

Gerald Gill  
Presentation #1  
Question and Answer Period  
March 4, 2002

**Gerald Gill:** I'll be more than happy to entertain any questions that anyone might have.

Excuse me, could you just tell me your name?

**Fayola Bostic**<sup>1</sup>: Fayola Bostic

**GG:** Thank you.

**FB:** The day you said when you were asked what you liked best about Lafayette and you said, "Nothing." Now would you ...?

**GG:** I think you probably got a sense from my remarks that I was quite impressed by, I got a very good education here. I got a full appreciation for the liberal arts, there are many requirements, and probably the requirements then were more strenuous and more rigid in terms of total number and diversity of courses that one had to, that one had, that one had to take in 1966 than one has to take now. I got a very good education. I'm not .... I never denied that. And I'm appreciative of the education which is one of the reasons why I wrote, talked about some of the men who had influenced me in terms of college professors. I might have had complaints about what we were taught in history, but I never had any complaints about the History Department per say. I was exposed to gentlemen in terms of members of the faculty who cared about their students, cared about

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<sup>1</sup> Fayola Bostic, Class of 2005.

the craft and the study of history, and they strove to impart those values and lessons to those of us in their classes. That's the major... one of the major lessons. I also got a full appreciation for the liberal arts. Lafayette is not a pre-professional school even though it does have a college of, a college of engineering. But Lafayette is supposed to impart values and also imparts skills that are transferable in terms of whatever jobs that you do get. I may not have learned that then, but it's something I've certainly learned in terms of thinking about my years at Lafayette. Which is one of the reasons as I thought about this presentation I wanted to be fully honest in terms of where I was then and where I am now. Probably in hindsight my my remarks would have been more comparable to the remarks that Riley Temple<sup>2</sup> made in that in the Laf, in the issue of *The Lafayette Alumnus*<sup>3</sup>. But I was too angry, too bittered, and too alienated, but I was also in the end fully appreciative. Secondly, and I'll say this, when I graduated from Lafayette College in 1970 I owed five hundred dollars in loans. My education was generously supported by the school. Consequently, I'm indebted to the school for the nature of the education that I did get. I do give money. I'm aca, I'm academic, and consequently I cannot endow a chair. I cannot create scholarships. But what I can to is to give contribute to the annual fund every year as a loyal alumnus. Could you tell me your name?

**Nana Ama Bentsi-Enchill**<sup>4</sup>: Nana.

**GG**: Nana.

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<sup>2</sup> Riley K. Temple, Class of 1971, A.B., American Civilization.

<sup>3</sup> *The Lafayette Alumnus* is published by the Lafayette College Alumni Association.

<sup>4</sup> Nana Ama Bentsi-Enchill, Class of 2002, A.B., Government and Law.

**NBE:** First I would like to thank you and all your classmates for struggling for us as we are here struggling in much the same respect as you did. But my question would be in an institution that necessarily filters out, filters in, and filters out mouthpieces such as yourself... how can we keep this legacy alive in the minds of those who are already here? Our numbers have grown in such a way that we almost can afford academic ...?

**GG:** What you're saying is something that's common. I teach at a college that has three hundred students of African descent with a population of about 4,500. So there are approximately seven to eight percent, but for example, there are students who will walk past, students of African descent on campus will walk past and don't speak to me. I don't know what they think I do, cuz I have to initiate the conversation. And partly because for people of African descent wherever you're socialized from the continent to the Caribbean to the Americans south or urban centers throughout the country, we've been told to number one have respect our elders, and if you walk across the campus, and you don't speak to me I take it as an affront, partly cuz I will initiate the conversations, but I know people who are busy trying to conjugate verbs or think about math sets or chemistry equations, and they don't necessarily acknowledge everyone that passes. But I think you're facing a degree of individualism, that for example, that we didn't face, particularly when we started to set up the ABC<sup>5</sup>. We referred to ourselves as brothers, and we used the term as brothers. We spoke to every other black student on campus. Particularly by '68 or '69 when we had gotten over the notion of individualism, and we saw ourselves as

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<sup>5</sup> The Association of Black Collegians (ABC), established at Lafayette College in the spring of 1968. For additional information on the creation of the ABC see Gill's oral history interview of March 5, 2002. A copy and transcript of the interview are housed in the Lafayette College Archives.

committing in solidarity with each other in our struggles for... was one in which we would have to deal with together and not as isolated individuals. And it is, it's an ongoing struggle. You're the recipient at least in terms of changes that have taken place, but some people take the changes, take the changes for granted. Now at the same time you've mentioned Riley Temple. Some of you might know Darlyne Bailey<sup>6</sup>. Some of you may know other black alums, particularly since Fred<sup>7</sup> has been very actively involved in trying to bring black alums back to campus. But for many of us our experiences were rather bitter ones when we were here. I'll be perfectly honest. I graduated in 1970. I came back in 1971, '70-'71, '71-'72 when I was teaching junior high school because I still had friends who were here. And I came back because I needed to talk to some people to get letters and so forth for my application for conscientious objector status, so I needed to talk to people on campus. But since 1972 until 1987 I never set foot on this campus, partly because there were other things I was doing with my life in terms of graduate school, having a family, and also in terms of my career. But there was also the fact that I was still very embittered by my experience. I came back in 1987. I came back in 1990 because I was asked to come back, and I was deeply touched when I was asked, when Dawn Person<sup>8</sup> invited me to come back. In 1990 and that's where I met John<sup>9</sup>, and that's when I met Rex<sup>10</sup>. I came back in 1995 for my reunion. It was the first time that I had ever been to one of my class reunions. And I was the only one of the nine black students who had come back to the reunion. It's at that particular

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<sup>6</sup> Darlyne Bailey, Class of 1974, A.B., Psychology.

<sup>7</sup> Fred D. Brown, Jr., Class of 1989, B.S., Civil Engineering.

<sup>8</sup> Dawn Person, Assistant Dean for Academic Support Services, 1985-1990.

<sup>9</sup> Referring to John McCartney Associate professor and Head of Government and Law Department

<sup>10</sup> Referring to Rexford Ahene Associate Professor of Economics and Business

time that I fully made my peace with Lafayette. Because I fully acknowledged everything that I had gotten from Lafayette although I had been contributing to the school since the 1980s. But the first time I really felt comfortable in terms of being back at Lafayette and fully acknowledging. That's when I met Professor Rothkopf, President Rothkopf<sup>11</sup> at the, at my twenty-fifth reunion. It takes time for people to get over their bitterness, and it's probably one of the, and this probably helps. People might come back if they're asked to come back. People may not come back if you send out a letter announcing something, but if someone gets a targeted invitation inviting him or her to come back and share his or her life experiences, and probably, for example, Riley graduated in 1971 so Lafayette was coed, but probably, I had more in common with Roland Brown<sup>12</sup> than I do with with Fred, partly because Roland Brown in the Class of 1949 and me from the Class of 1970. We were both black men at this school when this was an all male institution. I, so I can't really identify with Fred's Lafayette because it's beyond my... I'm not used to having, I was never used to having women in my classes, so I, I can't identify. I wish I could, but I can't (*Audience laughter*) But it takes time because of the healing process, and I think now, for example, there are many African-American alumni who are in their mid forties and their early fifties, which is also their peak earning years, and these are now men and women who are comfortably established in their careers who could perhaps think about giving back. Giving back in terms of time, giving back in terms of making a presence on the campus. And giving back in terms of financial donations.

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<sup>11</sup> Arthur J. Rothkopf, President of Lafayette College.

<sup>12</sup> Roland Brown, Class of 1949, B.S., Electrical Engineering.

**Kofi Opoku**<sup>13</sup>: I'd like to ask you, I see so many people from your class and around the country who graduated from Lafayette, and they're very successful in their professions, very, very successful. And I keep on hearing about how embittered they are. I wonder, when looking back, when that... so long.

**GG**: Probably because I came here as an relatively idealistic in terms of what I thought the College would be. And I didn't find it. Again probably because I had never visited the College beforehand so I really didn't know what the realities were. I just had a relatively optimistic view of what I could get from a college, from a college education, and that's why what I found so alienating. But it was the culture of Lafayette. It was also alienating. I came from a black working class culture where for example we partied differently. I came from a culture where, for example, people didn't drink. I do not drink beer. I hate beer. I hate beer (*Audience applause*) I still... the parties where there was beer on the floor this thick. Okay. It was nauseating. I can't stand the smell of beer. I came from a culture where people dressed up to go to parties. We didn't dress down to go to parties. And it was just totally alien to everything that which I had been socialized in my first years, and my growing up to New Rochelle<sup>14</sup>, so consequently I was embittered by that experience. But again I had good experiences. Rooming with Joe Cox<sup>15</sup>. Rooming with Marc Davis<sup>16</sup> my first year. At least in terms of having those experiences allowed me to meet individuals that would not necessarily be so. So I can say this now, that would not allow me to be as wholly indifferent. Now there are two

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<sup>13</sup> Kofi Opoku, Visiting Professor, Department of Religion.

<sup>14</sup> Gill grew up and attended high school in New Rochelle, New York.

<sup>15</sup> Joseph T. Cox, Class of 1968, A.B., English.

<sup>16</sup> Marc B. Davis, Class of 1970, A.B. Economics.

forms of indifference to the school. I could have been alienated from the school, stayed in my room. I could have been alienated from the school and wanted to make change. I chose, I chose the latter. So consequently I could have, well, let's say stewed in terms of my bitterness, so why am I here, I hate this place, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, and didn't do anything. I could have said, "I hate this place blah blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, and I want to do something to make it better and make it be more comfortable for people like me and people who look like me after they after..." And that's one of the things that motivated members of the ABC to try to change quantitative culture of Lafayette.

**Crystal Taylor<sup>17</sup>**: Crystal Taylor

**GG**: Right.

**CT**: I find it most delightful to hear your story and tales of what you went through while you were here. But at the same time it's... it's also a little sad to see that we're facing some of the same issues that you faced particularly emotionally and in our pursuit of education. So I guess what I would like to say is that you spoke about wanting, thinking about transferring after your first semester and having gone home, you know, and trying to figure out what you want to do, and having come back and try to make a fresh start. I think sometimes we can get in the mode of thinking that it's different someplace else, and now.... some of your research at Tufts... maybe you can help us see that what we're experiencing here, while the Lafayette experience is a unique one perhaps the experience

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<sup>17</sup> Crystal Taylor, Class of 2003, A.B., Mathematics.

that people of color face, you still are going to experience... so you can't run from the culture...

**GG:** What's going on here is no different than what's going on in any other government wide institution in terms of what the impact and effect on students of color and faculty members of color. I didn't talk to you about my frustrations of being a faculty member of color at Tufts<sup>18</sup>. I didn't talk to you about my joys in terms of being a faculty member also. But what's taking place here in terms of what you're doing is the same thing that I state. And probably, for example, better that you hear me talk about them, for example, if Fred tells you, if Fred tells you, you expect him to say that. Okay. If Charles tells you... If they tell you, for example, you expect it because they're paid from the College. But, for example, if I say the same thing then, for example, you might say, "Well, gee...". You know the reality might set in in terms of what to do. I wish I knew the answer cuz I could write the book. Okay. But it's it's just effort to try to... Number one don't wallow in self-pity. Involve yourself in everything the school has to offer. This school has a lot to offer. And take full advantage of everything this school has to offer because there are innumerable contacts that you're gonna keep for graduates of this institution. Secondly, take full advantage of everything in terms of the classroom. I tried to take full advantage when I became more savvy of the things that take place here. Also realize that there are faculty members who are very supportive of students of color on this particular campus directly and perhaps indirectly. Also there might, I don't know the nature of the student body, but for example, I think there are a couple of students who are interested in the concerns of people of color and people who can make genuine

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<sup>18</sup> Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts. Gill is an Associate Professor of History at Tufts.



friendships across racial, racial lines. So you're not alone. But most people here think you're alone, that nobody's ever gone through what I've gone through. Which is one of the reasons why I make my remarks, cuz I've went through it. I can understand. I can sympathize. I can empathize. I am not in power of doing things to change the day to day realities, at least in terms of student life, but I can be involved, from afar in terms of trying to bring about changes particularly with other alums. I'm sorry if I'm not really answering your question.

**CT:** Well see it's a question that I'm sure will go unanswered for a long time

**GG:** But it's part of an ongoing discussion that we can perhaps have tomorrow at least in terms of trying to find out how or what people, or to try to come up with answers. John.

**John McCartney**<sup>19</sup>: I'm looking from the inside at your efforts, ABC, etc. I look around the Valley and other places, what has made Lafayette in a sense move ahead, though we have a long way to go in doing what we want to do, move ahead of many of the other colleges in the area... Lehigh<sup>20</sup> ... we have several tenured black faculty members. People take this for granted, but its something that is not seen in many places. You go in the Valley, no black faculty, no black administrators. But I think we've come quite a bit trying to make this place more humane, more represented. Other colleges, I went to Lawrence College<sup>21</sup> the other day to speak there, maybe two black faculty members. So in terms of the broad picture, we're not doing too badly, I don't think. And

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<sup>19</sup> John McCartney, Associate Professor and Head of Government and Law Department.

<sup>20</sup> Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

<sup>21</sup> Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, New York. (?)

my question is, what do you think it is here that has enabled us to come as far as we have, like your efforts and maybe what else can we do?

**GG:** Okay. Practically speaking Lafayette had more black students than any other school in the Lehigh Valley when I was, when I was an undergrad. We complained about our numbers. They were worse at Moravian<sup>22</sup>. They were worse at, at Muhlenberg<sup>23</sup>. They were worse at Cedar Crest<sup>24</sup>. They were worse at Lehigh. Lehigh did have an African-American faculty member before, in terms of who was teaching, before Lafayette did, but that was only by one year. One of the things I like to suggest is, for example, for... I would like to suggest, and I maybe will open this us as a challenge for students at Lafayette to contemplate going on to careers in of higher education. I made a conscious decision to go on to higher education because there was nobody like me here when I was an undergraduate. So consequently I acted upon my frustrations by going to graduate school. But where's the next generation of black faculty coming from? This is one of the questions we were asked by the administration. You're putting forth a demand for more black faculty members. They were studying data from 1968. There's only one percent of Ph.D.s are African-American, where are we gonna get these black faculty members? It was a smoke screen. But it was the argument that they were putting forth, and it was a very legitimate one. So consequently some of you, I would challenge you to consider careers in higher education. You're not gonna become a multi-millionaire unless you develop a patent for something, but certainly when it comes to the freedom to teach, the freedom to do your own research, the freedom to shape young people's minds.

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<sup>22</sup> Moravian College, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

<sup>23</sup> Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pennsylvania.

<sup>24</sup> Cedar Crest College, Allentown, Pennsylvania.

I consider myself to be rather current, probably because I interact every day with individuals between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two. I'm growing older chronologically, but I can still remain young. So, for example, I knew who Alicia Keys<sup>25</sup> was before some of my students (*Audience laughter*) I knew who Aaliyah<sup>26</sup> was partly because I interact with young people, and it keeps me chronically, chronologically I'm getting older, but I can stay young and at least in terms of quality of mind issues. Certainly there are ongoing efforts and ongoing frustrations of among faculty members of color. John<sup>27</sup>, I don't know how many committees you've been on that deal with the questions of race. I've been on too, too, too many committees, and too, too many task force, and too, too many (*Audience laughter*) pilot studies, and too, too many oversight committees, and too, too many ad hoc committees (*Audience applause*) Okay. But those are some of the recurrent issues that always come about. I need help. I need allies. I need young blood. Okay, in terms, for people who want to seek careers in higher, in higher education. That's one of the ways in which there can be some changes in terms of higher education, that there are more and more people of color enter into graduate professional programs, cuz I'm sick and tired of writing letters of recommendation for people going to law school. Okay. (*Audience laughter and applause*) It has nothing to do, it has nothing to do with people who wish to go to law school, but I've seen too many people as lawyers who suffer mid-career crises and then decide they want to do something else. Okay.

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<sup>25</sup> Alicia Keys, R&B vocalist. Keys won five Grammy Awards in 2002.

<sup>26</sup> Aaliyah, R&B vocalist.

<sup>27</sup> Referring to John McCartney.

**Anja McCartney**<sup>28</sup>: As Dr. McCartney pointed out there has been an increase in tenure of black faculty, but in your speech you said that thirty-three black men and women entered in the year 1974?

**GG**: The class of '74. Right.

**AM**: But in my class of 2005 there's only like nineteen black students, so what do you think about that?

**GG**: Partly because... I don't know the particular solution in terms of how Lafayette recruits, but for example, Lafayette is probably engaging in the same pool that every other selective college and university in this country is engaging in terms of looking at students of color. Those of you who are of African descent will often know, for example, regrettably, there's been a tendency by some other students of African descent to devalue scholarly activity in high school. Too many of you have probably heard the comment, you were accused of being white or acting white in high school because you were studying, or you wanted to do well in high school grade wise, or you wanted to do well at least in terms of your SATs<sup>29</sup>, or you were taking AP classes<sup>30</sup> and some other people saying you're acting white or you talk white. So consequently in some areas African-American achievement isn't as highly valued as it used to be. There was a premium in terms of education when I was growing up. My grandmother went to fifth grade in terms of, in terms of elementary school in Norfolk, Virginia, but she was insistent that her

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<sup>28</sup> Anja McCartney, Class of 2005, A.B., Chemistry.

<sup>29</sup> The SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test) is used as a college entrance examination.

<sup>30</sup> Advanced placement classes.

children, my father and my, my aunt, got high school education. I was three years old, I was told I was going to college. They already had my luggage packed out for me to go to Lafayette (*Audience laughter*) But it was always those types of efforts, and I think right now that most, most of the of the elite colleges are looking for the same small number of of African-American students. Does it mean that schools need to be more creative in terms of finding... colleges and universities need to be more creative in finding African-American students? Yes. Does it mean, for example, that there ought to be efforts between colleges and high schools and colleges and junior high schools to prepare students from lets say sixth or seventh grade when they're entering middle school or junior high school to think more seriously about colleges? Yes. Is there a need is there a means for summer enhancement programs on college campuses to bring students of all racial and class backgrounds who had never attended college to see what the college experience is like before they are seniors in high school? Yes. There can be ways in which colleges and universities can try to attract the pool or increase the number of students so therefore, not everyone's looking for the same, the same students. To be perfectly honest if a student has a choice between Harvard<sup>31</sup> and Lafayette all things being equal where might the student go? I'd say go to Lafayette. Okay. But, for example, there many people are more hooked on at least in terms of the name. Lafayette may not necessarily have the best reputation in terms of, among people of color probably because people don't know what the school does in terms of providing educational opportunities. And also in terms of, in terms of the alumni. One of the things we did at Tufts was to compile a list of graduate and professional schools that African-Americans alumni from Tufts attended... have I sent you a copy of that? If Lafayette did the same

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<sup>31</sup> Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

thing you could see what people like me, and I did not graduate summa cum laude. I did very well, but I did not graduate from here summa cum laude. But what people like me have hopefully done in terms of our lives and careers. That's a marketing strategy. So, for example, if you were in high school and you found out that alumni from Lafayette over the course of the last twenty years had gone to graduate or professional schools in x programs or law schools such as or medical schools such as or whatever or... or whatever... or whatever they've done, then you might feel more comfortable. Gee this school has a demonstrated track record in terms of graduating students of African descent in four years to go on to careers. And obviously there's a worth... to a Lafayette education. It those types of activities when you're trying to break down, lets say, break down the some of the myths that people might have at colleges such as Lafayette, and have people have a true appreciation for what the school can offer. Now I'm startin' to sound like a recruiter. (*Audience laughter*)

**Question:** Oh actually I was just going to piggyback on what you just said about more people of color in higher education, but not only as faculty and administrators...

**GG:** Do you mind if I just tell an anecdote? My first day at Tufts University I went into the classroom introduced myself to students, the students in class. Student came up to me asked the question at the end, and, she said: "What are your qualifications?" (*Audience laughter*) I was somewhat taken aback. I told her what my qualifications were. She came up to me and said afterwards, well she asked that question, cuz she could tell by my facial grimace that I must not have looked none too pleased, although I didn't challenge

or rebuke her. But she told me that she had asked that question partly because she asked all of her instructors that, the question. I asked other members of my department if they had ever been asked that question. None of them had ever been asked that question. But certainly, for example, there's always the perception that people of color somehow are under qualified or not qualified for the positions that they do occupy. I try to dispel that, that notion, and I think if more and more people move into higher education then you can see perhaps changing in terms of some of those attitudes.

**Diane Shaw**<sup>32</sup>: Gerry let me... I don't want to cut this off, and Gerry has generously said that he can be here all night if necessary. (*Audience laughter*)

**GG**: I don't have to go anywhere tomorrow.

**DS**: We do have refreshments courtesy of the ABC, thank you very much, and I'd like to suggest maybe people...

**Arthur Rothkopf**: Yeah I just wanted to have one. Thank you Gerry for coming back and sharing this. I think it's a very important thing for our students to hear this. Can I maybe just ask two questions: one did you think thirty years ago you'd come back to find ABC still existing and still thriving and maybe the second part of putting on your historians hat, thirty years from now when one of these young people come back and speak do you think there'll still be an ABC and how do you view, putting your historical hat on, what the world's gonna look like in terms of race relations on college campuses?

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<sup>32</sup> Diane Windham Shaw, Special Collections Librarian and College Archivist.

**GG:** Certainly we established, we had hope that the ABC would be permanent. I thought of the ABC, that, for example, what the ABC did do in terms of '69 and '70 was to serve as the center for social outlet but also for people to change racial consciousness particularly for individuals who were living in fraternities. Obviously there are black male students now who are members of fraternities. I see no problem with that obviously as someone who pledged a fraternity. Therefore the ABC may not solely also serve as a function for, for occurrences on campus that it did when I, when I was here. I'm aware of the realities of, the changing the realities of race, and it's one of the reasons why I'm glad as an alumnus that they, that it was decided to keep the name ABC. I realize that several years ago there were efforts to perhaps consider changing the name partly because people were dissatisfied with the name, or perhaps thought the name ABC only spoke the realities of people of North American descent, black people of North American descent. It did not necessarily speak to realities of people of Caribbean descent or the people from the African Diaspora. I'm glad the organization's kept its name partly because of historical continuity, which is one of the reasons why I wanted to tell you the origins of, of ABC. Thirty years from now probably the ABC should still be in existence on campus, and I hope it would be. But I hope it would be as an example of ethnic pluralism on this particular campus where, for example, people of any racial group can, would feel comfortable going into the Portlock Center<sup>33</sup> or better themselves with the programs at the Portlock Center. Often times when there's anything that is... the program is for black people on any particular campus there are many people who are

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<sup>33</sup> David A. Portlock Black Cultural Center. The Center, named for David A. Portlock, a Lafayette administrator and associate dean of academics, was dedicated on November 13, 1999.



white who are hesitant to take advantage or go into it because they fear what's gonna happen in terms of that particular program. Now, for example black people on this campus or people of color are expected to go everywhere and to navigate everything on this particular campus. (*Audience applause*) We're not supposed to... no matter how we feel we're supposed to be able to, be able to negotiate space that might be hostile or space that might not be fully comfortable for us. But there are people who are, some people who are white feel uncomfortable if they're in any situation where, for example, there are minorities. We have to deal with that everyday in terms of minorities, in terms of numbers, not minorities for the status of people. So therefore I would like ABC to continue to remain as a space on this... the Portlock Center to remain as a space for black students and other students of color, but at the same cuz obviously I would assume more so in terms of changing realities. Cuz when so I was in Lafayette there were no Asian-American students in my class. There were no self described Latinos in my class. So race was black or white. Obviously in the twenty-first century race is going to change. African-Americans are not going to be the largest non-white racial group in this particular country. And this college will have to adjust to those realities at least in terms of the College, of its pool of potential students. So, for example, I think that students of any racial and ethnic group should be totally comfortable on this particular campus, and if there is a need for organizations to support their special needs, yes. But at the same time... because what we did at the ABC was to say our programming was open to everyone. If you read the manifesto<sup>34</sup> we said we wanted a black cultural house so that

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<sup>34</sup> The Black Manifesto was issued by a group of black students at Lafayette College in October 1969. The students presented five demands: there should be more black students on campus; there should be more black faculty and administrators on campus; there should be a black house on campus; more black studies courses should be added to the curriculum; and there should be an

we could have space for teaching our programs pertaining to African-American culture for people throughout this college. We weren't saying that this is only for fifteen, or fifteen people who are going to live in, in the cultural center to seek... but we were opening this as our space but to be shared with everyone who was willing to partake in the study of the experiences of people of African descent. But we wanted a place where we could be, where we could relax. Where we could go to the between class or after class. Where we could listen to where what we wanted to listen. I was tired of listening to the Vanilla Fudge<sup>35</sup>. I happened to have an appreciation for listening to...those of you who aren't old enough... (*Audience laughter*) I had an appreciation for Led Zeppelin<sup>36</sup>, but I was tired of hearing Led Zeppelin. I was tired of hearing Steppenwolf<sup>37</sup>. I wanted to get James Brown<sup>38</sup>. Okay, and so for example, we could go to the cultural center and listen to James Brown. Okay. (*Audience applause*)

**GG:** First of all I'd like to thank everyone who came. Diane was trying to get me to give an abbreviated version of this presentation. It was longer than I had anticipated, but I really didn't want to cut out anything cuz... I was... I'm not writing my autobiography, but I just wanted to come to grips in terms of trying to put down on paper what Lafayette meant to me.

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end to racism on campus. For additional information on the Black Manifesto see Gill's oral history interview of March 5, 2002. A copy and transcript of the interview are housed in the Lafayette College Archives.

<sup>35</sup> Vanilla Fudge was a Long Island, New York, based rock and roll band that achieved popularity during the late 1960s.

<sup>36</sup> Led Zeppelin was a British heavy metal and hard rock band popular in the 1970s.

<sup>37</sup> Steppenwolf was a rock and roll band popular in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

<sup>38</sup> James Brown, one of the most influential artists in American music, is known for creating the funk music style.

**DS:** Well you did a great job. Thank you Gerry.