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The Silenced Generation - Growing up after massive resistance and the civil rights movement The Virginia Oral History Collection at Longwood University


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Megan Banton

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I removed crutch words, false starts and “ums” from the transcript.

Molly McIlory: Can you state your name for us?

Megan Banton: Megan Banton

MM: Alright and what do you do here [at Longwood]?

MB: I am currently serving as an adjunct professor of anthropology for the fall term.

MM: What do you have your degrees in and from what schools?

MB: From Longwood, class of 2011, I have an honors degree in anthropology, a degree in history and a minor in biology.

MM: Oh wow.

MB: I have a master degree in skeletal and dental bioarchaeology and I am currently working on my PhD in the same topic at University college of London.

MM: Oh wow. Well congratulations that's awesome.

MB: It's a mouth full. I feel like I just gave you my resume.

MM: How long have you worked here at Longwood?

MB: Just a few months. Yep, since the beginning of the fall term.

MM: And do you plan on staying here at Longwood long-term or temporary?

MB: If I got invited to, I would. I am just serving for professor Bates while he's on . . . this term.

MM: Okay. Do you enjoy working here [at Longwood]?

MB: Yeah, of course.

MM: What do you enjoy about it [Longwood]?

MB: I like being back around the same people that I studied under when I was here at Longwood myself, so being around my mentor's sort of on the other side has been really nice.

MM: So it's nice working with them [mentors]?

MB: Yeah and it's nice a small . . . community with the students too so it's good.

MM: Did you live here in the area [Farmville], if not or do you live here in the area? Sorry and if not, do you live in a neighboring county?

MB: I live in Maharaja, so I do live around here and I did go to school in Farmville.

MM: And how far is that from here?

MB: It's about 20-25 minutes.

MM: So it's not a long commute?

MB: No, not, not particular.

MM: How long have you lived here?

MB: Well I'm 26 years old minus four years because I've been living in London for four years, so—

MM: Okay so that was the next question, so if you lived in a different town or county or even country—

MB: Country—

MM: How was it different from Farmville?

MB: Well considering I was a commuter student to Longwood living with my parents, the first time I actually officially moved out the house and to London which is obviously a lot bigger population than Farmville. Very much more interconnected, very multicultural, so very different, but a good different.

MM: Yeah, so how did you enjoy that? Like what did you do there?

MB: I definitely enjoyed it. It was sort of unique to the fact that there aren't too many people I bumped into that could be counted from Southern or having Southern accents, so everybody thought it was really hilarious that I said y'all and things like that, but you know I made fun of them back, so it was all cool. It's fine.

MM: Have you faced any challenges by living here in Farmville or in a county or town next door?

MB: No nothing personal.

MM: No real . . . ?

MB: No, nothing that comes to mind right away.

MM: That's fine. Do you still have – I lost track of where I was. Okay sorry, I lost my place.

MB: Oh it's okay.

MM: So, do you still have family members that lived here? Do we still want to ask that question [asking the group]

Charlotte Fredrick: Yeah that's fine.

MM: Okay, do you have family members that lived here?

MB: Yes.

MM: And are they originally from here?

MB: Yes.

MM: Where do they live?

MB: Well, my parents live right in Maharaja, where I'm staying.

MM: Okay.

MB: But, my father and his mother all lived here during that time period [time of the school closings] and my dad still lives here and my grandmother has moved to Buckingham, so—

MM: Well do you remember how long like . . .

MB: My father has lived pretty much in Farmville his whole life, so and I've lived here pretty much, with the exception of four years living in London, my whole life, so— two generations, I guess.

MM: Has your family faced any challenges by living here in Farmville?

MB: Currently or in the past?

MM: In the past, currently—

MB: Okay, no I do know that when the schools shut down, my father was in that generation, so he did for a lot of his early school years, he bounced around to the different churches and did his schooling at those places before he went to Prince Edward Academy, which is Fuqua, so other than that—

MM: So other than that, do you have any siblings?

MB: No I'm the only child.

MM: And we asked you about Kristen Green's book [before the interview had started] and—

MB: No.

MM: No that's fine, it's okay. I'm trying to get down to— okay so I can ask this one. Does Kristen Green's book, obviously it talked about school closings and a big topic that was talked about was race and racial profiling and discrimination and so, does Kristen Green's book affect the way you live and how you view Farmville and the topic of race?

MB: It is certainly something being brought up in Farmville that you've always heard about and it's been part of it. I went to Prince Edward County school, so obviously a big history there. It came up pretty much anytime we had Black History Month or any of those type of things. And in history classes, since it was local history, so it has certainly been there. I know that from my father's generation, it was- it had some influences and things like that. He said it was almost like the opposite extreme in a sense that when he was at Fuqua, it was more like there was a taboo on it, like there was nothing derogatory that he could remember ever being said about African Americans, but it was almost that you didn't talk about it, ever.

MM: Okay. So it was like an uncomfortable subject . . .

MB: Yeah, just like you don't— he doesn't remember any teachers being derogatory or anything like that.

MM: Were your teachers? Any like that?

MB: No, no. Our different generation I guess, so by the time I was there it was strictly talking about more historical terms for the most part, so—

MM: Did they face it towards a positive or negatively when they explained it to you guys?

MB: Oh, usually it was just in the terms of civil rights because it was an educational thing at that point, so being apart of the local history it was usually brought up at some point.

MM: Has your family heard or have any opinions on, do you know . . .

MB: No, I don't think—

MM: Have you heard of her, herself living here? Like does your family, have your family members heard of her?

MB: I don't know. I don't think so. I, I haven't, so I cant speak for them. I don't know.

MM: You're fine. Okay well why do you think, I mean even though you haven't read it . . . why do you think she wrote this book? Like why do you feel like she, like do you feel like she needed to write a certain opinion, like she needed to get out—

MB: Give me a summary of what's the author. What's the summary?

CF: Okay I guess I have to do it, basically she's been explaining what's been going on and her, like her family's history of what happened and she decided to move back [to Prince Edward County] and her husband is of a different color and to raise her family here and it basically just talks about both worlds and how they're— yeah. I don't know how any way to describe that—

MB: Well considering the fact that your, if she grew up here as a child, your developmental years are obviously a very huge influence on you, as a child, so yeah I can understand wanting to write about something that had a big influence on you growing up and I certainly think it would have had a big influence on growing up living in this area especially she was of the generation where the closings actually happened because like I said it is something that I know in my generation it was more talked about . . . I guess you could say, educational in my sense, but actual—my parents generation, other people that I've know from that generation is very much talked about in the personal sense of what I was doing, what my position was and what my family's temperament really was during the time period, so I know that my dad said that his dad owned a mechanic shop for instance, up at Downey's corner and he was one that wanted Prince Edward schools opened that worked on African American's school buses, so—

MM: Who was this?

MB: My grandfather. So he was the only one apparently, according to my dad that would actually be willing to work on school buses.

MM: Oh wow.

MB: . . . once the school was open. So, he basically got all the business working on anything that went wrong with the school buses, so but yeah that's what I meant sort of like in a personal sense so for the same reason for her especially if she's in an interracial marriage which is still in some places kind of taboo, less so. But I can understand that wanting to— yeah know definitely.

CF: Do you think your grandfather did the right thing by helping out?

MB: Yeah, of course.

CF: Do you think— not because of the certain time period that it was— like you're supposed to be— like most people were against everybody or being integrated, do you think he made the wrong decision in that time period or—

MB: No, I mean from my understanding of it, he didn't get really any bad stigma for doing it, he just did it, you know, I don't think it really matter to him so much personally, you know, his business.

MM: But it didn't affect him like any friends he may have had?

MB: No, not anything my dad has ever told me that it affected that in any sense, so we just remembered that, I guess that it must have been something that stuck with my father because my father was working with him as he got older and that was one of the things his dad must have told him when he started working for him and stuff, so it left an impression on him what his actual stance— I never met my grandfather so as far as his actual opinion on that I would love to ask, but you know, I never had the opportunity, so—

MM: Okay, have you or your family visited the Moton Museum? Have you heard of the Moton Museum?

MB: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

MM: Have you, yourself been there?

MB: Oh god, I think it's been awhile and I think, to be honest, I haven't been since it's been officially open. I did go to a ceremony when I was in high school was sort of in the process of trying to open it, I believe it was like a special ceremony type thing, so I have been but I haven't been since it's been all official or anything.

MM: Have you had any family members—

MB: It's on my list before I go back to England.

MM: So have any of your family members been there?

MB: Yeah I think, I think my mom might have been at one point. She used to work girl scouts, so I think she has been there with some girl scouts.

MM: Did she have any opinions on it or is she— was she like—

MB: I think she liked it. She thought it was pretty cool, I mean she was busy working when she went because I mean she was with a bunch of little girls, but yeah, but yeah I think she enjoyed it.

MM: Was you— now you said your dad and your grandfather, was it on your mom's side?

MB: My dad side, yeah.

MM: So your mom didn't grow up here?

MB: No, not here specifically, but she grew up not too far away, she grew up in Scottsville, so that's about an hour from here, so but not directly in Farmville, no.

MM: Okay, do you know if your parents or grandparents on the other side knew about the history here in Farmville?

MB: I'm sure that they did living— I mean they weren't that far away, so I'm pretty sure that they did growing up, so yeah, but for the most part she didn't have much to do with Farmville until she came to Longwood as a student, yeah.

MM: These are literally the . . . questions I have to ask, but you haven't been there, but you said you have heard of it, so I'm trying to think of— do you think Moton Museum is a good representation of what happened during the closings? I mean, we've all been there. I mean, your mom was in there. So I feel like my opinion, I don't know what you guys felt, it showed a good representation and another thing, I wouldn't get rid of anything. Would you think the museum— like if it was never put there, do you think it would have made like a difference?

MB: Do you mean like if the museum was never there?

MM: Yeah, like if the museum was there to show like— because I didn't know about the history of Farmville until like just this year.

MB: Yeah, I think to be honest before the museum was there, the history basically consisted of probably a historical mark and that was about it, so I definitely think it's a good thing, but to see how it's presented, I can't tell you much about the exhibit itself, but anybody that I have heard that's gone to it— I can come back and let you know once I do go, but yeah I haven't heard anything bad about it, but to be honest it's one of those things that I don't know how many locals go, that sort of thing where it's in your yard so you never go type thing. I can go another day type thing and then . . . never going.

MM: Okay so I was saying, do you or your family have any knowledge of the school closings? Like do you or your dad or your grandfather, like—

MB: What do you mean?

MM: How your grandfather worked on the cars that African Americans, did they know about the school closings?

MB: Oh, yeah.

MM: Did they say anything or mention anything to you?

MB: My father, like I said my father's main thing he said, which he's was the generation I would get to talk to about this is, that it definitely had an influence on him getting bounced around for ages from school, he wasn't from a very influential family or anything like that either. Some other— my grandmother worked at the shoe factory that's here in Farmville. Like I said my dad was a mechanic, but he definitely remembers going to the Episcopal church across the street and he's been to the Presbyterian church, the Baptist church, he did school at all of them and then he went to Prince Edward Academy, like I said what he said it was more from his educational background it was for that you didn't talk about it, but everybody was well aware obviously with what was going on, so yeah I think it was more of one of those things that was politely not talked about. Maybe—

MM: Did you have any family members or friends of family members involved in the school closings? Like do you have any friends—

MB: Personally, no. Not that I don't that were personally involved in the politics behind it or anything.

MM: Do you think your dad's friends or your parents' friends, that they would have any friends or coworkers or anything like that or that they may have known that was . . . with that?

MB: No I can't remember. To be honest, I don't think so. I mean, I definitely remember that my father . . . some people that were the KKK—

MM: Do you remember any stories or anything—

MB: I remember thinking that he didn't really have anything to do with any of them, so that's the only thing I can think of, but I can't remember any particulars on who it could have been or anything like that.

MM: Does your grandfather or your parents in general, what did they think about the organization? Especially during this time—

MB: During the time period?

MM: Yeah.

MB: My father's family was pretty much one of those that didn't really care so much, they were a working class family that for the most part from my understanding from they pretty much . . . there

MM: So they weren't for or against it?

MB: No, you know they interacted with African Americans when it was brought to them, but otherwise they didn't, you know, it isn't like a proactive political movement my father's side of the family either way, so—

MM: Do you have any opinions relating to the school closings?

MB: Opinions? Actual opinions, that's a dangerous subject.

MM: Please feel free to elaborate.

MB: No mainly, I did a degree in history so I have always taken an interest in it from the general aspect of it being or the history, to be honest it wasn't until really, I guess I was graduating from high school, that I really even started to be significant, I mean I knew about it, just didn't realize where it was in the whole scope of the civil rights movement.

MM: Did you learn about it when you went here? Like did you—

MB: Yeah, I mean we knew about it but it wasn't until my high school government class that when we started to learn about it because when you talk about the judiciary system, that's when it came up—

MM: Okay.

MB: In relation to the court case.

MM: Okay.

MB: So that's when you sort of say oh on a big scale, not just a thing that happened here, you know. I mean, I know some people on my father's generation that were illiterate in result of the school closings and things like that, so yeah no it's definitely a big portion of it, so I definitely think it's significant in the whole scope of here, I mean I don't think it's something that should be ignored or that it's a good thing that museum is there so it sort of brought it back to focus I guess, more out into focus it's one of those things that everybody I believe in the local area was well aware of it, but wasn't really aired out I guess.

CF: So you know never learned anything before the high school class?

MB: No we definitely heard about it, like I said like Black History month and things like that. It sort of comes up with local history so I definitely knew about it, it's just one of those things that didn't . . . and that's probably an aging thing to some degree too of me getting older and starting to understand the whole scope of what went on then, so it really wasn't until high school classes that it started to make sense on the world scale, but no we definitely knew. I think we started to learn about it in middle school like late middle school probably, so like 7th or 8th grade in history classes because I think that's when you first started really learning things like civil rights and stuff like that, so you usually heard about it but no I don't think they devoted a whole class to it or anything but you know it certainly came up in relation to it because it's local history so—

CF: Did your parents ever teach you anything before you went to those classes?

MB: Oh yeah, yeah. My parents are like big history buffs like me sort of especially with like local history like my mom and dad are both of the types that they'd be like 'oh we did this in this building when we were growing up' and blah, blah, blah or we'd be driving down the street and I think they did that sort of like the historical markers and stuff, like I'm pretty sure that we stopped in like every historical marker in Farmville they've probably taken a picture of it with me standing beside it as a kid or something. So they definitely I knew that it existed, so yeah sort of my understanding of how big it was on the scope of the whole civil rights movement came about as I got older, I guess you could say.

MM: If you were affected by the history of the school closings, how did it affect you? Did you feel like you were affected by either like—

MB: Personally, other than occasionally I feel like some people still feel like it's an awkward topic, no. I mean—

MM: You don't feel awkward talking about it?

MB: No, I don't feel like it's an awkward topic, but you can still get that sometimes it feels it's an awkward topic, but that's more probably with the people that were of the generation, that I feel like it's awkward for them, but my generation, not so much. I mean I guess we just don't really think about it. I mean I went to Prince Edward School and it's very mixed school, I mean it wasn't a thing. I mean nobody really, you know, like you know those school closings that was just awful, so no it was more for I think it sort of talking to the older generation like people from my parent's generation can agree like 'oh yeah that,' so no but from my generation not so much that it's there just kind of awkward I guess for certain— that generation, for people who were actually actively involved.

MM: So for you personally, whether it was overseas in London or even here like basically anywhere, have you ever been racially profiled?

MB: Me racially profiled? No I don't believe so just because I am of the group that usually not racially profiled and to be honest I don't think gender has ever been a thing either so as far as—

MM: Do you have friends or like any—

MB: Oh god yeah I live in London so half of my friends are from different places all over the world, my friends that— she's from Iran, she wanted to go to Qatar for our campus at UCL that's in Qatar, but essentially she had a big problem . . . with people from Iran. She basically was dragged around for a whole year for the visa process before they told her 'we are not letting you in'.

MM: Oh really?

MB: And she said that they had no good reason to deny her other than the fact that she was Iranian, so—

MM: Wow.

MB: So, you know that, that, that, you know, type of thing that I have plenty of friends that they sort of run into things like that, so— to be honest, in London and stuff, it's more people that are from either the Middle East or from India or things like that, I've sort of met people that have gotten— I have another friend, he's born British, so he is English, but he's from an Indian family and he's actually been profiled trying to get into a club before.

MM: Oh really?

MB: And he said that it actually ended up being quite hilarious thing because the guy obviously was profiling him and wouldn't let him in because him and his friends were all Indian, basically wanted to get in and he wouldn't let them and he gave them some derogatory terms from India.

MM: Wow.

MB: And he basically gave a stern talking to, he has like this super British accent and everything, so it ended up being kind of hilarious, but yeah definitely no I am definitely aware of it in the sense that I have plenty of friends who are from other places and that they have other problems with it, so—

MM: Why did you feel that when they told you about that when someone is racially profiled or when someone wouldn't let me join this club because you know I'm Indian or I'm from Iran, like how did you feel about that like—

MB: I mean it makes me very angry on a personal level, I was not brought up in a sense where that was ever considered okay to be derogatory to anyone and like I said I mean I've gone into anthropology and sort of focused on that and traveled and everything, so I've gotten to meet lots of people and I enjoy meeting different types of people and I like the diversity of people, so to me I find it really disturbing and it sort of makes me angry at the small mindedness of particular individuals that would do that so basically I want to force them to like sit there and take a cultural class of some sort like please sit here, so no it usually makes me feel pretty angry on, on that, yeah that's basically it. It's kind of infuriating I guess.

MM: So I wanted to ask, do certain races or ethnicities at all make you feel uncomfortable or—

MB: No, I think in the modern terms and stuff that there are like usually as . . . like kind of tenses up when they see someone walking around with the hijab or anything like that but its never really bothered me like that much to be honest, like I said one of my good friends in London is actually from Iran so it's never bothered me particularly too much. I think sometimes my parents really worry about that because they are worried about their daughter traveling abroad, so in the context of the world it is kind of crazy, so but no not particullary no uncomfortable, definitely not uncomfortable.

MM: Did you kind of feel a little bit, when you first moved there, did you feel like not secretly racially profiled her, but felt a little leary because she was from Iran or did you think of anything negative about her or did you think—

MB: Like when I first met her?

MM: Yeah.

MB: No actually my first thought was that she was the most gorgeous person I have ever seen in my life, literally I was completely jealous, so no not really, so no but she's actually talked to me quite a bit about stuff too, so I mean she's said stuff that her parents generation in Iran, it wasn't a big thing to have to wear the head piece and all that type of stuff and then it sort of has gone

down hill to the point where it's like a big problem if you don't. She said that why she doesn't really want to go back to Iran, she wants to stay and live in the UK because it's freeing I guess she said it's so stifling and it didn't used to be that way, so yeah I have talked with her about stuff and it sort of open your eyes to the other side of the story, I guess you could say, so yeah nothing particularly about her. I mean I do think that everyone in some degree has a conscious bias, but you do do that I am not saying that I don't do that. You do make first judgement on people that you first— based on what you see but as a personal thing I don't think that's stopped me from going to be nice to someone or talking to someone or you know, if they sit beside me on a bus I am not going to freak out. I just saw an article recently on a woman that had a burka on, on the train and it was like no one would sit beside her and finally some guy came and sat down beside her, I mean I think those type of things are good things, so I don't think I wouldn't not sit by someone just because they wear a burka.

CF: So you gave examples of like from London, but have you noticed anything here? Is it worse there than it is here? How do you—

MB: To be honest I've noticed it a lot more over there then I've noticed it here, and I feel like more so today-I'm not saying that there isn't any difference between the African American community and the white community in Farmville, but from personal experience with my family I mean I grew up with my Dad's best friend being African American- so it on a personal level, no but I mean it's not one of those things that I know doesn't exist but like sometimes it's starting to be people that are Islamic that they're more profiled than even African Americans because we're used to African Americans, if that makes sense. They're part of the community here and they've long been part of the history even though its not necessarily been good history, but they're considered to be normal here and not considered to be strange even though the context of Farmville is starting to be other groups that are starting to get the outsider treatment. In London right now they're starting to do big crack downs on visas and things like that, that are making things a lot more difficult for people to come into the UK and they are very concerned with government right now

MM: Which individuals to they actually profile over there

MB: I would say typically the Middle East and things like that just because of the worlds climate and how things are right now, so primarily Middle Eastern and I don't think India so much and its just mostly Middle Eastern right now that they're targeting, but it has been sort of an overall clamp down in general, and if I were to go and apply for a work visa it would be more difficult compared to when that would make it more difficult

MM: Have you yourself noticed a change in Farmville?

MB: Over the course of my generation-I'm sure- people are always changing

MM: You said you noticed the more ethnic groups like -?

MB: That's what I say like- I mean- you noticed the whole temperament toward certain Islamic people but stuff does change over time- and I would say that that's probably the most thing in

relation to racial connections that would be the thing that I probably noticed the most that temperate after 9/11 looking at things I know there's actually a trailer park not too far from where I live that's pretty much all Islamic people that live there and I remember after 9/11 everyone was like worried about- you know- what their connections were, which was never a thing before that - so you know - that type of temperament changed in that sense, as far as African American stuff - I mean I have definitely known people that I would definitely call racist, but for the most part me and my family have always associated with them and it's never been a big thing- like I said the only thing that has ever been a big thing was the Modern schools and for that generation- they feel awkward to talk about it and it's probably not something you bring up to talk about you just kind of ignore it and go on about your business.

MM: Did your parents ever bring up the topic of race? Did they ever explain what racism is and what it means to be racist? Or what people do to certain ethnic groups?

MB: Yea they tell me that they'd beat my tail if I ever was like oh - it was just always taught very strongly in my family to - that you never judge anyone based on anything like race or anything like that - so I mean - my family considering we're in Farmville they're pretty liberal - I would say that my grandmother to some extent still has a little bit of that old sort of school thing, but she wouldn't be out right mean to someone of another race, but she wouldn't go up to them and strike up a conversation unless there was some reason to do so

MM: Yea I think that was a generation thing cause my grandma was the same way

MB: Yea and I know I am very talkative and even standing in the grocery line I'll strike up a conversation with anyone if I'm bored enough

MM: When you went to school here did you notice any racial profiling? Did you notice that race was kind of a big topic, or if no one talked about it did you notice only certain ethnic groups only walked together and wouldn't interact with each other?

MB: Well I guess that the interactions that I've had or my close friends have had have never been anything derogatory or bad- and I think for the most part white people normally hang out with white people and black people hang out with black people, but it's not so much segregated it's just one of those things that just kind of happens, but there were activities that we would do together as well

MM: Like school activities like sports or -?

MB: Yea sports were actually one of the areas where I'd say that it actually did divide itself and one of the things we actually noted - and now that you actually mention it is an interesting thing - there were sort of two different cheer groups, one was cheerleading and one was a step like team and there was one white person on the step team and one black person on the cheerleading team - this was one of those self done I guess - I don't think that this was done on part of the coach because I mean there was men on the cheerleading team - I don't think that this was one of those things that was done on purpose but I do remember my friends and I noting that we have two racial teams here and used to talk about how we need to get more white people on the step team

and more black people on the cheer team

CF: Why do you think that was that way?

MB: I don't know - one of the reasons might be that step has always been a big thing and I remember even in elementary school that it has been sort of a culturally based in African dance type things, so it has African roots to it, so generally African Americans have more interest to it because it is there cultural heritage

CF: Do you think that certain races in like high school where they all hangout together - why do you think that people I guess flock to their own race?

MB: I think people tend to want to go with people that are more like themselves and where they know they will be comfortable and where they know what to expect - I think that is just a natural instinct for everyone and that its a cultural thing and we want to hang out with people that are the same as us, but I think it would be beneficial if society started encouraging people to do the opposite to basically mentor people that you wouldn't normally mentor or things like that - basically stepping outside of you comfort zone is actually a very good thing - like I said going to London I don't have any American friends I have a few British friends, but most of my friends are from really like all over, so that's been a really great experience and I think that we'd get a lot of benefit out of doing that - it just basically goes back to people want to know what to expect to some degree, so if someone is dressing like you and looks like you, you're going to go talk to them right? They're going to be the person that you gravitate to versus someone that seems very different so that probably the underline part of it, but I don't know of something that is actually consciously done by everyone I just think that this is one of those things that just kind of happens

MM: It can be faculty or just students walking by your office, but do you notice any of them doing any racial profiling or do you hear them talking about race?

MB: No not so much here - I mean

MM: Did you hear about the incident last year with the racial comment towards a teacher?

MB: No I've been away so what was the deal

MM: Last year there was an incident with one of the African American teachers and someone broke into one of his classrooms and wrote derogatory things on his board and I just wanted to know if you had heard about that, or what your opinions were about that - like what do you think about that?

MB: I mean I hadn't heard about it, but like I said I think earlier is that - not saying that racial things don't exist cause I know some people are racist, but it's not people that I would usually hang out with, so that being said it's not completely surprising, but at the same time on a personal level I would definitely call someone out on being racist to someone else - and definitely call them out on it

MM: Do you hear a lot about racial profiling like in social media or anything like that?

MB: God yea, you hear about anything and everything on social media and the temperament of everything now is not so much that it happens more it's just now people can hear about it more than they used to, but it seems like everything just blows up and everyone hears about everything – you know- definitely Facebook and dear God the whole confederate flag thing – yea I basically went away from Facebook – I was just like I cant do this – there were plenty of people I was just like unfollowing because I don't want you on my news feed

MM: How did you feel about that – obviously very strongly

MB: Yea, no, I mean – not so much strongly – I can kind things from both sides of it but I don't think it belongs on state capitol buildings – it's not – that's not the place, so no – it was just one of those things that was world war three on my Facebook page and like it was the same time that like gay marriage and the court case stuff was going and it's just like my whole Facebook feel looked like a war between rainbows and confederate flags – and it was just ridiculous – and just like get away from me, and I just cant handle it and I would say that just being out there in the world it sort of opens your mind to the nice things that happen has a result of mixing and you sort of get a different world view of things – I would say that it's one of those things that when you see what I would call a small mindedness it does get very frustrating and sometimes it is quite hard to not say anything

MM: Okay I have to ask – do you plan on getting married and having kids?

MB: In the future – so I wouldn't say no – it's just not in the cards right now

MM: Okay so in the future when it is the right time – if you do have kids would you want them to attend private or public schools?

MB: Public

MM: Why?

MB: Personally just because I started off at a private school which was Fuqua and I had a slight learning disability – it just wasn't a good atmosphere for that, so I ended up going to Prince Edward to get the extra help that I needed – I think that that has probably changed some with Fuqua now, but I think public school is a very good experience because I want my child to be exposed as possible to the most different kinds of people as possible – I think was something that was actually a good influence about actually going to the public school and seeing the different people was helpful not hurtful in the long run

MM: Would you discuss the topic of race with your kids and would you feel awkward or would you just -?

MB: I wouldn't feel awkward about it I would just tell them that it existed and I better not catch

them being derogatory to anyone – no I definitely – I definitely would talk about it and make sure it's not swept under the carpet and I don't think that it's something to be ignored or should be ignored I think that anything gets worse by not talking about it and you kind of have to address it

MM: Do you think it would be a good idea for you kids to understand the topic of race – I mean obviously you think it's important – but do you think they should know early on like before they went to elementary school at public school

MB: I think it would be one of those things that I would definitely address it but probably one of those things – children tend to have a thing that about they eventually notice things for themselves and I would probably bring it up in the context of things as it was brought up and now that you mention it my parents did the exact same thing actually I told you that we did talk about it – I do think I had a playmate when I was younger and I think that was one of the things that I came home and said something but you know it wasn't something bad that I said about a black person because my parents would have been like that's not acceptable and don't do that – so I think I would do it in that context – when it comes up and noticed it should be addressed and that obviously shows that the child has some kind of understanding that something was different or strange about them because they pointed it out so then I would explain it

MM: Do you think that kids should learn about different races from their parents or school?

MB: Both

MM: Why?

MB: Because you're going to have different opinions so depending on your own family background – like I said doesn't mean that racism doesn't exist – I think that you should learn about it from both – I think schools should take it in a sense that it needs to bring up issues but it also needs also be a politically correct term of presenting things to you – there job to you is that if there is a bringing up of a parent that is racist in the family home that the school would just try and make you think for yourself and try to generate things differently – give them just enough information that they might realize things are not quite that way and if they are in a community that is racist they would hopefully figure that out for themselves – but no I think it is both – both

MM: Do you remember how old you were when your parents first talked to you about that?

MB: Literally like I said when I was talked to you guys I remembered that whole play date thing I most of been like 6 I guess – I was like early early school

MM: And when did you first start learning about the history of Farmville and the school closings?

MB: God I don't actually officially remember – I definitely think I was in middle school – like late middle school – like in history classes

MM: Did they explain like the politically correct sense or was it more of what you learned from your parents?

MB: I mean yea my parents it was definitely more informal – I mean it wasn't in the context of obviously from a racial or a family that is raciest – you know I didn't get any bad derogatory or anything about it from my family but that doesn't mean that other people don't get that impression, but I definitely think in the families that don't talk about it are the ones that that might present itself because if you don't talk about race then obviously it means that you don't think it's worth thinking about – I think the school – not necessarily sterol in the sense that you don't bring up the certain conflicts that are associated with it – I think that you could present that but could present it in a way that is sort of neutral as possible, but just by putting it out there and saying that there are problems that need to be addressed should hopefully be enough to where people would know that if there was anything conflicting with there home life that they've gotten a bad bringing up that they could potentially look into it and get a different opinion I guess

MM: Has growing up in Farmville affected you or your family in anyway like positive or negative?

MB: Positive or Negative? Like I said my family being white I don't imagine had as much of affect as someone that were actually African American cause they were the ones that were basically shut out from any school so I don't think that they would have had the same impact in the sense that, but I defiantly think that on a personal level like I said that it was something that everyone was conscious about – it obviously had some impact in the sense that – it's like one of those topic that it was talked about at school – it's probably talked about a little bit more now – the people of the actually school closing generation almost feels awkward so – I mean my generation would mention to people or talk about it more so then they would – my Dads generation – like you know were brought up in it have a different temperament about it and they were exposed to a lot more different opinions about it to and you know opinions have changed a lot over a few generations of time since the civil rights movement so with that being said that exposed a lot more of different opinions of that time and that would influence them a lot more

MM: Do you plan on staying here for the rest of your life or-?

MB: I mean I love traveling and I love being overseas – I am definitely well traveled and I love being a well-traveled person

MM: So do you plan on staying in one place?

MB: Well I'm getting my PhD and as I've been telling people I am going to apply to anything and everything that is remotely relevant to my degree and then just spin the wheel and see what happens

MM: Do you think that there will ever be a day where race will be truly equal?

MB: I'd like to think so, but I think that's a little easier said then done cause like I said people tend to gravitate towards people that are similar to themselves – there is actually this very

interesting video – it's called tad topia or something like that – you guys should definitely go watch it – it is absolutely hysterical, but it's very good about an African American man that lived in three white communities and he learned to play gold, he goes to like a KKK meeting, so it's quite hysterical and he talks about it – he talks about it in the sense that you have racial actions I guess without racism, so in the sense that – they were sort of separating themselves and they all live in these white communities but then once he was in these communities it was sort of a self done separation – it's not a conscious thing – considered based on race you don't really realize – the battle is not so much racism just in itself and I think it is a problem of fighting it and realizing that they have that unconscious bias

MM: Have you ever encountered the police officers here, or have you like ever gotten a ticket?

MB: I haven't gotten a ticket but I have a friend that works for the force

MM: So do you find the officers to be helpful or hurtful? Like are they aggressive?

MB: Man I haven't had that many run-ins with the cops

MM: Or do you know anyone that have like been in trouble-

MB: I haven't known anyone personally that has had problems personally with the feds – no I don't think so – I mean if someone gets busted for something they obviously have harsh comments to say then, but that's just cause they got a ticket

MM: When you hear about social media – like when you hear about cops racial profiling people – have you ever noticed a cop or police racial profiling in Farmville or in other counties that you were from?

MB: No but like I said I'm sort of on the opposite side of – the side that sort of has the upper hand usually – no I have never personally seen it – I am trying to think of anybody that I am friends with that is on the other side – I don't think anyone that I am friends with on the other side have had problems with the law enforcement side of things – no

MM: How do you feel about police nation wide like what you hear about on the news or social media?

MB: I definitely think that there are problems that need to be addressed and I get frustrated with media cause they make it difficult to find out all the details – depending on what news source you're watching it obviously has a slant on it – I am very much a person that will go back and look at the case to the completeness that you could possibly get – looking at the court transcripts and things like that after they're available saying that the guy that was a cop what he said and what the witnesses say and see if they are blowing it out of proportion in relation to the after affect – I definitely think that there are issues that need to be addressed – I tend to look at those individual things as they come up and make judgments on the individual cases

MM: Do you think the media is trying to start a race war like whites vs blacks?

MB: I don't think that they're trying to do it but – I think they are like everyone else and have their own political stance that they have and they you know present according to what they have and what their world view is – that's just how the news works – different news sources have different backgrounds, so if you have different backgrounds even though they claim to be non-biased and keep things as cut and dry as they can, but that's really not the case when you get down to it – so I think it just ends up being just a difference view from different news sources acting like a race battle because of their different political viewpoints

MM: What do you think about the hate crimes like white on black or black on white – like how do you feel about that?

MB: I think it's horrible either way – I mean I think either direction is disgusting - I mean I don't think that violence is appropriate on either end of it and I don't agree with how Ferguson's protest – I don't agree with how it's been done – I do think that there are some issues that need to be addressed and that protest wouldn't be a bad thing I just don't agree with the violence as a result of it – I don't think it's appropriate for white people to do the same – it's not appropriate at all

MM: Do you have anything else that you would want to mention like any stories about this topic at all?

MB: I don't really – I am just a talker – I am probably giving you guys way too much to have to write down anyway

MM: No, no, no you've been great – this has been perfect

MB: Well I think that that's pretty much it – you know like I said it's just pretty much one of those things that growing up I definitely knew about it, but it wasn't something like a stigma like my parents would talk to me about it if I had questions – but sort of on the outside of things it's not something you would stand on the street corner and be like hey you know those school closings – that was – wow – rough times – so you don't talk about it over coffee necessarily and when you do talk about it it's usually when you talk about it through a historical context – and I like history so it's normally not something talked about in a bad way – as far as the school closings and stuff like I said certainly the wider realm of things is the issue though – I just think that anywhere you go that just applies to everywhere – so it definitely is a big proportion of the history of Farmville it's something that I think that Monton Museum certainly does a good job on, or at least I have been told – like I said I haven't heard anything bad about it from the people I know that have went – it does a good job on bringing out the other side of the story – I don't think it's doing any harm being there obviously so it's a good thing – like I said any exposure you can get is good exposure

M: Alright well then that is all we have for you, Thank you

MB: Thank you guys