, a data scientist with a master's degree in Integrated Science and Technology from James Madison University, who reflects on Black spaces and community on campus. The interview documents his personal background, educational trajectory, and involvement with campus organizations. Discusses questions of representation and cultural identity, the formation of supportive networks within a predominantly white institution, and the roles of student leadership and academic achievement in building community.

### **McKinley Melton interviewed by Qyaira Colbert**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0021

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31161

**Unit Date** 2019 November 11

**Language** English

**Creator** Melton, McKinley

**Creator** Colbert, Qyaira

**Creator** Porter, Rob

**Creator** Nemergut, Margaret

**Extent** 423 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:24:28 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

#### **Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with McKinley Melton, who discusses experiences related to Black spaces and cultural identity at James Madison University. The interview documents aspects of student life, academic

pursuits, and participation in diversity initiatives, emphasizing the importance of mentorship and community building.

#### **Tim Miller interviewed by Zenobia Lee-Nelson**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0022

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31162

**Unit Date** 2019 November 11

**Language** English

**Creator** Miller, Timothy

**Creator** Lee-Nelson, Zenobia

**Creator** Medeiros, Megan

**Creator** Conrades, Jenna

**Creator** Nemergut, Margaret

**Extent** 22.2 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:13:01 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

#### **Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Tim Miller, who shares his perspectives on Black spaces and institutional dynamics at James Madison University. The interview documents his professional role within the university community, experiences with diversity and inclusion work, and observations on the development of supportive environments for Black students and staff. Discusses leadership and mentorship practices, institutional challenges, and strategies for promoting equitable policies and cultures on campus.

#### **Chervon Moore**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0023

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31163

**Creator** Moore, Chervon

#### **Chervon Moore interviewed by TaLisha Hairston**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0023a

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31179

**Unit Date** 2019 November 1

**Language** English

**Creator** Moore, Chervon

**Creator** Hairston, TaLisha

**Extent** 198.9 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:34:32 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

#### **Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Chervon Moore, who reflects on Black spaces and community engagement at James Madison University. The interview documents her involvement in student organizations serving the Black community and examines the importance of historically Black Greek letter organizations for sisterhood, service, and leadership development. Discusses community outreach, student retention, and the role of culturally based organizations in supporting academic success.

#### **Chervon Moore interviewed by Zenobia Lee-Nelson**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0023c

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31181

**Unit Date** 2019 November 1

**Language** English

**Creator** Moore, Chervon

**Creator** Lee-Nelson, Zenobia

**Extent** 42.2 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:07:58 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

### **Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Chervon Moore who recounts her experiences as a "Double Duke" and student affairs professional. The interview documents her undergraduate and graduate years, initial disappointment with limited visibility of the Black community, and subsequent engagement in organizations such as the Black Student Association, Contemporary Gospel Singers, and Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. Discusses her transition from corporate consulting to student affairs work at JMU, shifts in leadership and diversity priorities over her five-year tenure, the location and visibility of the Center for Multicultural Student Services (CMSS) within campus infrastructure, advising the Women of Color organization, and strategies for retention and coalition-building among students of color.

### **Adebayo Ogundipe interviewed by Nico Penaranda and Illiana Harris**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0024

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31164

**Unit Date** 2019 November 13

**Language** English

**Creator** Ogundipe, Adebayo

**Creator** Penaranda, Nico

**Creator** Harris, Illiana

**Extent** 941.8 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:54:29 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

### **Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Adebayo Ogundipe, who discusses his academic and personal experiences at James Madison University and the intersections between international student life and Black identity on campus. The interview documents his perspectives as a member of the campus community engaged with Black spaces and Africana studies, focusing on cultural identity, academic experiences, and community involvement. Discusses how international students from the African diaspora navigate predominantly white institutional settings, participate in academic programs and student organizations, and contribute to evolving conversations about Black identity and community at JMU.

### **David Owusu-Ansah**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0025

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31165

**Language** English

### **David Owusu-Ansah interviewed by Illiana Harris**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0025a

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31182

**Unit Date** 2019 October 17

**Language** English

**Creator** Owusu-Ansah, David (19520801)

**Creator** Harris, Illiana

**Extent** 800.2 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:46:18 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

### **Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with David Owusu-Ansah, who discusses African and African American Studies at James Madison University from his perspective as a scholar and faculty leader. The interview documents the development of Africana Studies programs, interdisciplinary collaborations, and efforts to integrate African perspectives into higher education curricula. Discusses themes of cultural authenticity, academic rigor, and the challenges of establishing ethnic studies programs, including curriculum design, faculty recruitment, and strategies to engage students in Africana Studies.

**David Owusu-Ansah interviewed by Nico Penaranda****Unit ID** SdArch46-0025b**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31183**Unit Date** 2019 October 31**Language** English**Creator** Owusu-Ansah, David (19520801)**Creator** Penaranda, Nico**Extent** 393.8 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:22:47 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with David Owusu-Ansah that continues his reflections on African Studies and its place within the academic landscape at James Madison University. The interview documents theoretical foundations of Africana Studies, arguments for decolonizing education, and the contributions of African-centered scholarship to contemporary social issues. Discusses research methodologies, community partnerships, and the global dimensions of African Studies.

**David Owusu-Ansah interviewed by Zenobia Lee-Nelson****Unit ID** SdArch46-0025c**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31184**Unit Date** 2019 November 18**Language** English**Creator** Owusu-Ansah, David (19520801)**Creator** Lee-Nelson, Zenobia**Extent** 9.9 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:19:47 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with David Owusu-Ansah, which includes an analysis of the evolution of African Studies education at James Madison University. The interview documents intersections between academic scholarship and social justice, emphasizing culturally relevant pedagogy and strategies for engaging students with African and African American history and culture. Discusses pedagogical innovation, student mentorship, and the development of critical consciousness through education.

**Darius Perkins interviewed by Ashleigh Williams and TaLisha Hairston****Unit ID** SdArch46-0026**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31166**Unit Date** 2019 November 18**Language** English**Creator** Perkins, Darius**Creator** Williams, Ashleigh**Creator** Hairston, TaLisha**Extent** 189.9 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:32:57 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Darius Perkins, who reflects on his experiences within the James Madison University community with particular attention to Black spaces, student life, and campus culture. The interview documents his academic journey and involvement in programs such as African, African American, and Diaspora Studies and related student organizations. Discusses community-building efforts, identity formation, and opportunities and challenges encountered by Black students at a predominantly white institution.

**Karen Risch-Mott interviewed by Qyaira Colbert****Unit ID** SdArch46-0027**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31167**Unit Date** 2019 October 17**Language** English**Creator** Mott, Karen E. Risch**Creator** Colbert, Qyaira**Extent** 624 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:36:06 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Karen Risch-Mott, who discusses her work in multicultural education and efforts to develop inclusive teaching practices at James Madison University. The interview documents her support for diverse student populations through culturally responsive programming and collaboration with student support services. Discusses themes of educational equity, cultural competency, and the practical challenges of creating inclusive learning environments, including policy development, cross-cultural engagement, and strategies for fostering a campus climate that affirms students from a wide range of backgrounds.

**Olivia Stephens interviewed by Mistire Kifle****Unit ID** SdArch46-0028**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31168**Unit Date** 2019 November 18**Language** English**Creator** Stephens, Olivia**Creator** Kifle , Mistire**Extent** 212.6 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:12:17 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Olivia Stephens, who reflects on her academic journey and experiences as a Black student at James Madison University. The interview documents her involvement in campus organizations that support students of the global majority, her efforts to build community and find affirming spaces, and her engagement with diversity and inclusion initiatives. Discusses themes of identity, belonging, and leadership development at a predominantly white institution, including the importance of mentorship, peer networks, and culturally responsive programming.

**Diane Strawbridge interviewed by Mone' Parker****Unit ID** SdArch46-0029**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31169**Unit Date** 2019 November 19**Language** English**Creator** Strawbridge, Diane**Creator** Parker, Mone'**Extent** 432.1 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:25:00 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Diane L. Strawbridge, Executive Director for Student Access and Inclusion at James Madison University, who reflects on her experiences as a JMU alumna, longtime Harrisonburg resident, and founder of the Centennial Scholars Program. The interview documents the development and evolution of Centennial Scholars from its first cohort in 2004, including early challenges in communicating the program's purpose, building structures for study hall and community service, and partnering with offices such as Community Service-Learning to support Pell-eligible students from across Virginia. Discusses themes of educational access, student development, and institutional responsibility for diversity and inclusion at a predominantly white institution, highlighting how Centennial Scholars provides a space for students to explore identity, build community, and "take ownership" of campus while also challenging assumptions about who the program serves. Additional topics include Strawbridge's own commuter student experience in the late 1970s and early 1980s, changing patterns of

racial diversity at JMU over several decades, and the role of Black faculty and staff mentors in sustaining community for students of color.

### **Wayne Teel interviewed by Nico Penaranda**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0030

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31170

**Unit Date** 2019 November 14

**Language** English

**Creator** Teel, Wayne

**Creator** Penaranda, Nico

**Extent** 428.4 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:24:47 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

#### **Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Wayne Teel, professor in the School of Integrated Science and Technology at James Madison University, who recounts his path from agroforestry work in Sudan, Kenya, and Mozambique to teaching environmental and geography courses at JMU. The interview documents his long-term engagement with African agriculture and ecology, including fieldwork on smallholder farming and Indigenous tree species, his scholarship on Kenyan sand dams and water access, and his role in developing and teaching a Geography of Africa course that contributes to the African, African American, and Diaspora (AAAD) Studies minor. Discusses themes of environmental and racial justice, global inequities in land and resource use, and the challenges of building connections between AAAD and science and engineering disciplines on a physically divided campus, emphasizing the importance of giving students experiential and place-based knowledge of Africa. Additional topics include his participation in Kenya-based study abroad programs, collaboration with colleagues and African partners, and the use of physical objects and visual materials to interpret African landscapes and water systems for JMU students.

### **Daphyne Thomas interviewed by Zaria Heyward**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0031

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31171

**Unit Date** 2019 November 4

**Language** English

**Creator** Thomas, Daphyne Saunders

**Creator** Heyward, Zaria

**Extent** 175.2 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:30:24 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

### **Linda Thomas interviewed by Nico Penaranda**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0032

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31172

**Unit Date** 2019 November 18

**Language** English

**Creator** Thomas, Linda

**Creator** Penaranda, Nico

**Extent** 670.6 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:38:48 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

#### **Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Linda Thomas, who reflects on her relationship to James Madison University and her perspectives on Black spaces and campus community. The interview documents her connection to the institution—as student, staff, faculty, and community member—and her reflections on the evolution of Black student life and institutional support for people of color. Discusses campus culture, student services, academic programs, and broader social conditions affecting students and community members of color, as well as ongoing efforts to more inclusive and supportive environments.

**Jordan Todd interviewed by Zenobia Lee-Nelson****Unit ID** SdArch46-0033**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31173**Unit Date** 2019 November 13**Language** English**Creator** Todd, Jordan**Creator** Lee-Nelson, Zenobia**Extent** 16.8 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:09:49 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Jordan Todd, who discusses his experiences and perspectives on Black spaces and student life at James Madison University. The interview documents his involvement in campus organizations, academic journey, and observations of campus climate for Black students. Discusses student activism, community building, leadership development, and academic success strategies, as well as efforts to address institutional challenges affecting students of color.

**Jacqueline Walker****Unit ID** SdArch46-0034**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31174**Jacqueline Walker interviewed by Zenobia Lee-Nelson and Illiana Harris, Session 1****Unit ID** SdArch46-0034a**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31185**Unit Date** 2019 November 19**Language** English**Creator** Walker, Jacqueline Baldwin, 1949-**Creator** Lee-Nelson, Zenobia**Creator** Harris, Illiana**Extent** 7.7 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:15:19 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records the first session of an oral history interview with Dr. Jacqueline Walker, Professor Emerita of History at James Madison University, who recounts her recruitment to Madison College in the mid-1970s and first impressions of Harrisonburg and the campus. The interview documents her first impressions of Harrisonburg, early meetings with colleagues in the History Department, and the mix of welcome and hostility she encountered. Discusses themes of racism, professional fit, campus climate, and intellectual community, emphasizing how supportive colleagues and a sense of intellectual community shaped her decision to build a career at JMU.

**Jacqueline Walker interviewed by Zenobia Lee-Nelson and Illiana Harris, Session 2****Unit ID** SdArch46-0034b**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31186**Unit Date** 2019 November 19**Language** English**Creator** Walker, Jacqueline Baldwin, 1949-**Creator** Lee-Nelson, Zenobia**Creator** Harris, Illiana**Extent** 16.4 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:32:41 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Dr. Jacqueline Walker, who reflects on her family history in Burke County, Georgia, her parents' experiences during the Great Migration, and the central role of education for Black women in her family. The interview documents multigenerational strategies for securing schooling beyond the eighth grade, stories of landownership, racial violence, and economic

displacement in the Jim Crow South, and the expectations that Walker and her siblings pursue professional careers in fields such as history, engineering, and computing. Discusses themes of race, gender, and education, linking southern Black rural life, migration to northern cities such as East Orange, New Jersey, and the shaping of her own academic trajectory, including her later work developing African American history courses and African, African American, and Diaspora Studies at James Madison University.

### **Jacqueline Walker interviewed by Zenobia Lee-Nelson and Mone' Parker**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0034c

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31187

**Unit Date** 2019 November 19

**Language** English

**Creator** Walker, Jacqueline Baldwin, 1949-

**Creator** Lee-Nelson, Zenobia

**Creator** Parker, Mone'

**Extent** 5.2 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:10:23 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

#### **Scope and Contents**

Records the third part of an interview with Dr. Jacqueline Walker, Professor Emerita of History at James Madison University, who reflects on her tenure in the History Department and the factors that influenced her decision to remain at JMU. The interview documents her reflections on whether JMU was the right place for her, contrasting modest library resources with a strong sense of collegiality in the History Department, and considering job offers elsewhere, including an opportunity to direct a Black Studies program at another university. Discusses themes of academic culture, departmental community, and Black faculty retention, highlighting the importance of mutual respect among colleagues, acceptance of individuality, and protection from toxic departmental politics in enabling her to build a career, mentor students, and contribute to African American and African diaspora studies at JMU.

### **Pernell Whitfield interviewed by Norman Jones and Mistire Kifle**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0035

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31175

**Unit Date** 2019 November 1

**Language** English

**Creator** Whitfield, Pernell

**Creator** Jones, Norman

**Creator** Kifle , Mistire

**Extent** 982.5 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)

**Extent** 00:56:51 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

#### **Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Pernell Whitfield, who reflects on his academic and personal journey within the James Madison University community and his perspectives on Black spaces, student life, and institutional culture. The interview documents his involvement in campus life where questions of racial identity, community formation, and institutional support systems intersect, including participation in student organizations, engagement with academic programs such as African, African American, and Diaspora Studies, and use of campus services supporting students of the global majority. Discusses themes of belonging, leadership development, and mentorship, as well as strategies Black students employ to create and navigate supportive communities within a predominantly white institutional setting.

### **Amanda Yankey**

**Unit ID** SdArch46-0036

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31176

**Unit Date** 2019 November 12

**Amanda Yankey interviewed by Zenobia Lee-Nelson****Unit ID** SdArch46-0036a**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31188**Unit Date** 2019 November 12**Language** English**Creator** Yankey, Amanda**Creator** Lee-Nelson, Zenobia**Creator** Parker, Mone'**Extent** 2.2 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:04:26 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records an interview with Amanda Yankey, who reflects on Black identity and community at James Madison University. The interview documents her personal journey and academic achievements, and involvement in organizations supporting students of color. Discusses experiences of navigating a predominantly white institution, the importance of mentorship and peer support networks, and efforts to build inclusive communities and affirming spaces on campus. Additional topics include student leadership, community service, and the importance of mentorship and peer support networks.

**Amanda Yankey interviewed by Mone' Parker****Unit ID** SdArch46-0036b**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/31189**Unit Date** 2019 November 14**Language** English**Extent** 159.4 Megabytes1 digital file(.wav)**Extent** 00:09:13 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)**Scope and Contents**

Records a follow-up interview with Amanda Yankey, who offers additional reflections on her experiences navigating higher education as a Black woman at James Madison University. The interview documents her ongoing academic and personal development, participation in diversity initiatives, and observations on campus culture and institutional climate. Discusses themes of resilience and empowerment, the role of education in fostering social change, and the importance of representation and visibility for Black students in higher education.