

INDEX SHEET

Interviewee Elizabeth Ramsey
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 Place 311 Jackson Ave, Lexington, Va.
 Interviewer Emily Williams
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Contents:

Approximate time:

reasons for coming to W&M (1965), character of student body, integration	10 mins.
role of the <u>Flat Hat</u> (1965-1969)	4 mins.
expansion of campus	6 mins.
attitudes toward Paschall, Board of Visitors, other administrators	7 mins.
student issues and concerns curfew, registration	8 mins.
drugs on campus	2 mins.
commencement speaker issue	2 mins.
proposed sorority complex, fraternities	13 mins.
student government in late 1960s	15 mins.
function of S.A., vis-a-vis B.S.A., and Statement of Rights and Responsibilities	
student viewpoints	
deans	5 mins.
campus issues vs. national issues	2 mins.
assessment of 1965-1968 at W&M, relations with faculty	9 mins.
	10 mins.

ELIZABETH C. RAMSEY

Liz Ramsey attended William and Mary from 1965 to 1969, then returned in 1973 for graduate work. During her undergraduate days she was active in student government, and in this interview she discusses the concerns and attitudes of students she knew in this period.

Elizabeth C. Ramsey

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Lexington, Va.

Williams: What was your motivation in 1965 in coming (to William and Mary)?

Ramsay: That's pretty easy to answer. My sister had gone to William and Mary from the fall of '59 to the spring of '63. Nancy really enjoyed William and Mary, and she steered me in the direction of going there. I went down to visit her a few times, and she took me to a Sigma Pi fraternity party once. Her friends were very instrumental in making sure I enjoyed my visits there, and I think that's one reason I went. My grandfather went to William and Mary, and a good many of my mother's relatives had gone there. It was a family connection essentially.

Williams: Do you think this was the sort of thing that others also had?

Ramsay: It was, but I don't think it was a dominant reason. The impression that I received from talking to people in my freshman class was, for one thing, the girls were academically a little superior to the boys at this time, and I think ^{most of} the girls had a choice from a wide variety of places where they could have gone to school. They

chose William and Mary primarily because of the financial situation. It was quite inexpensive in 1965. You're talking of a total college bill ^{for} of a year of \$1200. ^{for} in-state; most of the students were in-state. It was sixty per cent ^[in-state] when I was a freshman. Many of my friends had been accepted at "Seven Sisters" and schools like that, ^{but} because of finances and because they wanted to be close to their families they ended up there. Of course, you know that a large percentage of the student body came from northern Virginia and eastern Virginia, so ^{proximity} and I think money, too, ^[were reasons to come to William and Mary]. If I remember correctly, everybody's father was a doctor, lawyer, civil servant, Army officer, Navy officer, ^{-- that} type of thing. That's the kind of student --upper middle-class-- that was attracted to the place.

Williams: The Flat Hat charged that the students at William and Mary in that period were conformists. . . .

Ramsey: I remember that editorial very well. Yes and no. You've got to remember that in 1965, you're talking of pre-integration days, and the student body was not particularly heterogeneous. Now if that's what they meant, (if I remember the editorial), that was the basic charge) I think that that is a valid criticism. I don't think that they were mindless sheep, however.

The student body was conservative because of the kind of families from which they came.

Most of the people I went to school ^{with} had roughly the same upbringing and background that I had.

Surprisingly, one of the most vivid recollections of my freshman year was ~~that~~ being a minister's daughter,

I was told when I went to college that this was a godless place because it was a state supported institution. ~~I wasn't told this by~~

my own family, or else my sister would never have gone there. ~~But~~ I remember that there ^{were} extremely

religious people there. Everybody on Sunday morning went to church or Mass; it was not at all strange

or unusual. This is essentially the kind of student you're talking about: strong home ties and an essentially conservative outlook. Later of course ^{(in the late '60s),} this changed

a little bit. ~~For one thing the college inte~~grated; there was a little more

heterogeneity. But on the other hand, the type of black student that was attracted to William and Mary

came out of the same sort of background. Race did ~~nt~~ make really make any difference; you still had an

essentially conservative student body.

Williams: How did the student body receive inte gration?

Ramsey: Very well.

When I say "conservative" I mean it in terms of basic values; politically the students were very liberal in that upper middle-class liberal sort of way--liberal but not too liberal-- no Berkeley free speech. The student body was much more willing to receive it and accept it; it was the ^[integration] administration and the Board of Visitors that were the foot draggers. The first black students--I worked with some of them in various things--were super people, but there was always this fear on the part of the administration and on the part of the Board of Visitors that ^{they} didn't want to push too fast. I will say this: getting black students to come to William and Mary was extraordinarily difficult because any black student who had the academic qualifications to come had full scholarships ^[elsewhere]. I remember talking to one young man who had a full scholarship to Brown. Of course, there were a lot of black athletes recruited, many of whom came and did extremely well, both academically and athletically. It was hard to talk them into it. Of course, ^{William and Mary} it had the reputation of as a southern, white institution. UVa had the same problem, except UVa has been far more aggressive in their recruiting of blacks, and they have a more substantial

program for the less-gifted black student, whereas William and Mary, a school of some 5000, could really [not] support that kind of program the way UVA could. At UVA you're talking about a thousand or so; at William and Mary you wouldn't be talking about that many. In fact, in my junior and senior years, the college received a great deal of criticism from some of the student activists (and there were quite a few on campus).

I had been on the Martin Luther King Scholarship Committee, which was formed to give scholarships to essentially non-white groups; it didn't specifically stipulate "black" but the name of the scholarship implied that this was ^{the group} ~~what~~ it was for. I worked with Dr. Martin Garrett and a number of prominent people on the faculty on this particular committee. Garrett was instrumental in recruiting blacks; he and Sam Sadler and Harriet Reed and some of those people did a fine job with this. I remember the criticism; I was stunned by this because I had talked to many of the students who came as potential scholarship recipients. The reasons for not coming to William and Mary were very strong:

full scholarships somewhere else, an opportunity to go to a school with perhaps a bit more academic prestige in the ~~sense of the~~ northeastern region. The main reason we got the students we did was essentially they didn't want to go very far from home, which is a perfectly valid reason to go to a college.

H . These young people had a great many choices ahead of them, and William and Mary was not the obvious choice for a black student. Personally I think integration was one of the best things that happened [#] to William and Mary while I was down there. Of course, I grew up in the south, and to see these barriers fall to me was a very rich and rewarding experience; I was extremely pleased at this, and I would like to see this more. When I went to graduation in 1976, I felt a great deal of pride in the ⁽ⁿ⁾stitution to see young black men and women receiving their degrees. Their parents were going through the usual, "Stand and let me take your picture!" I thought that was just great. I wish William and Mary had been in the forefront of it; that's the only thing I regret: that we hadn't been more aggressive. No college can be an outstanding college if it excludes people of any race or religion or creed, and I feel very strongly about it. I guess that was my liberal cause

during the '60s--not the war, but inte^gration.

Williams: The Flat Hat also very strongly supported inte^gration.

I want to ask you about the role in general of the Flat Hat. You may have found a change in this in the four years you were there. Was the Flat Hat leading or reflecting or out-of-step with student opinion?

Ramsey:

I don't think a generalization can be made. I would say on the whole when I first came there, The Flat Hat was essentially a college newspaper like all college newspapers. We had a good time at the dance, the football team won (of course that was in the old years), occasionally ^[there was] an editorial that spoke up on some issue, but usually ^[there was] some editorial that didn't make waves, ^[Also included were] who the beauty queens were, what the fraternities were doing this week (that was one of the popular sections of the paper, by the way).

Williams: Who got pinned?

Ramsey: Yes, they might have in '65-66. Towards the end I would say that the Flat Hat [#] did not really reflect student opinion; it was out ahead of student opinion. Chris Sherman went to the anti^{war} demonstration, the big one in Washingt^on where the girl put the flowers in the barrels of the guns in front of the Pentagon. He

covered that. I wouldn't say that the whole article was perceptive necessarily in the sense that Chris was an observer, not trying for an analysis. In my opinion, the Flat Hat diverged. I thought the Flat Hat was moving in the right direction, but they were moving at the wrong pace, and I guess that's essentially it. On the whole, I would say that the Flat Hat was probably a little ahead of the student body, by '68-'69, clearly so. I have heard people say by '70-'71, it was a real rag. In fact, in late '69, I was beginning to wonder about the younger staff members, what they were doing on the paper. It seemed to be a personal platform, which is okay, I guess; that's a side of journalism. It was not a leader of student opinion (as it was) in the early days. It's an inconsistent record; it's up and down. Sometimes it was ahead; sometimes it was behind; sometimes it didn't reflect anything. It did make good reading on Friday afternoons, however.

Williams: I was going to ask how it was received.

Ramsey: It was considered quite a thing to go downstairs in the dorm and get your Flat Hat. Of course, your freshman year everything is that way. You would walk through the dorm and pick up a copy of the Flat Hat and peruse it. I don't think anybody ever

learned very much from it. On the other hand, it was a good way to keep in touch with a lot of different facets of ^{the} campus that you otherwise would not have heard of:

... various or ganizations, where the meetings were, and what they did at their meetings--I think certainly it was a way to keep the student body in touch with one another.

One thing that has to be remembered at this point ~~about the Flat Hat~~ is that in '65, you're talking about a completely different campus from what's there now. DuPont was in the boonies. It's hard to believe, but being assigned to DuPont was like being assigned to outer Siberia; there was no "caf" out there; there was no William and Mary Hall.

Ludwell was really Siberia! If you were in Ludwell in 1965, you were more than likely a late Virginia applicant or an out-of-state student, because all of the out-of-state students were assigned to Ludwell.

I didn't know why they didn't want to mingle with those of us who lived in Jefferson. You're talking about everybody living on the Old Campus. The only academic buildings that were ^{the} on [^] New campus were Phi Beta Kappa Hall { Andrews wasn't even built; ^{there was} no Math building, no

is this right?

social science building), the physics building had just been built; Adair Gym had just been built. The idea of making a trek to Adair Gym was just...! We hated it. Now today what do you think about it? Then it seemed like forever. The library was completed my freshman year; we moved into it the second part of my freshman year. The Life Sciences building was built while I was there, Andrews was built while I was there, The Math building was completed while I was there, but ^{they} ~~we~~ didn't even move into it until after I left. The "caf" was completed while I was there, but it wasn't opened until my junior year. And of course, juniors and seniors didn't eat in the "caf" then. I never ate in it except at orientation one time, when I was a student government officer. The campus was much more self-contained; the students were in much more proximity. There were no fraternity houses ^(those were) built while I was there) so that everybody lived in either

dorm complexes on the old campus or in the Sorority houses. So you're talking about three thousand students within an area of half a mile.

From the observations of an outsider, I would say the college community was ^{an} extremely close-knit community at this particular time. You knew a great many people by sight. There was no campus post office, and after 10:00 classes the whole student body would walk down Duke of

Gloucester Street with one thing in mind: going to the p.o. and seeing what was in that box! Usually what was in the box was Time magazine or something like that because I can't remember anybody got a vast amount of mail. When someone did get a package it immediately drew a crowd, especially if there ^{was} a thought that there might be cookies in the box!

Williams: Was there a great deal of dissatisfaction among the students over expansion? Were students upset at becoming a number?

Ramsey: No, not really. As I remember it, the ~~upcar~~ came about the landscaping and architecture; there was a big fight about the buildings looking right and the destruction of the woodland. There was a ten-year plan, and the plan reported that the school would never get any larger than 6000 or 7000. That was well received by the student body. Nobody wanted the school any larger, but the actual physical classrooms were desperately needed. You're sorry you have to cut down trees; it's too bad, but on the other hand, let's face it, Washington Hall and Rogers Hall were not sufficient. I do think that what has happen^{ed} is sad; the fact that students never go on the Old Campus.

(Ed) Dr. Baldwin did a nice job over at the Life Sciences building making it look pretty with all the dogwood.)

Williams: I ^{had wondered} if there was this dissatisfaction ^[aimed] at Paschall. On the landscaping and the architecture Paschall was the one who was blamed; Paschall also gets the credit for New Campus.

Ramsey: I can't remember any real dissent about the expansion, other than the cries that we didn't want to turn into a megauniversity, which I think was a far-fetched fear. Given the parsimony of our state legislature I doubt it would have happened anyway. All the money goes to Tech, UVa, and maybe Madison now. It seemed to me that the students were happy. Lord, Swem -- that was like a crystal palace if you had ever tried to find any books in the old library! I'm surprised people didn't make burnt offerings out in front of Swem Library when it was opened. (They did put soapsuds in the fountains to celebrate its opening.)

Interesting story; the statue of Botetourt that's in the basement of Swem now -- that of course used to be in front of the Wren Building. It was moved away from the Wren Building before I came there, but I remember it from when my sister was there. It was taken apart and crated and was in storage my first year in school. I guess it was put into Swem in the winter of my freshman year, maybe in the spring of my freshman year, ^{ostensibly} to protect it because Botetourt had been painted during various football rivalries and so on. Every year,

according to legend, students would take a pumpkin and stick ^{it} over Botetourt's head at Halloween (headless horseman type of idea). Of course, it was considered protected down in Swem Library. The first Halloween after they moved Botetourt down there, that very night, Botetourt appeared with this pumpkin over his head. Someone had gotten through all that security and put the pumpkin over Botetourt anyway. He was also decorated with Christmas greens and various strands of crepe paper. Where students are concerned, where there's a will there's a way. I always thought that that ^{it} was sort of neat that somebody got through the elaborate security down there to put the pumpkin on Botetourt's head.

Williams: *Let me move us to a different subject, and that is Dr. Paschall.* In the four years you were there did you see a change in the views of the administration? By the time you left there were calls for Dr. Paschall's resignation made in the Flat Hat. (He found out that a letter was going to be printed and threaten to suspend the signers.)

Ramsey: I can't remember if that was after I left or not; I heard of it at any rate. Yes, there was a change towards Dr. Paschall, no question. When I first came there

I don't think anybody thought anything of Dr. Paschall one way or another, except that he ^{was} ~~is~~ a very nice gentleman; he had a lovely wife and a lovely house and ^{had} us over ~~at~~ Christmas for cookies (^{this was} ~~the~~ reception for freshmen). He had no immediate impact on the lives of the students, other than the fact that he was out hustling cash for the college. He was adept at that, too, obviously. The Board of Visitors took as much ^{flak} ~~flak~~ as Paschall; there is no question in my mind that the Board of Visitors ^{did} ~~did~~, especially ^{on} ~~on~~ the integration thing. The students had a tendency to blame the board there. When it really comes down to it, who makes policy for the college? Dean Lambert took a lot of heat, and Melville Jones, the vice-president, took a lot of heat, too. ~~The~~ ^{attitude changed, and I'm going to be very candid. By my} senior year you could not help but like ^{as a person.} Dr. Paschall, ^{as a person.} He was a very warm kind of person. I think I ^{always had} ~~always had~~ a sympath^{etic} attitude toward him because I grew up in the same area of the state from which he came. Dr. Paschall put off an awful lot of students in the late '60s by his very manner, his very demeanor, which you've got to admit has vanished from the Virginia scene. It's even vanished from southside Virginia: that courtliness, exaggerated

and yet sincere, that he displayed just irked a lot of students, especially those from urban, northern environments. (The way Philadelphia would see Jimmy Carter; it's exactly the same kind of thing.

"I distrust him immediately because of the way he talks.") I do think though that Paschall outlived his time there, but then on the other hand all college presidents did this. Can you find a college president that handled the disturbances well in the late '60s to everyone's satisfaction without getting his name besmirched in the process? Do you remember Hayakawa over at San Francisco State? This was during the same period of time that [#]we were going through ^[this] at William and Mary. He took such a beating in the press. I think Dr. Paschall simply could not handle what was happening at that college; I'm not sure anybody could. By the time Dr. Graves came through it was a different place. The big issue was the ~~parietal~~ rules, the open doors in the rooms and so forth, visitation. For a man of Paschall's generation this was absolutely unthinkable. Plus, you've got these people in the state legislature in Richmond who were on the Flat Hat's ~~back~~ all the time and threaten~~d~~ to cut off money because ^{of} the Flat Hat. And Paschall being essentially a political man knew that if the College was going to survive with money, . . .

I sometimes wonder if the Law School's current problems can't be traced back to this time period. There is such a thing as resentment in the state legislature being reflected in the budget figures, and anybody who doesn't believe[#] it is crazy. A lot of students denied the connection[^] ^{--this was ridiculous!} and there were a lot of ridiculous students running around at this time, too, I might add.

I felt sorry for him because I think he tried to do the best he could by his ^{lights} likes, but his ^{lights} likes weren't good enough. Paschall was not a dev^oious man, but he was not a man to tell you "no" to your face. I know this too; it was considered ungentlemanly.

Dean Lambert--I think the same thing there. [#] What always bugged me was that moderate students with moderate ideas were sho^oved aside down there. The ~~administration~~ by not listening to moderates had a tendency to force things to the point where moderates no longer had a voice.

I'm thinking about the demonstrations about the dorms. When I say "demonstrations," ^{I should clarify:} there weren't signs and pickets; there was a threat to do that in front of the Wren Building. Larry Peterson was in charge of that. They had a sit-in. Everyone disobeyed the rules one night, and everybody sat in the boy's dorm with

] their dates, which was illegal.

Why did it ever get to that point?

^ It seems to me that if I could put
 a valid criticism against any administration
 [it would be] members ^ those of us with more moderate ideas should
 have been listened to. Again this was a pattern that
 was repeated everywhere. You cannot single out any one
 person at William and Mary and say that they lack ^{ed} it.
 These men were trying to deal with a situation that
 changed from day to day and hour to hour, and the students
 themselves were not even sure ^{of} what they wanted.

"We want open dorms; we want to live off-campus." Was it
 really important? That's the question I asked when I
 was an undergraduate down there; is it really important
 whether or not you get to stay overnight in somebody's
 room? If you're looking for ^{an} education, is it really
 important? There was a lot of upheaval over something
 I'm not sure was all that vital to the College of
 William and Mary.

Williams: Do you think it was a symbol?

Ramsey: Oh, yes. A rebellion against authority. You're talking
 again about a conservative student body; they don't
 want to overthrow the institution; they just want to
 live in it more freely and more easily. I remember when
 they burned the William and Mary Woman; ^{*} that was quite
 a night. Yes, it was definitely a symbol everywhere,

* The women student's handbook.

the rebellion against in loco parentis.

Williams: Did the Administration have a paternalistic attitude?

Ramsey: Oh, yes, very much so; no question!

Williams: I was so surprised to read that when curfew was changed, the way it was changed, ^[was that] Dr. Paschall polled the parents on it.

Ramsey: Yes, he did. I remember that now. They very much played that game with us. It was very much parental-type of guidance always being put down on us. This is essentially my conservative nature: I never had a curfew as a student in high school. I was supposed to be in by 12:00 or call my mother, one or the other. My mother never said, "you must be in by such-and-such a time." Imagine my shock when I went off to college and found out that I must be in the dorm by 11:00 or I got all kinds of demerits! It wasn't really a shock, but it did seem kind of Mickey Mouse to me. I would have been in by 11:00 anyway. You ~~can't~~ ^{couldn't} pass if you ~~ran~~ ^{ran} around all night; at least I couldn't have. I still think there are a lot of college freshman that don't exercise good judgment. Another thing about those curfews; there was a lot of avoidance of them. There are always ways to get around the rules. Again, was it really all that important?

Williams: How great an irritant was curfew as a single issue? Many students I've talked to say that this was just symptomatic of everything that was wrong.

Ramsey: Yes, it was symptomatic, and that's all it can be. I would imagine that some things may go back; there's a lot of fadishness in this. There were problems here; the College did treat us badly on some areas. I ~~could~~ never be excited ^{could} ^{about} whether or not I could stay ~~out~~ until 11:00. In fact, many girls enjoyed the curfew simply because if you were with a really turkey date you didn't have to tell him, "Look, you're a turkey. I'm going home." You could say, "Gee, it's five minutes to one. Mrs. Monty* is going to kill me if I don't get in the dorm!" Later you had to change the story. It saved a lot of social pressure on us. ^[there was] No question that you had to come back home. I'll tell you something that was a burr ^{under} my saddle the entire time I was at William and Mary was the registration procedure. If you ever wanted to go through a dehumanizing, ridiculous experience, that registration was it! I think that was one ^{on which} issue the student body would have united and roared. There was no pre-registration when we were there. It was first come, first served. It was the biggest hassle in the world, and every time we asked about changing it we were [#] told it couldn't be done, and that was the only

*housemother in Jefferson
right?

answer we got. I can tell you more horror stories about registration... To me, that was the most callus way to treat the students, because if you were serious about your education, what is more important to you than the courses you take? They would give ^{you} all these things like "Oh, somebody has to take 8:00 classes." I wasn't even trying to get out of the 8:00 classes, and I still couldn't get the classes I wanted sometimes! I remember I had to cry my senior year to get a class so I could graduate.

What is this business, crying one's senior year?

(It wasn't a real cry, but it was a fairly good fake.)

It was ridiculous to go through this to get a card

cut for a class. (I remember Dr. McCord, my advisor, having to pull some strings on that one.)

That was ridiculous -- absolutely no excuse for the way they handled that.

Williams: Why didn't that become a target for protest?

Ramsey: Because it only happen^{ed} twice a year.

Williams: And the curfews ^{were} are every night.

Ramsey: That's right. You see, the problem ^{came} because they tried to ^{arrange the schedule;} in other words, they did it alphabetically.

So one year I was on the top of the list; I was the first group in. If you that year had an easy time of it and got everything you wanted, ^{you} could really get

upset about the prospect that maybe next year you might have a hard time? You see the problem there. Boy, I thought that was the worst-- I thought if anything symbolized dehumanization, that was it at that college for me, and it could have been handled differently if some people hadn't been lazy.

Williams: Let me ask you about something related to social rules: the Sarah Brittingham case. How important was this to students? It was a cause célèbre in the Flat Hat.

Ramsey: She was a good friend of Chris Sherman's.* / As a result of the case/ she lost her editorship of the William and Mary Review. Personally /I think/ it was a mountain built out of a molehill, another case of overreaction on the part of the administration to something that wasn't really that important. Sarah was a fine/young lady; she had a great deal of talent and a great deal of promise. It was a real tragedy there. I think many of the students didn't really know about her. There were some surprised faces when the Mortar Board people gave her the top award that spring as /one of / the outstanding senior woman. There were something like ten or twelve named; they named her first. She was outstanding, there is no question. Sarah as a person changed a great deal during her college career. /The court case/ was a case of overreaction. To think of somebody

* Flat Hat editor.

having been kicked out of school for spending the night with their boyfriend is just absurd now. I think she got a raw deal.

Williams: Do you think she was scapegoated?

Ramsey: Yes, they tried to make an example of her.

It happen^{ed} all the time, even with the curfews. Girls could avoid the curfews, ^{if} they were all that anxious to do it, ^{ASK} the housemothers, if there are still some alive! They all seemed nine hundred when I was there! Ask how many bricks were in the doors all the time to keep the doors from closing shut. That sort of thing went on. It really was a scapegoat sort of thing.

Williams: Let me ask you about the dissatisfaction ^{about} Carson Barnes.

Ramsey: That was later. I can't comment on that.

Williams: How did the College Administration handle drugs on campus?

Ramsey: You're really asking the wrong person that question. I really don't know. My impression of drugs, (and this is probably wrong), was that ^{they} came from the under classes. This drifted into the College around '68, and it seemed to me that it was much more wide-spread among the younger students than it was among those of us ^{nearly at}. Who wants to be bothered by

pot when you're a senior? We've all been through first drunks and all that garbage. It seemed to me that the College was not particularly hard on the offenders. I never knew anybody who got busted, (to use the term of the day), and so I can't really say anything about that. It was widespread at one point -- the light stuff, nothing heavy. It was pretty widespread in the freshman dorms. I think the College handled it with some sense for the most part. Actually I think they turned their backs on the problem, which might have been the sensible way to handle it, if you want to call it a problem. Again it's something that looks absurd in retrospect, too.

Williams: It's interesting to hear your comment and to put it together with other people from later, especially when you say that the under classes when you were graduating were the [#]ones that used drugs more.

Ramsey: You have heard differently on that?

Williams: Yes, that it peaked in the late '60s.

Ramsey: It did peak in the late '60s, but I heard about ^{it} more with the underclassmen than I did with the upperclassmen. I know a lot of it did come from the high schools, because we began to get kids in the fall of '68 who brought it with them. It was very strong by my senior year, and, of course, this got mixed up with this open door /

closed door policy in the rooms. It changed the social life dramatically, but that occurred after I left.

Williams: ^{Why} Was it your year that the Commencement speech became an issue?

Ramsey: Again, it's a symbol. I wish I knew the list of the people we asked for because it was a pretty good list. Of course, the College Administration had to approve the list. Actually what happened ^{ed} was really an accident. The Administration delayed too long trying to get somebody and then got stuck. I don't think it was a deliberate attempt to thwart the wishes of the students, because we had some fairly conservative people on that list, if I remember correctly. We also had some radical people on that list. ^[the speech] If ~~it~~ ^{was} ^{used for} paying off a political debt, those kids were always angry about that. The students should be able to listen to ^m whoever they want to listen to; I'll stand for that today. I don't mean this against ^{anyone} personally ¹ or against the state of Virginia, but why would a student from New Jersey want to listen to some Virginia state judge give his commencement address? Again, how important is it because nobody listens to them anyway? In '69, we didn't have a speaker;

there was a big revolt about that, and the kids ^{noted}
 not ^{but to have individual conferment,} to have a speaker, partly ^{resentment} over the
 fact that we couldn't pick our own ^{[speaker].} I'm sorry now
 that I can't look back and say, "I heard him at
 my commencement," or "I heard her at my commencement."
 On the other hand, we ^{were the last class} to get our degrees
 individually. It was boring, but I'm glad; I sort of
 liked that.

Williams: I've heard criticism of the Administration of the
 period ^{[delaying].} for the very tactic you alluded to ^{that} you
 think ^{that} was not the case with the commencement speaker?

Raasey: They let it blow over, which ^{was} pretty much the order
 of the day down there. They let things get beyond
 the point where they could handle them, the moderates
 were ignored, and all of a sudden they had a problem
 on their hands. This delaying was a constant tactic.
 It's good politics; look at how many
 political people do that. You talk about political
 people when you talk about state university, too. Yes, it was pretty common.
 So was obstruction: "If you don't tell them anything,
 they won't know anything to get angry about."

Williams: ^{Jumping to another subject: the proposed new sorority complex.}
 The Flat Hat at one time said that the sororities
 should not move into the new complex
 because it would segregate the sororities from the
 mainstream of campus life. How would it have segregated

the sororities more than the new fraternity complex?

Ramsay:

^{That's} Precisely why I think the Flat Hat made that comment because that is exactly what happened ^{led with} the fraternity houses. When the fraternities were in the lodges, ^{on fraternity row --}

I think you know to what I'm referring.)

they were fairly open organizations.

It was very common to go there with an independent and go to a number of parties and feel perfectly welcome at all of them; The men may dispute this. They had immense block parties and things like that.

It was a very open type of thing, The fraternities of course, lived with the other men. There was no segregation of housing between fraternities and the non-fraternity people. There was resentment. I'm

not going to tell you that the frats and the non-frats didn't have problems; they had a lot. ^{When the houses were built --} Recall what

I said about the physical outlay of the campus at that time--the fraternities were in left field, and all of

a sudden the parties became closed. As a date I noticed this; the parties became far more intra-fraternity rather than inter-fraternity. The men

^{selves} did push them off this way; they wanted the houses, and I guess they should have had them. It did tend to isolate them, and then the division between

Greek and non-Greek became very serious within the male student body because now the parties weren't open.

It's one thing to have a friend say, "Come on down to the lodge tonight;" it's [#] another thing to say, "Come on over to the house." There's a difference there.

Personally I think the social life suffered from the fraternity houses. I was never as happy in those fraternity houses as I was in the old days in the lodges, and it wasn't simply longing for the good old days. ^{The good old days} were better. You would sometimes

house-hop; everybody had friends everywhere ^{else} because you lived with other people from the time you were a freshman until you were a senior. [#] The

sororities--for one thing, the houses they lived in (and I'm ^{not} talking about the maintenance, which was incredibly bad) were a very comfortable to live.

Only sixteen to twenty girls can live in them, which means that only seniors can live in them, which means that you live with other people throughout your college career. Consequently you're not going to say,

"I don't like the Kappa Kappa Gamma's," because you have lived with them. How can you say that about your friends? In my senior year I never felt strange

at all about walking into the Tri Delt house or the Pi Phi house to see a friend. There was no barrier there. If you had taken the sorority women and thrown them in those complexes-- note again that the juniors and seniors don't eat in the "caf" [^] you would have seen a fracturing of the women's student body that would have been reprehensible. I believe very strongly that the only way I could have stood being in a sorority in college was under the situation that I was in; otherwise I would have thought that the whole thing was garbage. I think to separate those girls from the rest of the student body would have been awful.

4 Thirdly, the cost of those houses would have been prohibitive. The sororities could not afford to move into them. ⁴Fourthly, the girls themselves could not afford to live in them, which means the sororities, which were not all that exclusive in terms of money, would have become extremely exclusive in terms of money. It would have been the death of the sorority system at William and Mary as we know it. I think that would have been too bad. If you believe that they have any place at all on campus, to have changed ^{them and put them in those complexes} [^] would have been a tremendous tragedy, not only for the Greeks, but for the non-Greeks as well. I feel very strongly about that. At the time

I was a student. I thought this. Today from the standpoint of ten years later, it seems sort of paranoid, but I wonder if there's a grain of truth that[#] the construction of those sorority complexes, and the attempt to get the sororities into them, was all really a plot to get rid of them altogether, because it would have killed them in opinion. And you will notice when the vote to move was taken not many people were dying to get over there, were they?

Williams: Your statement about the administration was interesting because I read somewhere that the administration was pro-Greek.

Ramsey: I remember that. ^{The Greeks didn't think that, though.} A lot of Greeks felt that the administration ^{fraternities and sororities} was out to get us because ^{they} they are a pain in the neck in a sense; the maintenance problems are high; you have to deal with the Greek organizations and all the social stuff that goes along with that, plus there is inherent conflict within the student body whenever you've got a sizable porportion of your student body Greek and a sizable ~~por~~ portion not; the tension is there. They needed the housing space; this was a way to justify it. The administration didn't want to be saddled with those old houses, and I think the ^{wasn't all that happy about being} administration ^{saddled with taking}

care of anything for those sororities. I don't think it was anything against the philosophy; I think a lot of people in the administration felt that they were worthless organizations and just a drain on the college's money supply. You see, the sororities don't maintain their own houses, except the downstairs.

I do know administration people that felt that way. ^{When I look back} I don't think that they were particularly high in the administration, ~~when I look~~

~~But~~ I was very pleased personally when the sororities voted not to move in them, because the whole point of being in a sorority is to keep it as cheap as possible so that it doesn't become exclusive. ~~and~~ If you are going to make it exclusive financially there's no point in being in a sorority; ~~because~~ that's a snob system, and I don't want any part of that. I'm not really sure that I'm pro-Greek myself, to tell you the truth. I've seen the good and the bad. After moving to Lexington I've certainly seen the bad.

Williams: You said that the fraternities wanted to go into the houses. Why?

Ramsey: I think for the most part the lodges really didn't give them space. They were tiny, and it limited their membership. As it turned out, the financial problems

of going to the houses also limited their membership; they didn't get very far that way. I think that the idea of having a real building of your own with a real place to meet, a kitchen, and that sort of thing appealed to the guys. It would though because the sororities aren't built around a party on Friday night, whereas the fraternities are. The social activities after the game, the fraternity party -- fraternities pretty much revolved around that. And of course, that was so hard on the independents; there was nothing for the independent. This gets into the parietal business again. The independents had a case there: "where do I take my date?" The answer was nowhere unless it was the Williamsburg Theatre, and then the "Corner Greeks" then home again. I think the independents still have a gripe on that point; I don't think ^{things} have improved very much [#] for them from what I have seen. They've formed dorm associations, but those are pretty loose and never worked the way they should have worked. The house was much more attractive to the guys just for the party space. When they were finally built, the guys didn't get the party space they wanted; they really weren't much larger than the lodges.

So I don't know if we really got ahead or not. That doesn't really answer your question, but I don't really know how to answer it. I wasn't all that close to the fraternity ^{scene.} I think a lot of them were very unhappy once they got there. I think there was divided opinion among Greeks--that's the way to put it.

Williams: To go on to another thing that you were very much involved in, especially your senior year, and that was student government. Let me ask you first: people criticized the Student Association as being frivolous-- maybe not your year .

Ramsey: They criticized it while I was there. as being frivolous-- and it was. The name tells you what it was--a student association; there was no government in there. There was no attempt at government. How can you govern a school when you have no autonomy? It was supposed to be a means of communication and also a means of providing some social life and a means for providing an outlet for the philanthropist in us, I guess. In other words, it was supposed to be a service organization and not a governing body at all. It ^{however,} did have some voice with the administration, but [^] the administration was under no compulsion to look at us.

It was during my period that the Board of Student Affairs was established, and I don't think that had that much weight, either. The Board of Student Affairs, if I remember correctly, was made up of the presidents of the student body and the honor council and that sort of thing. Those people were the ones who had the input.

I'm not sure the Board of Student Affairs necessarily gave them more (input), although on paper it did give them more. I'm not sure it necessarily did. I think the Board of Student Affairs was good in that it at least set up regular meetings ^{between} the student body and the administration--sure, that was good. My argument was that you had to have the Student Association to have the B.S.A.

Williams: You didn't feel that the B.S.A. was taking a chunk out of the empire of the S.A.?

Ramsey: Well, I wouldn't use the word, "empire." They didn't have much of an empire. The Student Association could have served as a means of communications ^(between the B.S.A. and the student body) and as feedback. I don't know if it ever did. The thing was unwieldy, for one thing (the S.A., not the B.S.A.), because you had all these people: some of them were not very careful about their responsibilities.

some of them were extremely adept at carrying out their responsibilities. Heck, we threw some good dances, and we had some service-oriented projects, for example, the Campus Chest, which got a lot of money together for various good causes. We instituted the midwinter's dances, and that was a good thing. Spring finals was put on by the S.A. That sounds pretty trivial, and it was pretty trivial, I guess, but on the other hand, the S.A. did some helpful things, for example, the book sale.

There's no question (and I'm getting to the main point) that we discussed some very substantive issues in those meetings. Some real issues were ^{at least} aired at those meetings. And I think that's all a student body government can do with the kind of situation you had at that college where we had no input in the decisionmaking. We discussed some very subatantive things, and it did some good; it always does some good.

Williams: As a forum.

Ramsey: Yes, as a forum--as a lightning rod. Sometimes we took heat that otherwise would have been directed at the administration. By going through us the whole thing was muted and

changed so that something positive could come out of it. I think the S.A. was responsible in part for changing the registration procedures. We worked desperately to change the registration procedures, and we got action on that, not while I was there, but for generations to come. I think the S.A. did some good work in the ratings of the faculty when that was a big deal -- assigning values to faculty members, whether they were good or bad. I personally think that's a nitwit thing. We never got enough responses to make a clear sample, and so what if ^{50 percent of} the student body thinks somebody is bad or good? I could make a comment about that, too. But I think that is a perfect example of [the S.A. as a] lightning rod. In other words, we diffused a touchy situation; the students wanted to evaluate their professors, and we gave them a way to do it. It wasn't satisfactory; it didn't really work, but it was done, and for a lot of people that was the satisfaction of it. You could go over to the library and look at that book--I don't think many ever did--but you could. I think word of mouth was more efficient. In a school that small you know who's good and who's bad.

I think that was a prime example where we took the heat off the administration.

Williams: Wann't diffusion just what was being said about the administration--that they were trying to diffuse the opposition?

Ramsey: Yes and no. How important is it? Again, why get yourself into an uproar about something that is not really all that important? If we could diffuse an issue that was not important, that really is a symbol for something else, I don't think that's necessarily bad. What is really important is, "Am I getting a good education -- not whether I can keep my boyfriend here overnight, but am I getting a decent education?" And for most of the people who go to that institution that is a major concern. When you get into these other piddling things, like, "We want the right to evaluate our professors because kids at Berkeley are demanding this right," is that really so terribly important? The ratings were there for anybody who wanted to see them. We spent a fortune on them. It was tremendously expensive. We hired a Washington consulting firm to do all those computer programs for us. Then what can you criticize? ^[We could say] "The book is there; if the student body isn't going to take the time to do the ratings

then don't criticize the administration and don't criticize the S.A. because we put the mechanism there for you. The students obviously don't want it as much as they thought they did.⁾⁾ So I think that was a matter that was not important enough to make a big issue out of. I think the S.A. did a good job of turning the heat off that particular issue.

Actually the most popular thing that we did was (showing) the movie on Sunday afternoons. We showed cartoons during exams. That sort of thing gets more attention because the students on the whole really weren't interested I don't think in whether their professors had a 3.6 rating or a 2.8 rating.

Williams: When the B.S.A. was created by the Statement of Rights and Responsibilities . . .

Ramsey: Oh yes; I typed that, by the way, very late at night.

Williams: When the B.S.A. was created did you hope that it would be a channel, a forum, more efficient perhaps than the S.A. because it had faculty and administrators on it?

Ramsey: The B.S.A. was a logical accompaniment to the S.A. The S.A. was like a tree whose branches didn't go anywhere. Anything that the S.A. did (meant) that Tim Marvin, the

president of the S.A., had to tromp over to Dr. Paschall's office and wait until Dr. Paschall wanted to talk with him. Then he could present his point of view. You see, the B.S.A. gave the president of the student body legitimacy, and once you have that legitimacy then you speak with some force behind you, and I think that was good. The B.S.A. never did everything the students wanted it to; if you've read the Flat Hat editorials you know about the high hopes that some people had for it. But on the other hand, what are we talking about here? We're not talking about the United States Congress; we're talking about a university. Students don't run the university. We are there only to express an opinion about the way it's being run, and our opinion doesn't really count very much. I'm not sure that's bad or good.

Williams: Do you think students in the class of '72 would have said the same thing--that students aren't there to run the university?

Ramsey: Oh, of course they wouldn't. But I don't think they are there to run the university. But this is the class of '69, and most of the people of the class of '69 probably would not have agreed with me on this point. But ask them now.

In '79 ask the kids who graduated in '72 what they think and see what responses you get. I think they should have listened to us more. We had good ideas; we knew what we were about, but still, it's not our university. If the student body had had the power to make rules I really wouldn't have trusted the rules they would have made. You're talking about people without a vast amount of experience. It 's like the dog that chased cars: if we had gotten it, I don't know what we would have done with it.

Williams: You said you typed the Statement of Rights and Responsibilities--I got the impression that the final form of the statement was something done halfway in the dark of night. It was [passed] in the middle of the summer--after a great deal of agitation, however.

Ramsey: This is the story: there were a number of those statements of rights and responsibilities. The one I typed was the second one. My junior year everyone was agitating for a statement of rights and responsibilities; the emphasis, of course, was on rights--very little on responsibilities. That summer we received in the mail a handsomely printed booklet,* and of course everybody went beserk. It had

* the statement approved by the board

been done with very little input--the administration was always very vague about who actually wrote that thing (at least to us it was very vague). So that winter we went back to school, and the S.A. had "Time-Out Day." Everybody raised Cain all day about various issues. Now here is another example of the S.A. trying to do something positive that again we got mixed student support for. Most students went to classes. Most students didn't really care. I went to some that were very stimulating. They had some outstanding professors leading those things. The Statement of Rights and Responsibilities was connected to this, so everybody got to work, and there was student input on the second version, not as much perhaps as there should have been. But I remember in the spring Tim Marvin coming over and saying, "Type this by morning. No typos. It has to be in Dean Lambert's office tomorrow morning." (my seniority sisters and I)
We finished it about 3:00 in the morning.

There were substantial differences from the first one.

But again, what's happened to all these statements of student rights and responsibilities in the last five or six years?

In 1976, who cares? The ultimate test of time is if anybody still cares, and I think the answer is, "No."

Williams: But did it do any good in '69-'70?

Ramsey: I was gone by the time that thing was finally adopted. I graduated in the spring of '69. I doubt it; it was a vague document. It was one of these things the students said, "We have to have it." The whole thing was set off by an illegal "search and seizure" in the rooms. I think it was popcorn poppers they were after or something like that. Yes, did the student have a right to privacy in the room-- that was a major issue. The Statement of Rights and Responsibilities I don't think dealt with that tremendously well. It was something everybody wanted, but no one really knew what to write. How do you codify something like that?

Of course, that's my age talking now. At the time I thought it was a nice thing because it is good to have things written down; at least you always know where you stand. There were lots more important things there, though, than that. It sure created a lot of stir. There was a lot of heat and lightning about it. It was the same thing: how substantive was it? As a big issue, looking back on it now,

how really important was it out of four years of school? But it did create a lot of heat and light, and of course the Flat Hat had a field day with the whole thing. This is the problem with the administration (and I guess I'm having trouble pinning it down)--this insensitivity. Anybody could see that was the wrong way to handle that. And the moderate students took it on the ears. If we had been listened to in the spring of '68 then there would not have been all that flack in the fall of '68. They would not listen to the moderate side of the student body.

Williams: Why do you think not? It looks like the sort of people who comprised the administration[#]would have wanted to have heard what the moderate students were saying.

Ramsey: It happened everywhere, though. It happened in Congress. This is '68--the Democratic National Convention--who listened to the moderates there? They knew we wouldn't go out and burn down Marshall-Wythe (which is what James Blair used to be called before somebody changed it, which in itself was a cause célèbre while I was there in school). The problem here was that we wouldn't burn anything down; we'd say, "Yes, sir," "No, sir," "Three bags full, sir," pull our forelocks, and back out the door.

They mistook this; I think that the administration tried to fend us off and used delaying tactics: "it'll blow over if we're very quiet and don't mention it at the next party we have for the students at Christmas." It didn't blow over.

The moderates would come back from the S.A. meeting, and we'd say, "We talked about it." "Well, when are we going to get some action?" And there'd be no action taken.

Soon there's Larry Peterson (Leader of the Students for Liberal Action) jumping up and down. The administration played into his hands. ^{Larry and} Ernie Cote--they were not really radical people; they were pretty moderate, too.

(I want to make that point). ^{The administration} played into the hands of people who liked to stir up stuff ^[and] who had this moral righteousness behind them by not listening to those of us who said, "Why don't you let us sit down and talk to you about the Statement of Rights and Responsibilities?" They ignored us because they could ignore us! We weren't going to do any damage to them. We wouldn't go home and tell our parents bad things--we weren't that kind of people. And that's our fault, too, you see. There's something to be said for pushing hard for things, not keeping one's mouth shut. Unfortunately that's the way of the world: if you don't make waves no one will listen to you.

Williams: How extensive do you think the support was for those who did want to make waves? I imagine we're talking here about your senior year ('68-'69).

Ramsey: Yes. Among the seniors? All we could see were the black caps and diplomas at the end of that tunnel. What they did to the class^{es} under us--I don't know how many people were really burned up about that. I can't judge this because my perception is altered by what I know has happened down there since I left. I would say on the whole that the students were concerned; it wasn't an overwhelming, burning, driving concern. There was no Columbia at William and Mary. But yes, the kids were upset, and to a large extent they were mad because they were frustrated. I think a lot of us who were so-called moderates (I say "moderates;" I'm sure Chris Sherman [editor of the Flat Hat] would say "conservative") were angry because we felt we'd been slapped on the nose. And then they dealt with people we felt they shouldn't be dealing with. Yes, the student body was concerned; they at least wanted to have their ideas heard. I would say that was pretty widespread. Now division on tactics was enormous; [there was] a real gulf on how to do it.

I think everybody wanted to have this done; everybody felt it needed to be done.

The second thing that used to bug me was the way they divided the housing. Dean Mosely did an awful lot to straighten that out. There was an administrator who was a thoughtful person who used her brain. That helped diffuse a lot of tension. A lot of students really thought a lot of her; her door was always open to everybody. She played with fifty-two cards on the table; if you didn't like the way the cards were laid out, that was one thing, but they were all out there--at least that was always my impression.

There were some other people down there that I felt could be dealt with, and one of those was Sam Sadler, who at that time was in the admissions office. Sam was always playing with a full deck. I think since he's been dean of men--I was amused when I was down there in graduate school, because ^{undergraduates} were making the same kinds of comments that one always hears about deans of men. There's something inherent in that job; it's a lightning post. You're going to catch a lot of flack in that job. Sam was always extremely sympathetic towards the students and the students' point of view; there's no question about that. Sam doesn't play

games with you. You may not like his decision, but he's not a game player; he certainly wasn't when he was in that position. I have the greatest amount of respect for him.

[On the subject of registration] the registrar's office was ~~backed~~ ^{backed}. There was no evil intent; they couldn't see a reason for change. They weren't the ones going through all that mess. Those were the things [housing and registration] that bothered me; I felt those things were really substantive. That bureaucratic garbage just irked the fire out of me. I knew there was a better way to do that stuff; in an age of computers there's got to be a better way to do those things than we were doing them.

Williams: We've been talking ^{only} about campus issues; was this a time when campus ^{issues} were more important to you than national issues?

Ramsey: No, the national issues were more important to me personally.

Williams: Was that generally true or not?

Ramsey: I can't tell you. I can't speak for anyone but myself and my friends--you'd expect us to all have vaguely the same ideas.

Williams: One student said to me that when the national issues and the campus issues could provide a focus that's that's when the student movement really got rolling.

Ramsey: That would be after I left. That's a long time ago, and there's too much water under the bridge on national issues. I can't remember exactly what bothered us in '68-'69; it all seems so petty compared with the last five or six years. H '68 to me was a big turning point in the (Vietnam) war. I think most Americans really didn't know what was going on until '68. That's when the escalation really took off. If you take a look at the '69 yearbook, it's a stunning thing to see how many kids were in R.O.T.C. That was a good way to get out of military service in Vietnam; it was also a good way to get into it if you weren't careful, but you could play those odds. The war was a very difficult ^{moral} issue for me; I worried about it a great deal; it occupied a good bit of my thoughts. at this time. (Discussion of newspapers .) It was '68 when I decided the war was just absolutely a waste of time and effort.

H I think the William and Mary antiwar demonstrations are something the college can be proud of. They were ~~ter~~ tremendously moving and effective--although I didn't participate in them. I'm not a participant in things like that.

It was so hard to deal with it on any kind of level that I couldn't really express how I felt about the whole thing. I think their silent vigil for peace was an outstanding way of showing their feelings. And again it's a typically William and Mary way of showing it--not that it was unique to William and Mary, but the kind of students I went to school with didn't go around trashing things. I can still remember the expressions on some of their faces; they felt very deeply about something, and they expressed it in a most constructive way. And they took a heck of a lot of abuse.

Williams: From . . . ?

Ramsey: Townies, tourists--wow! Did they take it from tourists. The kind of tourist that comes to Williamsburg is fairly conservative, ^{upper} middle-class, Republican-type anyway, I guess.

When Nixon came--boy, the students were burned about that! If you're already angry and you see the administration pulling the same thing on you that the national administration is pulling in Vietnam--yes, it's just lies, lies, lies--that's exactly how you feel. You know what I said about the plot to destroy the sororities? Well, that's probably preposterous. You can only come up with that kind of plot in '68-'69. It was the only time anyone would believe something like that. You felt like saying,