Transcript for Barry Greene interview, conducted July 12, 2018 in Boatwright Memorial Library Seminar Room 2, University of Richmond, 28 Westhampton Way, Richmond, VA 23173

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Barry Greene: 00:00:00 Back when I first came here on campus, back in 1968, and the Collegiate Society said they're going to send the guy over to interview me, and he did. The good news is my roommate was there, so when the article came out it's on. But you're okay.

Irina Rogova: 00:00:20 We're like [crosstalk 00:00:21] in the pre-on.

Barry Greene: 00:00:22 Yeah. We're just having fun at what we're doing right now.

Irina Rogova 00:00:25 So this is one of our other students [inaudible 00:00:28]

Barry Greene: 00:00:28 Hi, Barry Greene.

Ayele d'Almeida: 00:00:29 Hi, Ayele, nice to meet you.

Barry Greene: 00:00:30 Nice to meet you.

Barry Greene: 00:00:31 So anyhow, they interview and we talked, I forget exact ... but anyhow, when the article came out ... and my roommate and I were in a room in Freeman Hall, therefore, and we looked at each other and he says, "That's not what you said," and I said, "I know." I said, "So go it for interviews." So I refused to give an interview again until Alison kind of tricked me, and so back in 2008. So 40 years it took to get me to come on this campus and do an interview, because I refused, after that, to do any interviews at all for anybody. And then, having worked in broadcasting for a little bit, after I left the university, I know they print what they think people want to hear. They don't always print the truth. Well, I shouldn't say they don't always print the truth. They print the truth, but they leave out the stuff.

Barry Greene: 00:01:29 So when Alison got me to come back on campus in 2008, she kind of tricked me, saying she wanted me to talk to some middle school students from Fairfield Middle School. I live out in the east, in Henrico around that area, so it just worked out real well. I said, "Well, what am going to tell middle school students." I really, truly don't want to hold you ... I'll
let you get to your questions, but she said, "Oh, just tell them about your experience at the University of Richmond, and what happened when you were ..." And so, I thought, "Okay." So I said, "Alison, I will do it as long as there are no reporters, and nobody’s going to interview me," and she says, "Okay." So I get my stuff and notes and everything together of what I was going to talk about.

Barry Greene: 00:02:19 So I go and meet with her, never will forget ... on a Wednesday, the program was going to be on Friday, and I said, "Well, Alison, this is what I’m going to cover. You said it was going to be about 20 students." I said, "So how many did you really say that’s going to be there?" She says, "Oh, now they found out it’s going to be you, so it’s going to be 350," and I thought, "Oh my God, you got to be kidding me." Well needless to say, it was a full house and there was the editor from the Richmond newspaper sitting in the audience. And shortly after that, that Monday ... this was on Friday ... that Monday morning my phone is ringing off the hook. The news reporter is calling me wanting an article, and I said, "No." And she said, "But you don’t understand, my boss wants me to do this.

Barry Greene: 00:03:11 And I said, "No."

Barry Greene: 00:03:14 Then she said ... she changed wheels on me and says, "But aren’t you the same Barry Greene that went to the Peddie School in Hightstown, New Jersey?"

Barry Greene: 00:03:21 And I said, "Yes."

Barry Greene: 00:03:23 "My dad was there with you."

Barry Greene: 00:03:24 I said, "Oh, you really did do your homework." So then I thought, "Okay, I’ll let you know." And so then ... the truth is I talked with one of my real close friend’s son, because my friends were all going, "Oh you got to do it, you got to do it."

Barry Greene: 00:03:41 And I said, "You guys are absolutely crazy. No I don’t have to do it. Really, at this stage of the game, I don’t have to do anything I don’t want to do." So I thought," Let me talk to somebody with some sense." So I went into the family room and talked to Rob. He was 15 years old, and he’s playing his little game, and I said, "Rob, this is what’s going on in my life. This is what happened. This is what they’re trying to get me to do." And then I’m thinking, "Oh my God, you’re talking to a 15 year old."
Barry Greene: 00:04:10 And he said ... He stopped, he put his game on pause and he looked at me. The first thing out of his mouth was, "Man, that's messed up." And he says, "Barry, I think it's worthwhile for you to do your interview."

Barry Greene: 00:04:22 So he's now 23 years old and he's the other one that's the reason why I do interviews. The rest is kind of history.

Irina Rogova: 00:04:33 What a great introductory story. So if you don't mind, I'm going to take a couple pictures ...

Barry Greene: 00:04:37 Okay.

Irina Rogova: 00:04:39 ... for our social media. Then I'm going to slip out of the room and let-

Barry Greene: 00:04:41 Oh, so you're going to run away and leave us.

Irina Rogova: 00:04:43 I'm going to run away.

Barry Greene: 00:04:43 You're going to leave me ...

Irina Rogova: 00:04:44 I trust that them with everything. [crosstalk 00:04:46]

Barry Greene: 00:04:47 ... in the hands of these trusty students. Okay.

Irina Rogova: 00:04:47 They are lovely and wonderful, and they've done all their research.

Barry Greene: 00:04:47 Okay.

Irina Rogova: 00:04:54 These are casual, little-

Barry Greene: 00:05:00 Okay. So I don't have to look at you?

Irina Rogova: 00:05:00 No, no.

Jacob Roberson: 00:05:00 First of all, thank you for that story and that introduction and for interviewing with us, because it's very special to have you here. We definitely do not take your presence for granted, so thank you again. Again, my name is Jacob Roberson.

Mysia Perry: 00:05:14 I'm Mysia Perry.

Ayele d'Almeida: 00:05:15 Ayele d'Almeida.

Barry Greene: 00:05:17 Okay. And so I'm sure I'll remember the faces, but unlike the gentleman out there, he graduated from the University of
Richmond too, Dan Fisher ... that ... we talked to him ... The chances of me remembering the names is going to be close to zero, a lot older now.

Jacob Roberson: 00:05:33 It’s quite all right. We'll take a picture and send it to you, everything will be fine.

Barry Greene: 00:05:37 That'll be great. Yeah, just make sure your names ... Once I see your names a few times, I will remember who you are.

Jacob Roberson: 00:05:42 Absolutely. As a precautionary measure, do you mind taking off your ring, because when you hit the desk it makes a loud noise?

Barry Greene: 00:05:48 Gotcha.

Jacob Roberson: 00:05:49 Appreciate it?

Barry Greene: 00:05:50 Anything else, do I need to take the watch off too? Okay.

Jacob Roberson: 00:05:52 No you're fine, got everything covered, just wanted to do that.

Barry Greene: 00:05:52 Yeah. I notice you're wearing the headphones. I don't want to ruin your hearing.

Jacob Roberson: 00:05:59 No, you're quite fine.

Barry Greene: 00:06:01 Good.

Jacob Roberson: 00:06:03 I'm able to adjust everything. Like Miss Irina said, we are here with the Race & Racism Project, so thank you again. This is an interdisciplinary student project where we are diving into the archives, and this year we’re actually doing an oral history piece, which is what you are here to be a part of. We’re trying just to tell the untold stories and complete the not-so-finished stories from The Collegian and from past yearbooks and things of that nature, just to grasp the whole, entire scope of students that went unrecognized. So thank you again for joining us, Mr. Barry Greene.

Jacob Roberson: 00:06:40 To get started, first of all, we would like to know the years you attended the University of Richmond, your major, and your hometown.

Barry Greene: 00:06:47 Hometown ... hometown's easy ... hometown's Richmond. I'm here from Richmond, Virginia. I know you heard me mention New Jersey. I did go to boarding school in Hightstown, New Jersey, the Peddie School. I was there from 1966, graduated
in ’68, and so came here to the University of Richmond in ’68. Back then school started in September ... none of this August stuff that you guys have now, after Labor Day, September of 1968 ... graduated in August of ’72. Majored in biology, BS degree. The undergraduate degree’s a BS degree in biology. Back then you could only, in the sciences and math, you only could get a BS degree. Now I think you can get a BA degree. You don't have to take as much math and science, which would have been nice had I been here too, but that's what I have, BS degree in biology.

Barry Greene: 00:07:46 I do not have a graduate degree. I've taken quite a few graduate courses in business administration, probably lacking like 24 hours of having the masters in business administration, but I'm not all that excited about doing that.

Jacob Roberson: 00:08:02 And so, what led you to come to the University of Richmond?

Barry Greene: 00:08:10 The truth is I wanted to come back home. Like I said, going off to boarding school in New Jersey, and basically ... probably I need to give you a little bit of background on that, only because it may not make a whole lot of sense as to why I wanted to come back to Richmond for home. But back then, there was a program called A Better Chance, and they were basically trying to ... well they wanted to integrate, some of the boarding schools in the North wanted to be integrated, and so they were a part of this program. One of my family friends who was with Virginia Union University, who I knew at the program, came by the house one Sunday and decided he was going to have a conversation with my parents. And so it was a lot of testing, and ended up the boarding schools decided to select you ... very family oriented, well-knit, close family.

Barry Greene: 00:09:21 And so my mom and dad thought that was a really good thing, to go off to school there would be great, and it was. And I’m not sorry that I did that, but you know, after being away from my family, and the truth is it really helped in preparing me for the University of Richmond. There was only four blacks in the school there, and the junior there was my roommate. So after graduating from there I wanted to come back home. Now a part of the Better Chance Program, we studied prior to going there, at different colleges around that took us in, with the hopes that we would go back to that college.

Barry Greene: 00:10:04 I studied at Duke University, English and math, for 12 weeks there prior to going off to boarding school. Part of that was to make sure, in that English and math, that I was on the same
level with the kids in the North when I got there. So University of Richmond, I looked at, you know I did look at thinking about going back to Duke, and the truth is I looked at Cornell University too. And Cornell was way up in Ithaca, New York and it's too cold up there. My first winter in New Jersey, I had to really, truly adjust to the snow piling up over your knees and going to classes. And coming from the South, you know snow, you don't have classes.

Barry Greene: 00:10:50 But you're living on campus there, and so I wanted to come home. I never heard of the University of Richmond. All the years living here, and never even knew the University of Richmond existed out here. Back then .. I guess you do everything now on the internet. We would have to get these big books, and they'd have all the universities listed and all the colleges. I happened to look in there and say, "Wow, this is a nice little, small school. It's at home. I could stay on campus out there, and I can still be at home. And so that's how I managed to find out about the University of Richmond, and that's how I ended up here.

Barry Greene: 00:11:29 I came and interviewed with the Director of Admissions, and the Registrar at the time was a guy called Tom Pollard. I interviewed with him and he even asked me the question, he says, "Are you sure you want to come here, because your boarding school has got a lot better facilities than we have here at the University of Richmond?", and the truth, is yes it did. I mean, the only thing similar at that time ... The university has gotten a whole lot better and comparable to the boarding school I left, but we had the lake, but our lake was a little bit bigger, because we could do rowing on the lake and things like that. But we had an Olympic swimming pool and stuff like that in our field house. We had separate fields for all of our different teams. The Varsity team did not play on the same team that the freshman football team or baseball team or ... everybody had their own. So they all practiced, when we had games, they all had games at the same time. Nobody shared fields.

Barry Greene: 00:12:36 We had real clay tennis courts that I learned to play tennis on, not the asphalt stuff that they had here. But anyhow, if I get off subject, there's no problem with you pulling me inline.

Jacob Roberson: 00:12:49 We're going to let you talk as much as [crosstalk 00:12:52]

Barry Greene: 00:12:53 Do not ... If I stray from your question, by all means, pull me back inline.

Jacob Roberson: 00:12:59 No, you're quite-
And you can ask anything you want.

You mentioned the director or somebody who was interviewing you, do you really want to come here, and so-

Well I mean, and I got the feeling that he was basing it on the actual facilities that I was coming to, because I was leaving first class, and at the time, the University of Richmond, when you got here and you saw the buildings and things, wasn't exactly like it is now. I’m not going to badmouth the university. But because when I came here, the students were ... there were barracks, old Army barracks from World War II, on campus all along the lake. Well, I’m twisting it around here, but all along the lake there were barracks that we had classes in. Then all along, across from where they filled in with buildings, Sarah Brunet Hall, there were buildings, barracks there that were used as dorms and classrooms. And so ... 

So he was referring to more the physical spaces?

Yeah, I don’t think he was referring ... I’d like to think he wasn’t ... I mean ...

Perhaps you know where I’m going with my question, but I was wondering since it is in 1968 and it's a time of massive resistance, in Virginia specifically, did you ever have any doubts of being the only or one of the few black students here at the University of Richmond?

You know, like I said, when I applied to come here it was to be closer to home, but I wanted to be at a university where I was not staying at home. So I wanted to live on campus here, and quite frankly, the university said, "No." They said no, I couldn't live on campus, so I went to the college counselor at my boarding school, because in boarding schools, I mean we had a counselor, his full-time job was to make sure every senior got into at least one college of their choice. Back then, my school, we went around, we interviewed with schools all over, and I did ... I did not interview at Duke, but like Georgetown and all those, you know I did. 

They only allowed us to apply to four schools, one that we kind of called it where we really would like to be, maybe a long shot, but then the fourth school was always a sure thing. You're going to get into there no matter what. And so that was his job and he did a very good job of it. And I went to him and I said, "You know ..." He says, "You’ve been accepted to
University of Richmond, great." I said, Yeah." I said, "But they're telling me I can't live on campus," and he said, "Oh."

Barry Greene: 00:16:13 So he went off, and next day he called and sent for me. He says, "You're going to live on campus there, but ..." I love this word "but" ... I'm Catholic, and one of my priest friends ... I'm friends with a lot of priests because one time I thought about being a priest ... but he uses the word "but" a lot. For him, "but" means better understand this, and that's basically what Mr. Oram was saying to me, "... but better understand this", and his exact words were, "Northern Baptist", because this boarding school was a Northern Baptist school.

Barry Greene: 00:16:58 They're not like Southern Baptist, and I was thinking, "Okay, I'm not Baptist, I'm Catholic." So I think he was preparing me for when I set foot on this campus, this Southern Baptist University. But that's how ... they didn't want me, but apparently ... I don't know, he didn't tell me what he said to them. I didn't ask him. And the truth is, I didn't know why they were saying, "No, you can't live on campus." It never crossed my mind that I had applied to a university that had never had a black on campus, other than the maids and the janitors, I don't know whether you still have maids here or anything like that, but yeah, we had maids that ... and once they got to know me, that was just absolutely wonderful, because my room was always the cleanest room in the place.

Barry Greene: 00:17:56 I mean, they changed your bed linen. They straightened my shoes up under my bed. They made sure my closet was in order, all that kind of good stuff. So see what you're missing. But anyhow, it never crossed my mind. I never ... that was not ... all I knew was I was going to get an education. I was going to be close to home, but I wasn't going to be living at home. It never crossed my mind that when I came on this campus for orientation ... that orientation, we rolled in on Sunday. We were in ... at the time it was called Pitt Field, which is now where the football stadium is, where they fixed it up quite a bit ... had us sitting there. Yeah, really I didn't look around, because I came from a boarding school, it was 400 students in the school, four blacks, so I didn't really pay that close attention to sitting in the environment, the freshman class here.

Barry Greene: 00:18:56 There was ... really just my face. There were three others, two girls and one other guy, but they lived off campus, and the guy I saw I think once or twice, I forget. It wasn't because we were in class together, but after my first semester I never saw him again. And the two girls, because of the way Westhampton was structured, unless they were going to
major in one of the sciences, biology or math, the girls just didn’t come across the lake.

Ayele d’Almeida: 00:19:31 So how did you learn that you were the first black residential student?

Barry Greene: 00:19:42 [Greene laughs] When I laugh, it’s not ... it’s just when I think about what answer I’m going to give. Again, my best friend, we’re like brothers, graduated from the University of Richmond at the same time. We’re very, very close right to this day. I cannot imagine ... He has always been with me through thick and thin, the worst, the hardships, the good times. Visiting with him, he and I ... his wife would hear him talk about ... well she would hear the two of us talking and she would often hear him say to me, "I could not have done what you did." And I thought, "Well, you know Mike, you do things to get an education ..." With him being white, that wasn’t a challenge for him, but you know ... And so, she often would hear him saying that to me, and again, what she did was she went to Alison Keller, and she said to Alison, "I think it’s disgusting that you guys have never recognized the first black at the University of Richmond."

Barry Greene: 00:21:03 And Alison was to go, "Who are you talking about?"

Barry Greene: 00:21:04 She says, "You know him."

Barry Greene: 00:21:05 Well yes she did know me, but she didn’t realize what the tie was with me to the university. I mean because I even ... she was like the Mistress of Ceremony or something for his oldest daughter’s wedding, which was held in the chapel here. I did the readings and the wedding, and she says, "You know him."

Barry Greene: 00:21:25 And so Alison says, "Really?"

Barry Greene: 00:21:27 Ans so while she started doing her little, I guess, background check, then my friend Mike calls me up and just to show you how it works is usually when he calls me up and says, "Let me tell you what your girlfriend did," and yeah, a likewise thing, when she calls me and says, "Let me tell you what your friend did."

Barry Greene: 00:21:47 And I said, "Your husband, you mean?"

Barry Greene: 00:21:50 And she says, "He’s your friend way before he became my husband."
Barry Greene: 00:21:53 But anyhow, she was instrumental, and so Alison ... that’s when I was telling you about the tricked me. He calls me up and says, "They want to recognize you," and so they had me ... I come ... I gave the speech, it was Black History Month, back in 2008, in February. But that’s how ... I never realized it. I never paid any attention to it until that came about. And so they did that history, their homework, and they said, "Yeah, you were the first to live on campus here."

Barry Greene: 00:22:25 I know for the first, until my senior year, there were not others on campus here with me. I guess, I think there was one athlete. He didn’t stay. The young man that started with me, he was supposed to have been a baseball player. He came from Maggie Walker [High School], but he didn't stay. I never saw him again after the first year. So that’s how, to answer your question, that’s how I realized apparently the first one living on campus, which was something.

Barry Greene: 00:22:59 They interviewed, in case you didn’t know, they interviewed to see who was going to be my roommate my freshman year. After my freshman year, I didn’t have any problems. Everybody kind of wanted to be my roommate. So that ... but they interviewed to see who was going to be my roommate. My best friend, he teases me all the time now, even right to this day, he teases me that, you know, "You got to be the roommate ... you know, you lived in the newest dorm that they had on campus," at that time was Freeman Hall. It was the only one with air conditioning. That’s where I stayed my whole entire four years here at the university.

Mysia Perry: 00:23:39 Can you ... I actually read the 2008 article that you rebuked it in-

Barry Greene: 00:23:45 Which one?

Mysia Perry: 00:23:47 The Richmond Times-Dispatch [crosstalk 00:23:48]

Barry Greene: 00:23:49 The newspaper or the one? In the Richmond Times, yeah the one that I balked against doing. I'll be honest with you, she was very ... I told her, I said, "You know, I'm going to give this with the understanding that you're going to be honest and tell the truth about it." Personally, I think she did a really good job with the article. Even though I think her editor ... It took almost a month, because I think the article came out, what, in March, some time in March, and I think a lot of it was because the editor who's a black gentleman ... I don't know whether he's still there or not and I really don't care ... but he kept telling her, "Go back. Go back." So she interviewed professors, the Dean's secretary, who's like a mother out
here on campus to me. As a matter of fact, even right to this day, she has never, ever missed sending me a birthday card on my birthday.

Barry Greene: 00:24:53 The reporter lady, I forget her name, but she said to me, she says, "You know, I had to go to my editor and say, this is the real deal. There's nobody out there that's said anything bad about this guy. I've interviewed professors. I've interviewed students. I've interviewed ..." She canned it. The only thing, there was one gentleman, that was a student out here while I was here, graduated the same year, lived in Colonial Heights ... and another one of my real close friends is in Colonial Heights that I spent ... As a matter of fact, his son was the one who said that I needed to do the article. But they ... and the other piece is they were excited when I tell them that we're ... because I need to go have my birthday dinner with them, and they said, "Well, what about Tuesday?"

Barry Greene: 00:25:42 I said, "No, I can't do Tuesday, I'm at the University of Richmond, Tuesday, doing an interview."

Barry Greene: 00:25:46 They said, "Good for you."

Barry Greene: 00:25:47 And I said, "I don't know, we'll find out what tough questions they ask me."

Barry Greene: 00:25:52 But he saw it, and then all of a sudden, this guy that never once opened his mouth up to me on campus, the whole four years of his ... he has a little dirtbag, ends up being recorded ... okay, so you can ... I don't care. You know, at this stage of the game, you can cut out anything you want to. I will not censor what you say.

Jacob Roberson: 00:26:18 Just to have that on record though, if there is anything that you want us to take out-

Barry Greene: 00:26:23 I will not. For you all, I will not have you censor anything. Anything you want, that I say, will be fair game. Okay. So I'll just clear the air up for you right now. Okay? I won't do you like I've done some others. But anyhow ... I mean all of a sudden ... the thing was I was seeing him at his son's little league games. He never spoke to me. I was telling my friend and his mother-in-law, and they said, "No way, there's no way he went to the University of Richmond." Well I mean, he really, truly didn't look like ... he was having some problems.

Barry Greene: 00:27:05 But anyhow, the article comes out, and all of a sudden he becomes my best friend. So now you know why I use the word that I use in describing him. All of a sudden we're, yeah,
best friends, and all my friends are saying, "You were right, he was the ... yeah."

Barry Greene: 00:27:22 And I said, "Yeah, well," I says, "He never once opened his mouth and spoke to me," and I remembered. I don't really talk to ... Well he has since passed away, which is fine. I mean, it's just like the ... He lived on the third floor of Freeman Hall. I can't think of his name right now.

Mysia Perry: 00:28:10 I was just wondering if you can talk a little bit about your transition from Armstrong to Peddie to UR, like how was that for you? Was there any type of culture shock, I guess, with going to these three drastically different places, I would say? Would you say they were drastically different?

Barry Greene: 00:28:31 Extremely drastically different, yes. You know, I think the biggest was being so far away from home for the first time. That was a major, I mean I probably cried every day for that first full year that I was away from home, because I was used to being with my sisters, my cousins. We all lived in the Fulton area, in the eastern part of the city, area called Fulton. And it wasn't a very big neighborhood, everybody knew each other, and it was like, for lack of a better word, the term used, a village. You know it takes a village to raise a child, well everybody there knew you. They knew your parents. I mean you were either a relative or close friend, and we were always together.

Barry Greene: 00:29:33 So I was only at Armstrong for a year, and to go off and leave all of that behind me ... you know, it was ... Going to Duke University was fine, because it was 12 weeks, and you knew you were going to be coming home. So now my parents have packed the car, and everything that you would normally pack when you go off, clothes and sheets and blankets and coats, and boots and everything you need for winter in the North ... Are you from the North?

Barry Greene: 00:30:15 You?

Ayele d'Almeida: 00:30:16 Minnesota.

Barry Greene: 00:30:18 Yes. That's not even the North. That is just ...

Jacob Roberson: 00:30:24 Canada.

Barry Greene: 00:30:24 Yes. That's exactly what I was going to say. That is Canada, freezing. Does it ever get above 80 there?

Ayele d'Almeida: 00:30:33 Yeah, it does in the summer.
Barry Greene: 00:30:33 It doesn't feel like it.

Ayele d’Almeida: 00:30:33 No.

Barry Greene: 00:30:36 And your water never gets above 50.

Ayele d’Almeida: 00:30:38 It ... okay ...

Barry Greene: 00:30:40 Tell the truth. But anyhow ... That was a big ... you know, packing up and then all of a sudden, you know, you go there, and you meet your roommates and the people. Then all of a sudden your parents help you get your room straight, and then they leave. And then all of a sudden it dawns on you that, "Hey, I’m not going to be having dinner with my sisters and my mom and my dad. I’m going to be sitting at a dining room table with these strange guys that I don’t know." So yes, it was, that was a big ...

Barry Greene: 00:31:25 And contrary to what you might think, there’s a lot of racism in the North. They try and make it seem like it’s a Southern thing. You know, in the South you know it’s there, and they don’t try to hide it. In the North it’s there and they try to cover it up, and then all of a sudden it slips up.

Jacob Roberson: 00:31:53 So would you mind taking us through that transition from going from the North at a prestigious boarding school and transitioning down, back to the South? Do you mind taking us through your first year here at Richmond?

Barry Greene: 00:32:05 No. That’s fine. I’ll throw in one thing. Going to the North, up there, was where the culture shock, that’s where I had somebody spit at me there. I had somebody call me a nigger there. Which things that you would think you would not hear or see in the North, but it was there in that boarding school with all those little, filthy rich kids, and I was in school with some pretty wealthy kids.

Jacob Roberson: 00:32:42 So did anything ever happen like that here at Richmond?

Barry Greene: 00:32:50 You know, I never ... here in Richmond, my freshman year in Richmond, I did not. Every weekend I left campus. I did not stay on campus here my freshman year, any weekend. I can’t remember any weekend that I spent on campus here at Richmond. My freshman year, we had Saturday classes here at Richmond. Look at that expression on your face. Yes, we had ... which didn’t bother me because my boarding school, and most boarding schools have classes on Saturdays. You had half your classes on Wednesday and the other half you had Saturdays. That was because on Wednesdays there you
got to leave campus and go to the barber shop, get hair cuts or do shopping in town. I mean, we were right there in town so we just walked.

Barry Greene: 00:33:45 So it was here, at Richmond we had classes on Saturdays. I forget how, but we had Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Monday, Wednesday, Friday classes like that. And so I had an English class down in the barracks early that morning, I think it was eight o'clock or similar class like that, and by 9:00-9:30, somewhere in that neighborhood, I had departed from campus, and I would come back on Sunday evening just before dark ready for ...

Barry Greene: 00:34:28 So my freshman year here, I don't recall being called any names or anything like that, but you could tell just from the way people avoided you, from the way the professors looked at you in the classroom. It took some getting used to. The maids and the janitors looked at you as if you were crazy, and they even admitted that they thought ... First of all, some of them thought that I was a foreigner. Others thought I was just absolutely crazy to be on this campus with no other blacks here.

Barry Greene: 00:35:06 And as they got to know me, they warmed up, and that's how they would finally admit that they thought I was crazy, then some thought I was from a foreign country, and I said, "No, I'm not from a foreign country, just as black as you all are, just happen to be here to get an education." And that's how I got through the freshman year, is because my thought was even though I sat in a classroom and there were professors that looked at me as if to say, "What are you doing here?", they didn't come right out and say it.

Barry Greene: 00:35:44 There were students that would not sit at the dining room table with me. If I happen to go into the dining ... Most of the time you're by yourself, so you go, you wander to the dining room and you just pick a place to sit down, and students would get up and move. They didn't want to be at the same table with me. One of the things that ... I should have said, one of the things that most, that always impressed me my freshman year was Ray Easterling ... I don't know if you guys ... He was a football player. He ended up playing for the Atlanta Falcons, but at the time, you could tell freshman football players because they got their heads shaved when I was here. I don't know if they still do there or not, but they got their heads shaved.

Barry Greene: 00:36:33 And I was walking to the dining room, and at this time the dining room, for us, was the Sarah Brunet Hall, is where our
meals were. And then the faculty, there was a little place off to the side where the faculty ate. And so I was just always impressed with the fact that I was walking behind him, and when he got the door there, he held the door for me, which was something. It just impressed me. I mean not that the fact was held the door he said "come on" type thing, didn't say anything, but the fact that he didn't just walk in. You know, I was behind him and he held the door, that always impressed me, going in. But yeah, you could tell, the professors, they looked at you like, "What are you doing here?"

Barry Greene: 00:37:22 You know especially one I had in math and a few of the English folks, not the one that I had in class, but you know, when you're walking around campus you see everybody, but you could tell they didn't want you. But you know, they couldn't teach the others in there and not teach me. So that was the way I handled it was, "Yeah, you don't want me in your classroom, but the fact is you got to teach these others sitting in here, so you can't have one lesson plan for them and another one for me, because I'm sitting in here with them. By all means, always let me know when I don't answer your question, or if you want to stretch the question or it leads to something else. I'm being very open and honest with you guys.

Jacob Roberson: 00:38:12 And we appreciate it.

Barry Greene: 00:38:13 Anything that you want to ask me will be fair game, I'll answer it for you.

Mysia Perry: 00:38:24 Can you talk a little bit about you going off campus during weekends or spending time with your family?

Barry Greene: 00:38:27 Yes. I was always going home.

Mysia Perry: 00:38:30 Did you ever kind of reach out to the schools like VUU, VSU-

Barry Greene: 00:38:34 No.

Mysia Perry: 00:38:34 No?

Barry Greene: 00:38:35 Never. No. It was ... You know, probably had I stayed here at Richmond, graduated, I probably would have gone to Hampton, because that's where ... A lot of my family, they either went to Virginia Union or they went to Hampton. I don't recall any family going to Virginia State. There were some at Morgan, but for the most part, Virginia Union and Hampton were the two places. And even now, a lot of the relatives of mine that were closer, maybe a little younger
than I am, but not as young as the ones are now, still went to Virginia Union and Hampton.

Jacob Roberson: 00:39:33 And so you kind of took us through your freshman year, but as those went off went off kind of without a hitch, you had some professors here and there that gave you weird looks, but as you went through your sophomore, junior, senior year, did things... like did you think professors warmed up to you more, or do you think that as far as interacting through social spaces and through your classes on campus that things got better or it was kind of a stagnant ride?

Barry Greene: 00:40:00 I do think it got better. There were a few that I became friends with my freshman year that they became friends with me. I will tell you, in the dining room my freshman year, the Jewish students were always, if I was sitting alone, would always invite me to join them at their table. You know, and when I think about it, I probably was thinking, "Were they being nice or did they try to get a feather in their cap?" It worked out, I mean, I think they got a feather in their cap, but they also turned out to be some of my closest friends too here.

Barry Greene: 00:40:41 But yeah, as time went on, there were ... and as a matter of fact ... you probably do know, I joined a Jewish fraternity, and was even the Vice-President my senior year. But yeah, it did get better. There were students that were friends. There were still students here that didn't want to be bothered. I mean they didn't say anything, but you could tell they didn't want to be bothered. They kept their distance. But there were others ... and I’ll back up. My mindset was, also from the standpoint, had I gone to an all black college or university, were all the students there going to like me or be friends with me? And the answer is no. And so that’s my mindset for how I dealt with it here, even though up until my senior year I was the only black on campus ... Were everybody supposed to be friends with me? No. And so I did not let it bother me that it was my race that kept a lot of them from being friends with me.

Jacob Roberson: 00:42:05 You mentioned you joined a Jewish fraternity, and that prior to what led that-

Barry Greene: 00:42:13 That’s because they threatened me. No, go to your ... [crosstalk 00:42:16] I will tell you how I managed to do that.

Jacob Roberson: 00:42:20 Did you enjoy it? Was that your main social group that you were a part of on campus or were there others as well?
Barry Greene: 00:42:25 There were others as well. I will tell you, I got to be more and more friends with them, and then my junior year, the guys that I was getting to be more and more friends with, were rushing the Jewish fraternity, and I was like, "I'm not going to join a fraternity," and they were like, "You better just think if we get in and then you decide you want to get, it's going to be even harder for you." And so I thought, "Okay you ..." I won't say anything bad. I was like, "Okay, jerks, I'll go ahead and pledge the fraternity with you.

Barry Greene: 00:43:07 It was fun. I mean, I had a good time, and they got to be my friends. Now I will tell you, like again, my close friend from here was not Jewish. He wasn't in the fraternity. As a matter of fact, the Jewish fraternity, now all of a sudden, they've got a couple of us Catholics in there, a couple of Episcopals in there. So now it was not all Jewish anymore, the way it was when I set foot on the campus my freshman year. My junior year was when it was not longer all Jews in the fraternity

Barry Greene: 00:43:40 But my best friend was Phi Delt, and he was President there until ... I was in the Phi Delt fraternity lodge a lot of times. A lot of times his brothers would tease me and say, "You're the only person we know that's in two fraternities." And even some of them, probably didn't want me there, but the fact that my best friend was the President there and knowing him the way I know him, to keep their teeth they probably wouldn't say anything about me anyhow. But I mean, some of them got to be good friends too. And so there were lots of things that I would also do with them, dining room, eat with them, as well as with my own fraternity brothers.

Mysia Perry: 00:44:37 You talked a lot about meeting your friends through your fraternities, what were some other ways that you found friends on campus?

Barry Greene: 00:44:46 A few majoring in biology, a lot of them came from being in the biology major, they came from there. I wouldn't say they came from anywhere else, and it was not that many really close friends, but I mean there were ... I didn't ... And I have to be honest with you, I mean I didn't stray around on this campus. Once it got dark I was in my room here. I mean, I didn't venture around on this campus. There were lots and lots of trees. Sometimes I would come across to the library, but you have to realize Boatwright and Freeman Hall were pretty close together. But other than that I didn't wander around on campus.
Barry Greene: 00:45:43 My best friend came over to my room a lot my senior year. But my senior year I had a single, I was in a room by myself then, and that was my choice.

Jacob Roberson: 00:45:55 Was there ever a time, or a specific memorable time where you were particularly uncomfortable being on campus or in a certain situation ... due to being the only one?

Barry Greene: 00:46:16 It’s probably ... I don’t know how to give you a specific answer for that. I will tell you any time I was wandering around on this campus was an uncomfortable moment, for the most part. Up until probably my senior year, was probably ... my senior year was probably the first time that I actually would stay periodically on campus on the weekends. Up until then, I was never on this campus on the weekends. Like my best friend, he would ... he even talks about it right now, he says that no, he was never on campus, once classes ended on Friday, he left campus. He returned Sunday evening. He was one of the head residents, so he, friends of my head resident, would get into my room and he’d be waiting in my room when I got back, because I’d bring back all kinds of food and stuff like that that I was going to be eating for the rest of the week.

Barry Greene: 00:47:31 But yeah, I don’t know if I was ever really comfortable on this campus, that I could honestly answer your question or give you a specific time or event that occurred. I don’t know how to answer that one for you with other that what I just said. I was just never ... I don’t think I was ever comfortable on this campus.

Mysia Perry: 00:48:00 Because of that, do you think you ever doubted your place on this campus? Did you ever have any regrets about coming to-

Barry Greene: 00:48:05 Never any regrets, never any regrets. I got what I came here for. I came here for an education, and that was the whole reason for being here, the whole reason for staying. Like I said earlier, they could not teach the others without teaching me. Sure, I mean, I think sometimes they could have been a little more fair with, some of the times, in grading my papers, but no, if I had to do it over again, I would come back. Because I think the university, to be honest with you, I think the university was ready, even though they interviewed for my roommate. My roommate was a junior from Martinsville, believe it or not. But he was a religion major, and at the time, if you knew the university at the time, the most liberal department at this university was the religion department. They were making all kinds of waves, so most people
majoring in religion here, I knew most of them because of my roommate. And they would come by my room.

Barry Greene: 00:49:22 There were a few that were not religion majors, but they were history majors and as a matter of fact, a couple of them I still see right now. Nelson Lankford, for instance, he was a junior, his brother and I were good friends. His brother graduated from here. He was a chemistry major and his brother was my sophomore roommate. Harvey, he’s a retired physician. John Mizell who is an attorney in the city, he was a junior. But they were all friends and so I guess my freshman year, if anything, I was more friends with upperclassmen because of my roommate, and they would come by the room, either religion or history majors is what the deal was on that.

Ayele d’Almeida: 00:50:18 You’ve been talking a lot about your best friend, how did you guys meet?

Barry Greene: 00:50:25 You know, the truth is I don’t even know how we met. I’m going to ask him that question, as soon as I leave here, as a matter of fact. I think it was mainly because one of his fraternity brothers, and we were all freshman at the same time, I was friends with him and we were majoring in biology. I’m not really sure how he and I got to be such good friends. As a matter of fact, when we graduated, we shared an apartment together, and then I was also in his wedding. I don’t know. You asked me a question I don’t have an answer for you on. The next time I see you I’ll have an answer for you, because I will certainly ask him because he and I are, I mean we are very, very ... to say we’re extremely close. I mean we talk all the time. I share, one of the stories I share is that fact that I’ve had a key to his home since his daughter was born in 1979, way before you guys were born, and when I tried to give the key back he said no. Usually when...the two things that we’ll have an argument about is...it really, really makes my blood boil when I go to his house and I knock on the door and he won’t open the door, because he says, "Why should I open the door for somebody that’s got a key to the door?"

Barry Greene: 00:52:05 I said, "Well the key was given to me for emergency purposes, not for me to just walk in whenever I wanted to," but he doesn’t see it that way. And then the other time we’ll have an argument is because he has two daughters and he says I make excuses for them. Which I don’t make excuses for them, he’s Baptist ... Are you guys Baptist? All three of you? No, thank God.

Jacob Roberson: 00:52:37 I’m probably more nondenominational now.
Barry Greene: 00:52:40 I was just going to say, I was going to be funny with it. He's Southern Baptist, and so he says I make excuses for the girls. I really don't make excuses for the girls, I'm just a little more realistic and understanding that times change, and sometimes the things that you expect the children to do change too. I mean, his big argument would be when Megan would come home, the oldest one, come home from college, she would sleep late, and he didn't like that, so he would be screaming. "You sleep late when you go home, and you sleep late on the weekends when you're here." Yeah, see. But he just won't move, and I said, "Well, if we could get you out of the '40s and just move you into the '70s, that would be a success story."

Barry Greene: 00:53:40 But yeah, he and I are very close. My father was murdered when I was a junior here at the university, and he was at my father's funeral, he and all my fraternity brothers, a few others, he and a couple other of the students. The Dean gave them free, anybody if they wanted to come, he would give them the pass to get out of classes. Any event in my ... My mother passed away unexpectedly back this past December, the [20]... I mean, he's just always with me. I cannot imagine ... The only time he wasn't with me was when I gave the speech here in 2008, but his wife was here with me, and I was like ... and that's because he was suffering with a really, really bad case of gout. And I made a point to let somebody know, I don't know what it's like to have events occur in my life and he not be there with me. But I'm going to find out how he and I got to be friends, and when I see you I'll have an answer for you, I promise.

Ayele d'Almeida: 00:55:00 Sounds good.

Jacob Roberson: 00:55:03 That's great. You kind of slid in there that your father passed away, was murdered in fact, during your junior year, how did that affect your time? Did it affect your time at all here at school?

Barry Greene: 00:55:15 You know, it did not affect my time. As a matter of fact, we always called him The Big Dean, I don't know what the Dean of Richmond College is now. He doesn't seem to be as powerful or have the clout that the Dean had back during those days. Is it still ... what's his ... Boehman? Yeah. At that time it was Austin Grigg, and as a matter of fact, he and even some of my professors were at my father's funeral. Well not some, Dr. Leftwitch, who was my adviser for biology, he was there and Dean Grigg was there with his secretary, Amelia Fernandez.
Barry Greene: 00:56:09 The Dean would ... often my best friend would say, "Any time you saw the Dean walking across campus, then you knew he was coming to my room to check on me." My freshman year, which I forgot to mention, I met once a week with the Dean of Students who was Dean Gray at that time, just to see how things were going. Like I said the Dean of Richmond College, he just showed up at my dorm room. He wanted to make sure that things were going well.

Barry Greene: 00:56:43 To answer your question, when my father died, the President, Dr. Modlin, had Dean Grigg call me at home that summer. Because my father died in November, it was just before my junior year, just before Thanksgiving, but that summer Dean Grigg calls me and he says, "Dr. Modlin wants to make sure that you're coming back to school here." He says, "He wants you to know that," and almost a quote from him, "Don't even think about not coming back. If you run into some financial issues, then he wants to know because he's going to make it happen for you to come back to the university." So my answer to him was, "Dean Grigg, I appreciate that very much. I am planning to come back to the university, and right now, we're not having financial issues, but I would certainly ... it's rewarding to know that if something comes up that I can come to you and say, hey, I'm going to need some help." I had that type of relationship with Dean Grigg. I didn't realize it was with Dr. Modlin, because the only thing ... I mean he was a Princeton graduate, a really nice man, I really never sat down and had a conversation with him other than when we were at the ... I don't know what you call it now, but it was the post office building for us. I forget what the name of it was. It's right in the back of this building. You have some type of activities that go on in there now, but on the lower level, right there at the parking lot ... right here at your parking lot where ... When I'm in here I have to look around to see where I'm at outside.

Jacob Roberson: 00:58:42 Thomas Hall's to your left.

Barry Greene: 00:58:44 Good old Thomas Hall. Well I don't want to be at Thomas Hall, I want to be-

Jacob Roberson: 00:58:49 And Weinstein Hall is right there-

Barry Greene: 00:58:51 I don't even know which one is Weinstein, but I will tell you I want to be down on the lower level of the road that comes in front of ... well you said Thomas ...
Barry Greene: 00:59:05 This is Thomas, so across from Thomas, and I think the sign says Lora Robins parking...

Jacob Roberson: 00:59:13 There are a lot of galleries right down here right next to the parking lot.

Barry Greene: 00:59:18 Okay, so

Jacob Roberson: 00:59:20 Maybe Whitehurst, is that the building you're thinking of?

Barry Greene: 00:59:23 No. The place is right across from .. This is Thomas here?

Jacob Roberson: 00:59:29 Yes.

Barry Greene: 00:59:30 So let me look out. That's not there, it's this way. No. I don't know. Anyhow, is this Lora Robins?

Unknown: 00:59:44 Uh-huh.

Barry Greene: 00:59:44 So apparently it's got to be this building right here. As I move around and screwing up your ...

Jacob Roberson: 00:59:50 You're fine.

Barry Greene: 00:59:52 ... yeah, it's ...

Jacob Roberson: 00:59:53 Around the corner?

Barry Greene: 00:59:54 It's this one, where if you went down this parking lot here that says this ER47 ...

Jacob Roberson: 01:00:00 Uh-huh.

Barry Greene: 01:00:01 ... you went down to there and over to on the other side of this building here, on the lower level, that's where the post office was. I don't know what's there now, but a US Post Office was there, and that's where our mail came in. Where I was going is Dr. Modlin was in there, and it was thundering and lightning going on outside, and he looks at me and he says, "How are you on this fine day," and I thought, "Fine day? It's lightning and thundering out there, and you think it's a fine day." But that was really, truly my only interaction with Dr. Modlin. But I thought he's got to be a great guy if he thinks on thunder and lightning and the rain coming down that it's a "nice, fine day."

Mysia Perry: 01:00:42 So would you say that you had a good relationship with the administration here at the university?
Barry Greene: 01:00:47  Yes. Absolutely. Oh, absolutely.

Ayele d'Almeida: 01:00:47  What-

Barry Greene: 01:00:54  Now when you say the administration ... because I was the first black here on campus and they wanted to make sure that I stayed, and that I was happy. I think the university was ready to integrate, but I don't think they knew how. And I'll have to be honest with you, I'll pat myself on my back, I think they were lucky to have me as the first, only because of the personality. You know, it's easy, when it's just one, what trouble is one going to cause? You guys may be causing all kinds of trouble now, but you know, you have to be realistic. When you think about it, I mean, what is one going to cause?

Barry Greene: 01:01:37  But you would like to keep him here. And so I think that was their goal, and I think the university was ready. And, you know, to be honest with you, I think they did their part, the administration did their part to help me be here. And I think it was just left up to me to take the ball and run with it to be here.

Ayele d'Almeida: 01:02:07  You talked a little bit about how they said they’d meet your financial needs, so your family was paid the full-

Barry Greene: 01:02:15  No, my family was not. I was ... they paid some, but I was on scholarship and financial aid here. I guess his comment was if it wasn’t going to be enough to keep me here, then they would work out a way to increase it. I don’t mind sharing with you, I left, after four years of education here, I left with a loan of only 2,300 dollars.

Jacob Roberson: 01:02:47  Must be nice.

Barry Greene: 01:02:53  You know...So yeah, and I know how much it costs to come to school here now. I don’t want you to think ... I mean, I’m not bragging. In 1972, 2,300 dollars was a lot of money, which is nothing now, you just put it on a credit card.

Jacob Roberson: 01:03:17  I wanted to go back a little bit in the conversation. You mentioned how you would definitely come back, you would go here again if you had the choice, but you mentioned how you ... At the very beginning of the interview you had an interview and they misrepresented your words and so you never did another interview again, for another 40 years, at that, did you ever come back to the campus? Did you ever visit here on campus during that stint as well?
Barry Greene: 01:03:50 I knew you were going to ask that question. The answer to that question is yes, but ... you know that "better understand this" ... but it was only ... because at the time I- [Recorder was paused here for battery change.]

Barry Greene: 01:04:13 The good news is I’m not going to trade him in.

Jacob Roberson: 01:04:18 So I asked did you ever return back to campus during ... because you had a hiatus of interviews for about 40 years ... did you ever return to campus during that same time as well?

Barry Greene: 01:04:32 Yeah I did, but when I left campus and I decided that ... I should say when I graduated, and I decided I wasn't going to use biology, I went to work in broadcasting at WTVR, in the radio part, and starting taking business classes in the evenings in graduate school. And so because I was in broadcasting, and the guy I worked for, my General Manager, he also happens to have been big with the football players here at the University of Richmond ... As a matter of fact what I was going to share with you is when I interviewed for the job he couldn't believe, when I put the University of Richmond, he couldn’t believe that I actually went to school here, so he actually called up to find out, "Is this guy for real, he really went to the University of Richmond?"

Barry Greene: 01:05:35 All kinds of crazy things happen when you're the first black kid at the University of Richmond. When my father died and my mom was getting Social Security for me and my siblings, the Social Security kept saying I wasn’t a student here at the University of Richmond. And finally, Dean Grigg had to get involved, and he was like, "What do you mean he's not a student here, I see him every day?"

Barry Greene: 01:06:06 Well what they were doing was at the time, the University of Richmond believe it or not, had University College, which was a two year college which was down on Franklin Street, so they kept... certainly he wasn't at the University of Richmond, he was not as Richmond College ... so they kept talking at the University College, which was saying, "No, he's not enrolled here." Well no I wasn’t enrolled there. I was enrolled in Richmond College.

Barry Greene: 01:06:32 So my General Manager did the same thing, I mean, he was like got to find out for real. So how I was coming on campus was, again, my best friend and he was big in sports. As a matter of fact, the freshman year he played on the Varsity basketball team here. And so because I could get tickets to all the different events, that’s how I came on campus here. I only came on campus at the time they built the Robins Center in
1973, somewhere about a year after, and so the basketball
games and things like that. So I was only on campus, and I
only went to Richmond Stadium, the Richmond stadium
where they had football games because I got the tickets from
my job to come to football games or to the basketball games.
That was my extent of coming onto this campus.

Barry Greene: **01:07:33** I did not come on and buy any Richmond gear. I didn't wear
anything. I did put Richmond tags on one of my vehicles back
in ’76. Did I answer your question?

Jacob Roberson: **01:07:54** Yes you did. Do you mind-

Barry Greene: **01:07:56** You're laughing at me. No I'm just kidding.

Jacob Roberson: **01:07:59** Do you mind speaking to what it was like being that
graduate, the first black student to live on campus and to
graduate from the University of Richmond? Because there
were other black students that graduated certainly, as day
students and during the night classes at University College,
but being the first to live on campus and having your
accomplishment denied by who you worked with and things
like that, can you speak to that a little bit more?

Barry Greene: **01:08:34** I mean...In most cases, I mean, I just chalk it up as ignorance. I
mean, you know, 1972, you know they probably didn't think
it was ... and I was probably the first to live on campus and
graduate from here, but I wasn't the first to graduate from
here. But a lot of people just didn't know any better. That's
how I view it. Probably wasn't the answer you were looking
for.

Ayele d’Almeida: **01:09:12** We’re not looking for any answers. And so you talked a little
bit about not wanting to do interviews, so what's your reason
for doing this interview?

Barry Greene: **01:09:25** Oh, you missed it didn't you?

Ayele d’Almeida: **01:09:28** I did. I would love to hear it.

Barry Greene: **01:09:34** The only reason why is because of Alison and Dr. Cade. Dr.
Cade has gone out of her way to make me present on this
campus, and so I just won't say no. Does that answer your
question?

Ayele d’Almeida: **01:09:57** It definitely does. Thank you.
Barry Greene: 01:10:01 That’s the only reason. Now, I will tell you, when Dr. Cade retires from this campus, you’ll probably be really pressed to get me to come on this campus.

Ayele d’Almeida: 01:10:11 Well you can keep in contact with us.

Barry Greene: 01:10:16 Well I could do that if I get your email addresses and things like that, I will certainly do that.

Jacob Roberson: 01:10:24 I did have a question that’s kind of-

Barry Greene: 01:10:27 I’m not answering it for you. No.

Jacob Roberson: 01:10:31 Switching gears, is there anything, was there anything that you wish you had known prior to coming on campus, known about the University of Richmond, prior to coming on campus?

Barry Greene: 01:10:45 The truth is no. I mean, had I known that I was going to be the only black living on campus, and the first to live on campus and I didn’t find out that they interviewed for my roommate until my roommate was the one that shared it with me. You know, as people got to know me they opened up, but it would not have made a difference. Had I known, I would not have changed my mind.

Jacob Roberson: 01:11:15 Is there anything that you came across or that came about, and it doesn’t even have to be like racial, just anything that caught you by surprise or that you, were like, "Wow I wish I had known that was going to be a thing before coming to the university"? And it’s fine if your answer is no.

Barry Greene: 01:11:36 I don’t want to say no too many times here. You’d think it was a boring existence for me here. I will tell you, back in that time frame with the Vietnam War and getting your lottery numbers and all that kind of stuff, there were protests on campus, which caught me by surprise. Did I participate in them? No. Did I watch from the little pigeon hole windows in Freeman Hall? Yes, I did, but .. and for me I think it was more of security and safety thing is to be in the dorm watching from the window as they marched up to the President’s house, and I don’t even know what their demands were.

Barry Greene: 01:12:38 Because my thought behind that is if there was somebody that really, truly didn’t want me on campus, that was the ideal time for something to happen to me on campus. You know, this campus was big and all these buildings weren’t here. You could easily disappear. Not that I...I had to have that thought. I guess I wasn’t ... I was caught off guard
thinking that they would actually have protests walking through campus. As dumb as ... and I definitely wasn't going to participate in that, you know panty raids. And I was tempted ... young ladies ... I mean they were throwing their panties out the windows and things, but was I going too participate in that? No. That was absolutely foolish.

Jacob Roberson: 01:13:35 We did come across those in the yearbooks. If you have anything else you want to say about that, feel free.

Barry Greene: 01:13:40 No. It was just, I wasn't going to participate in any of that. That was just not smart for the only black guy on this campus to be a part of that kind of stuff. You know, I came from a boarding school that did teach us, and you'll remember I was told Northern Baptists are not like Southern Baptists. He was absolutely right. Even though two of my closest friends are Southern Baptist, but that's all right.

Ayele d'Almeida: 01:14:19 How did being the only black student on campus limit your social experiences?

Barry Greene: 01:14:24 It limited it extremely, quite a bit. Other than, you know, once I joined the fraternity and I would go to the social part, but you know it was, for me, I wouldn't say there was any type of social life on this campus when it came to that. And I certainly wasn't going to date out of my race. I don't know what to tell you on that deal other than no. I did go to ... you know, once I joined the fraternity and all, when they had ... I would attend some of the fraternity parties. I didn't go to a lot or all the fraternity parties, but I did attend some of the fraternity parties.

Jacob Roberson: 01:15:11 So did you ever yearn for or seek experiences with other black people, whether it's in Richmond in general or just on campus ... well-

Barry Greene: 01:15:21 No, not outside my family, no.

Ayele d'Almeida: 01:15:27 Why is that?

Barry Greene: 01:15:29 I have no earthly idea. And I will tell you, the other honest part is I was starting to make friends on campus, and like I said, it wasn't until really my senior year that I actually spent a weekend or two on this campus. But my thing was, you know, I was starting to become friends, and good friends, and so I thought, you make your ... your closest friends, in most cases, are formed when you're in college, and so I didn't venture to some of the other schools just to have a black relationship or black friends.
And you mentioned how you would not date outside your race, did you have any white female friends at all, or was it mostly male friendships?

No, not here, no. I do now, and real close friends that are white females. But I think there was just too much going on during that time frame to be that chummy with someone that was not a member of your own race when it came to that. I mean it hadn't been that long ago when the gentleman had to leave the state where the white gentleman married the black lady.

Loving v. Virginia.

Yeah.

They went to DC.

That wasn't that far from my time frame. You have to realize I'm a lot older than you guys are.

I believe that was in '63, I think.

Yeah, see.

And then also, MLK was assassinated in '69.

Correct. Was it '69? No. He was assassinated before then. He was assassinated when I was in boarding school, so that would have had to have been like '67, somewhere in that neighborhood.

Well, it's on record, I don't know my facts.

No, that's okay. And the reason why I remember I was in boarding school, because the Headmaster at the time, when he called us all in an assembly said, that's when, his exact words was that he was embarrassed to be a white man at that time because of what had happened. But yeah, I think that was like in, it might have been '67 or '68.

I think it was '68 [inaudible 01:18:15] It definitely was '68, because the 50th anniversary.

You're forgiven, because you weren't born then.

The 50th anniversary was this past April. Okay.
Mysia Perry: 01:18:28 You talked about not being, having a lot of opportunities to go in these social spaces, did you have any physical spaces other than your room where you could kind of just feel like some type of connection to I guess-

Barry Greene: 01:18:43 The only would be if I visited another, a good friend's room. It was not ... I didn't feel here like I was at my boarding school where we had a TV room, we had a pool room. We had what we called the canteen, which was ... I forget what ... Do any of you even know what a canteen is? Okay, so the canteen was ...

Barry Greene: 01:19:20 Well yeah, we didn't have drinks like that though. But it was like a little on campus small restaurant for us that we could go to where you could get hamburgers, french fries, soft drinks, things like that, sit around and talk. Back then, believe it or not, it was amazing because I did not ... These guys smoked and so they ... I mean that was kind of a culture shock for me to be with teenagers that smoked because where I came from you didn't do that. But yeah ... pipes and cigarettes and things like that.

Barry Greene: 01:20:02 We had that type of environment there. We had, our field house had a huge inground pool and things like that. We had our own theater on campus where we had movies on Friday and Saturday nights. We also had a lot of times, once a month, girls would come in. We had, girls from some of the the girl boarding schools would come and we'd have dances, things like that. But no, to answer your question, as far as the University of Richmond, I did not find that type of environment here. It wasn't offered here, and maybe because it was a college and they didn't do that kind of stuff. I don't know. But we didn't have ... I don't even know if ... Well I think you ...

Barry Greene: 01:20:47 You have something like at Tyler ... you have now, but back then, no, there was nothing like that.

Mysia Perry: 01:20:56 What would you say that you miss most about the University of Richmond, during your time here?

Barry Greene: 01:21:12 I don't know ... maybe, possibly seeing some of the guys that I was friends with while I was here that I don't see now. Yeah, like I said, my best friend from here, I see him more on a regular basis. We talk on a regular basis. It's rarely ever that a couple of days go by that we don't communicate or talk to each other. So yeah, I may, well I doubt it, I may swing by his house when leaving here, but I won't do that. I'm going to call him though so I'll have an answer for you.
Mysia Perry:  01:22:01  Yes.

Barry Greene:  01:22:02  I was almost tempted to text him while we were sitting here to ask him. Oh well, I’ll see if he responds. He’s kind of a dingbat when it comes to his cell phone though. He’s ... I don’t think there’s any sports on TV right now that’s going to interrupt him. I’m going to say, 'Question" ... because he knows I’m here ...

Mysia Perry:  01:22:46  When were you last at the University or Richmond, like when was your last time visiting just for the heck of it?

Barry Greene:  01:22:57  It was this year, back in February I think it was. Dr. Cade had me out on a panel for the ... what is it ... the Oliver Hill thing. It was over across the lake, next to the building next to the Gottwald Science thing. Was it somewhere around the corner and down the hill and in the ... I don’t know what the place was called, but I did find my way in there. I think it was in February, I was on a panel there with a couple of ... some of the ... was it two of the professors from the biology department? As a matter of fact, one of them left to go to ... what’s the college, somewhere up North. He told me he’s going to miss the winters here when he gets up there, maybe Bates or somewhere up there.

Jacob Roberson:  01:24:07  What’s one of the biggest surprises to you, or changes that you’ve seen from your time to now, of course besides the fact that there are more black students, black professors, black people on campus, what’s something else that has been a big surprise to you?

Barry Greene:  01:24:26  Oh, the biggest surprise to me is the dress. You know, in boarding school, all of our classes were coat and tie. And when I came here to the university, it was almost similar that way. The students didn’t ... and we had a dress code. If you were accepted at the Robins School of Business, then you wore a coat and tie to all your classes there. I don’t know whether you still do or not.

Barry Greene:  01:25:02  At Richmond College you wore...always wore shirts with collars. You wore dress or khaki slacks. We did not wear sneakers in the classrooms. Most of wore Weejuns. He said something ugly. Oh, there he is. He says, "Really met after your dad's funeral." I knew he was there. I think I went with someone who had a car to the funeral. I'm not sure who. "I know who you went with. You went with Craig. George Craig is who you went with."
Barry Greene: 01:25:47 Because George Craig and I were friends, and George was a biology major and he and I were friends, and Mike was...George was in Phi Delt fraternity with my best friend Mike. And I was surprised to see him there, but ... I'll let him know. See I helped him out. So now you know, 1970.

Ayele d'Almeida: 01:26:14 Yes, I'm happy.

Barry Greene: 01:26:16 But the biggest is the dress, because we had to wear, you could wear sweaters and then when the weather changed, when it got warmer you could wear shorts to class, but they had to be tailored shorts like yours. They couldn't be cut off. We weren't allowed to wear jeans into the classrooms. Like I said, all shirts had to have a collar. For me, that's the biggest ... you know, when I come out on campus and I see ... It's not a bad thing. I don't want you to think it's a bad thing or anything, but for me it was like, "Man, you guys have really come a long ways, especially when it comes to how you dress."

Ayele d'Almeida: 01:27:00 Besides Dr. Cade, what's your relationship with the current administration?

Barry Greene: 01:27:09 I don't think I have a relationship with the current administration. I know Dr. Crutcher and he knows me when he sees me. And when he sees me sometimes he says he was talking about me the other day. So I'm not so sure if it's the same or just something that comes up. But I know him when I see him and we do have conversation. He knows me by name.

Barry Greene: 01:27:35 Dr. Ayers knows who I am. Dr. Ayers, as a matter of fact, I had breakfast with him when the article ... but you know, when you think about it, breakfast with him ... you think about the books he writes and the part of history that he's involved in, I kind of fit right in that part for him. Except he gave my cousin, last year graduated from Longwood and I was at the graduation, and Dr. Ayers was the speaker there and he saw me afterwards and he had a conversation with me. So ...

Barry Greene: 01:28:09 I have met Dr. Boehman back ... I've not seen him since I was ... when I met him back in 2008, but other than that, no.

Mysia Perry: 01:28:26 Do you know a little bit about the first black woman that may have been here? I know you said you were the only one residential, but-

Barry Greene: 01:28:33 Now when you say the first ... are you saying that came on campus when I was here? I know their names, I don't know
what their names are now, if they've gotten married. One was Isabelle Thomas, the other was Madieth Malone. Like I said, I really never ... I saw them every now and then, but other than that, I don't know what they're doing now.

Barry Greene: 01:29:10 You guys are good.

Jacob Roberson: 01:29:16 Okay, so as we start your wrap up, is there...do you have any advice for incoming black students or current black students for that matter, just in being here at the university?

Barry Greene: 01:29:33 I don't. I have a tendency a lot of times to talk about choices that we make in life, and I'd like to think the fact that I made the choice to come here to the university and made the choice to stay, versus I could have easily have left and would have been quite comfortable at Hampton or some of the other all black... but I chose not to. I chose to stay here because I wanted an education and I wasn't about to leave. So I think life is all about choices, and I would always share.

Barry Greene: 01:30:24 A lot of times, if I have to talk to someone, I talk about choices. And it's mainly because I think we make choices for a lot of reasons, and I think that it's easy to make choices for selfish reasons, and I don't think we should always make them for selfish reasons. And I think we need to think about the choices we make, and when we make the choice we need to realize that it's not just about us. It's not just about me or you. When you make a choice you have to think about who does it affect.

Barry Greene: 01:31:10 My sister reminds me that I was at this university for four years, and up until 2008, never once did I ever talk about my life here at the University of Richmond or how I was treated at the University of Richmond or how I felt about being here at the University of Richmond. She says that they never knew at home that I was the only black living on campus here at the University of Richmond. I never shared that. I thought there was not need to share it.

Barry Greene: 01:31:48 And so, you know, I said about choices because, you know, we make choices, you know, and if I go out I decide that I'm going to get drunk and then drive my car, I've made a bad choice, especially if I have an accident, because now I've...not only has it affected my life, but the stupid choice that I make also affects your life and affects people that I don't even know. You know a lot of...

Barry Greene: 01:32:21 I'd like to think that the choice that I made to stay here at the university and to stick it out, made it easier for the University
of Richmond to accept more. Even though it was just my senior year before others came to live on this campus or even came to the school, but at least it was a choice that I made that I feel like, not only it affected people that I don't even know, it's affecting people even right now, in this day and time that I don't know. The fact that I took the time to come and have conversation with you, I like to think that that choice affects your lives in some way or another.

Barry Greene: 01:33:06 But I do think it's important that we think about when we do make choices, because you don't know who it's going to affect. And then I'll shut up, unless you have got more questions for me. But when Alison had me come out, and I'll be honest with you, I was thinking, "What are middle school students going to get out of this old man's conversation about his time at the University of Richmond?"

Barry Greene: 01:33:41 And believe it or not, even though she told me it was only going to be 20 students, and it turned out to be about 350 people, and she was saying that they wanted to cancel the guest speaker when they found it was me. I'm glad I did, because that's how I got to meet Dr. Cade. She couldn't wait to grab me, saying, "We've been trying to track you down for a long time." And she's right, and I denied all the calls that would come into the house for me for that, so now she has captive audience and I couldn't get away. I'm glad that I did, but ... and I'll share a little other thing about Dr. Cade, but back to the middle school students.

Barry Greene: 01:34:26 There were middle school students there, and there were from Fairfield elementary ... Fairfield Middle School, which is not far from where I live. And believe it or not, I gave the speech on a Friday, I remember on a Friday ... like my best friend said, "Don't tell him something if you don't think he's going to remember it." It was raining like crazy, but I went to mass. I go to mass on Sunday mornings, I go to early mass, and all of a sudden at the end of mass I'm surrounding by, I think it was four, five students, and believe it or not they go to Fairfield Middle School and they were here for my ... and they had already told their parents about me, and they saw me at mass and they were like, "There he is, there he is," and their mothers were going...

Barry Greene: 01:35:16 I knew some of the parents and so they surrounded me and they were telling me what they got out of my talk here at the University of Richmond in sharing my time here. And so I thought, "Wow, the choice I made to have the conversation," and I was concerned that they weren't going to get anything
out of it, and yet there they were surrounding me in the back of the church.

Barry Greene: 01:35:40 Then the newspaper article came out and my priest made me a part of the sermon, and saying did they think it was easy for me to be here, and it was a part of my life, until 2008, that I never shared. Like I mentioned to you, I didn't share it at home, because there was no reason to bother or burden my mother, who now has seen five kids, because believe it or not, my brother was born my freshman year at the University of Richmond, and he was two years old when my father was killed.

Barry Greene: 01:36:14 So why bother--burden my mom with this? Her job was already hard enough, and she saw all of us through college, all five of us. And so I share that with you because I'm big on choices that we make, and that would be the advice that I would give is that be careful about the choices that you make in life, because you don't know who it's going to affect or how it's going to affect anybody, whether it's a good choice or a bad choice.

Jacob Roberson: 01:36:53 Is there anything else that you would like to say?

Barry Greene: 01:36:58 No, I can't think of anything, unless you've got some questions. And trust me, like I said at the very beginning, because of who you are, anything you ask me was fair game, and I would try my best to give you an honest answer, and a complete answer. And hopefully I'm successful at that, but I will tell you that if you think of something or something you wanted to ask and you forgot, by all means, don't hesitate to let me know.

Barry Greene: 01:37:35 It's like I told the young lady ... Irina? ... when we were setting the date ... "If something comes up, I will make my time available for you, whatever time is necessary or you need." And so if you need me to come back or you think of something that you wanted to ask me that you didn't ... because I'm big on ... even when I interview people for jobs at the bank, I let them know right up front, "Hey, I know a lot of times you're sitting there, you've got everything laid out, you've got all your words, but you leave and all of a sudden you go, oh man I wish I had asked this. So if there's a "wish I had asked this", trust me, you can still ask it and you will get an answer. Okay?

Barry Greene: 01:38:29 My email address is on there and you guys, it's yours to use if you need it.
Ayele d'Almeida: 01:38:36 And will you be at our sort of final screening of all of our podcasts on July 24th ...

Mysia Perry: 01:38:43 26th, she changed it.

Ayele d'Almeida: 01:38:43 Oh, 26th.

Jacob Roberson: 01:38:45 July 26th.

Barry Greene: 01:38:46 I have no earthly idea. This is the first I've heard of it.

Mysia Perry: 01:38:49 We'd love to have you, we'll definitely send you more information.

Barry Greene: 01:38:53 On July 26th?

Mysia Perry: 01:38:55 Yes.

Barry Greene: 01:38:56 What day of the week is that?

Mysia Perry: 01:38:57 It's a Thursday.

Barry Greene: 01:38:58 What time would it be?

Ayele d'Almeida: 01:39:00 Probably in the early afternoon...

Barry Greene: 01:39:01 I'll have to look at that. When you say early afternoon ...

Mysia Perry: 01:39:08 It's at six. I think so, that's what she said. She said around 6:00 or 7:00. I didn't know it was going to be that late, but we'll-

Barry Greene: 01:39:16 Yeah, let me know and I'll look at my calendar and unless there's something really drastically happening on that time ... I don't have any siblings that have birthdays on the 26th of July. There's one on the 28th of July.


Barry Greene: 01:39:30 You're the 25th? Okay. But she's in Texas. Like I said, I'm extremely, extremely close with my sisters, my siblings. We are...we talk every day. We're together most weekends, always holidays. I'm the oldest and my sisters, they think that I'm too old now to fend for myself, so ... It used to be I traveled by myself, visiting my sister in Texas, but now they seem to think one always has to travel with me, so I don't travel alone anymore. They know I'm here. I will call when I'm leaving here to let them know I'm heading for home, and
I'll call to let them know I’ve gotten in the house. They’re extremely protective of their older brother, even though he’s the oldest. But yeah, I share that with you only to let you know that I do come from a really close, close family, and that was one of the hardest parts about being away in school in New Jersey, not having that family and then, as you all know, coming here I left every weekend to be at home with family.

Jacob Roberson: 01:41:00  Well, that will conclude-

Barry Greene: 01:41:03  Have I used up too much of your time?

Jacob Roberson: 01:41:05  Absolutely not.

Barry Greene: 01:41:07  Well the good news is that clock up there is wrong. So ...

Jacob Roberson: 01:41:10  I’m going to stop recording now.