

Log

Interviewee: Lawrence D. Griffith

Interviewer: Amy Schindler

Transcriber: Jeffreen Hayes

Interview Date: January 23, 2009

00:45	Early life before attending William and Mary
01:10	Parents were Connecticut Republicans (liberal on social issues)
01:28	Second child; Mother had four miscarriages
01:50	Attended private school, Gunnery: a boarding school named after a slave, Mr. Gunn. Mr. Gunn was an underground railroad conductor
02:37	Applied to Harvard, Brown, Amhers, North Carolina Chapel Hill, Duke, and William and Mary; accepted to Duke and William and Mary
02:51	Father wanted him to attend college in the south
03:05	Father from South but Mother did not want to live in the South after witnessing racism in Miami: Mother saw a woman hit by a car, she called the ambulance but the ambulance would not pick up the woman because she was black
03:38	Larry felt uncomfortable living in the South in the beginning: He was told he would go to hell because of his language
04:04	His first night in the dorm with his roommate, his roommate said he would kill a gay person; after conversation, Larry came out to his roommate's best friend
04:33	Hated his first year at William and Mary, had applications to Columbia University
06:15	Discussion of his belief in Christianity: with HIV, there is always a spiritual component, particularly with questions about mortality
07:36	The question of what is he going to do with his life came up when Larry arrived at William and Mary: English major but wanted to be an architect
08:13	Met partner and used this as an excuse not to attend New York University's School of Journalism, for graduate school: moved back to Williamsburg
08:48	Came out, as a homosexual, before arriving at William and Mary: came out his freshman year of high school to personal friends, wrote his parents a letter about being gay
09:11	Father was not surprised but mother blamed herself: wanted Larry to seek therapy; starting seeing a psychiatrist at Eastern State Hospital
09:38	Mother and Dr. were colluding on his care, cancelled his remaining appointments
10:12	Felt alienated from majority of the social life at William and Mary because of his sexuality
11:40	Moved off campus sophomore year and became involved in Gay organizations on

	campus: Lambda Alliance
12:08	Never felt afraid but felt as an anomaly, novel because of sexuality: the difference gave the gay students swagger
12:48	Easier for him to be gay than other students
13:53	Talks about dances held at the college: Hank Cochran threw a Beaux Arts Ball in Andrews, Audrey Beasley prints blown up; Larry, Hank, and another student coated their bodies in black paint and created nude body prints which were hung from the Imperial Stairway in Andrews; soccer team ran nude through the event
14:58	Talks about Dr. Watkinson who was the best professor Larry ever had;
16:45	Explains “cruising” in Williamsburg: In the late 1970s, it was the only way to procure sex; cruising occurred on the Square (Merchant Square?), it was dangerous but the city tolerated it; CW and William and Mary employees cruised every week; misses the camaraderie of cruising—it was a culture
20:17	Political change at William and Mary: Thought William and Mary was apolitical and students were more interested in self-satisfaction; only act of politics occurred when the students got involved with fight about a living wage for William and Mary staff
23:16	Discusses GALA: did not know about the organization until 1994, 1996; primarily a social organization but trying hard to receive an official designation with the College; hard to identify potential members; served two years on the board
28:00	Discusses HIV status and HIV education: knew he was positive in 1986, when he was first tested; in 1987 fell off roof, told hospital staff he was HIV positive; was asked to serve on the Williamsburg Aids Network board, served as chairman; teaches about HIV at Lafayette High School to 12 th grade honors class and Walsingham Academy to 6 th /7 th graders
38:17	Provided William and Mary groups sex and HIV education but says it is harder because of cynicism
39:02	In depth discussion about living with HIV: frustration with discussion about drug health and not being able to talk about his status; a variety of emotions such as dread and depression; family history of depression; having HIV sucks and cannot find joy in having it;
44:17	Parents were alive when he was diagnosed with HIV, did not tell them for ten years; parents were upset but supportive; parents died before him and has no regrets telling them about his status
45:50	Only trauma in his life has been HIV: kept him from going to graduate school but did not affect his relationship with his partner;
47:20	Scrapbook collection: donated to Swem library, aim was to create a “slice of life” highlighting the 20 th and 21 st century life about a middle age, middle class, gay man living with HIV;
49:00	Talks about spiritual experience while praying to God, asking not to die of Aids; flooded with warmth and reassurance