

## ORAL HISTORY RELEASE FORM

DATE:

I hereby give to Longwood College the tape recordings, transcriptions, and contents of this oral history interview. I understand this interview will be available in the Longwood College library for scholarly or educational purposes only.

Signature of Interviewee:

Name:

James B. Lee Jr James Lee

Address:

105 Laurel St.  
Farmville, Va. 23901

Name of interviewer:

Michael S Daniels, Aimee Perez

Special Restrictions:

## ORAL HISTORY DATA SHEET (to be turned in with tapes &amp; transcript)

98-11

INTERVIEWEE: James Lee

ADDRESS:

DATE OF INTERVIEW: 4-15-98

PLACE OF INTERVIEW:

INTERVIEWER/S: Mike Daniels &amp; Aimee Perez

TOPICS COVERED: Integration of schools + community; Reaction to school closing; Event in Iowa City, Iowa; College; Return to Farmville; Current effects of school closings; Eggleston for mayor; Passing down anger + story of school closing in the black community

NUMBER OF TAPES: 1

Michael S. Daniels  
Aimee Perez  
Civil Rights in PE  
Final Exam  
Bagby/Smith

Interview with Mr. James Lee

" He wanted as far away  
as possible "

Why he come  
back -

James Lee: But uhh, you have to stay and fight to make it work. Runnin' not coming back wouldn't help you none. We wish all those that went to school here would come back and set up businesses or or do something to help the community. Staying away and not and getting an education and not and then coming back to Farmville doesn't help the town any. See we wish more would come back like Ghee and uhh and Eggleston uhh start their own businesses and and press forward. And these two have uhh, they're not the only ones, but these two has done that. You don't know Eggleston, but you know Ghee. He has done that, so that's why I come back home. Uhh it was of great importance to uhh us to come back and try to make the town better. Staying away uhh wouldn't have done it.

Break.

Aimee Perez: We've had a lot of speakers that are still very angry about having the schools closed and are very upset and almost angry with the white community for doing it. Is that your sense of the black community? Is that the minority or the majority?

James Lee: I would say it's the majority. It's something that you'll, I will never forget. Uhh, it was a great impact on this town. It was an unbelievable circumstance that, anybody that never heard of it or lived in this community, don't know how to accept it, they don't believe it. You can't tell them that schools were closed in Prince Edward for five long years. It's hard, it's something that, it's hard to grasp. And us that went through it, uhm, it'll always remain in our hearts. The animosity, as far as I'm concerned, uhm, has uh, faded away, but the memory will never go. I'll remember this 'til the day I die because it was just so, it was uh, it was unbelievable situation, that it could happen in the United States. And that's something that you never can, you can't get out your mind, and all of us, right or wrong, is passing this thing on down through generations. We want our families, peers, kids and grandkids, we want them to know that this happened.

cult. history

Break.  
Students now don't value educ - an affront to those who <sup>were</sup> ~~did without~~ denied educ.

James Lee: Not trying to keep this thing going for the sake of just uh discrimination, trying to get them to the point of uh special black kids gettin' an education, 'cause they out there now, some of 'em walkin' the street all day long, should be in school, or dropped out of school, they need to go back. We had a

reason why we were out, you don't., that what we're tryin' to stress. We want our black kids, all kids, to get an education. Why they can't? We were denied, but, no, you don't have an excuse. That what, that why we stress. And when we, you try to explain it to them, and try to tell what's happened that, that's when you start gettin' all angry all over again. And that's why some of these blacks are still angry when they speak. They tell you they're angry because it happened to them, and then you see kids out here that do this, can get an education, work with computers, and they refuse not to.

End.