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Interview Transcription of Audio Recording Conducted as Part of "Information Behaviors Among LGBTQ Students at Single-Sex HBCUs"

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American
Library
Association

Interview Transcription

of audio recording conducted as part of
**“Information Behaviors Among
LGBTQ Students at Single-Sex HBCUs”**

A Research Project by
Justin de la Cruz and Amy Winfrey,
Librarians, AUC Woodruff Library

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Diversity Research Grant (2017-2019)*

Spelman College Interview 9 out of 9 for

“Information Behaviors Among LGBTQ Students at Single-Sex HBCUs,”
a research project by Justin de la Cruz and Amy Winfrey
funded by the American Library Association’s Diversity Research Grant (2017)

The participant will be referred to by the letter P in this transcription. The moderator of the interview will be referred to as M within this transcription. Any actions, laughter, or other observations will be written inside brackets for clarity.

M: To start off, can you do your Spelman intro for me but don’t say your name so that this can stay anonymous, and share with us your gender identity and sexuality?

P: I’m an English major, first year from Atlanta, Georgia, and my gender is female and my sexuality is demisexual.

M: What perceptions of Spelman did you have prior to enrolling?

P: I thought it was this place where like *the* black woman comes, you know, so yeah that’s [it].

M: And have your perceptions on Spelman changed since you first enrolled?

P: Sort of, like okay so I feel like because I’m a freshman I see the people who have yet to grow, you know? So yeah like I see these people, they haven’t grown all the way and I’m like wow Spelman is going to make us into these women that I see that are graduates, you know, so yeah.

M: Did you do any research on the LGBTQIA+ community at Spelman before you made your decision to attend?

P: Umm, no I didn’t.

M: And how do you meet others in the LGBTQIA+ community at Spelman, in the AUC, and even outside the AUC, just in Atlanta in general?

P: Okay, so I’m from here so a lot of my friends in high school, umm I was in the Gay Straight Alliance for a while, umm but here well you just see people and it’s like, you know, you just know sometimes.

M: And did you meet people right away at Spelman and in the AUC or do you think it took a while?

P: Umm, no I met people right away.

M: And how do you connect socially with the people that you meet?

P: Umm, like who are in the LGBT?

M: Yeah.

P: Okay, umm how do I connect with them? Well you know like I feel like just like normal like... some people I don't get along with and some people I do, you know? Umm, my roommate... [the participant's phone rings]... sorry... My roommate is the first person I met 'cause you know when you meet... I mean we kind of hit it off it was great so yeah.

M: Is it different connecting with people if they are in the AUC versus outside of the AUC?

P: Uh yeah, definitely. Okay, so the only time I have connected with people outside of school like, okay, so high school and Spelman included, is like I've gone to like one pride parade but then I couldn't go anymore 'cause... but anyway but yeah it's pretty hard.

M: And did social media play a factor in meeting other LGBTQIA+ community members?

P: Well I don't know them personally but umm I'm on this like anonymous site umm this app and there's like a whole group of people so there's like you know people who love the earth, people who are in the LGBTQIA community and it's just... yeah so.

M: And so what platforms do you think are the most helpful just for connecting with people in general?

P: Oh you know what okay so my personal opinion is like uhh like the Gay Straight Alliance, like we're supposed to have something like that?

M: Afreketete.

P: Yeah, but that's what I think like you know just sitting down talking 'cause technology is great but honestly if I'm reading something on my phone then two seconds later I'm listening to Drake so.

M: So it's out of your head?

P: Yeah.

M: And do you think social media impacts your experience as part of the AUC LGBTQIA+ community?

P: Umm, no 'cause I don't really participate in social media like that.

M: Do you feel you are open about or do you feel the need to share your sexuality on social media when you do have a profile?

P: No, I never, okay so I just started telling—well not just—I been dating my boyfriend for a long time so I was like why do I need a sexuality? But every time somebody's like oh so you like girls and I'm like yeah, sometimes, so I don't know I don't feel the need to say anything but if the question comes up then I'm not afraid to share it, yeah.

M: How do you find out about extracurricular activities? Just in general.

P: Ohh, so my email is my best source. My Spelman email, it's my best source of finding out like what's going on on campus and what umm groups I can join so that's cool. And then like sometimes word of mouth cause you know you don't get everything through email, but yeah.

M: And do you participate in any extracurricular activities?

P: Let me see... no? Not really.

M: So have you gone to any events for organizations that are LGBTQIA+ specific?

P: No.

M: Do you feel like the non-LGBTQIA+ groups on campus are inclusive?

P: Yeah, but I, okay so because I haven't been I feel like I been to something but because I haven't been in anything like "*oh yes I am in something*" okay right? I'm in the first generation club and I mean yeah I feel like, but nobody really talks about you know LGBT there, so yeah.

M: Are there any inter-AUC organizations that you know of or participate in?

P: Inter?

M: Like organizations that include all or more than one institution in the AUC?

P: Oh! Umm our theatre department, like they do Sparkhouse, so that's all I can think of. But like all Clark and Spelman and Morehouse and Morris Brown and like the ITC, no I can't think of one.

M: And how do you share or find information about staying safe on campus?

P: They send out emails about that too! But also I like to go to the clinic and they always have the... on the Mac Vicar [Hall] they always have on the tv or like little signs, you know, just like saying "This is a safe space," and they have like counselors in like the upstairs, and so yeah that's pretty much where I learn where to be safe I guess.

M: And how would you compare your social experience at Spelman to what you perceive of the LGBTQIA+ experience at Morehouse?

P: Oh, can you repeat the question?

M: Yeah, how would you compare your social experience at Spelman to what you perceive of the LGBTQIA+ experience at Morehouse?

P: Oh no, umm, oh man, okay how do I explain this? I hate to be... yeah I can't... okay so I hate to be like boys are this way and girls are this way, but—and it doesn't happen all the time—but when you get into these groups it's like [the participant claps] men will like physically beat you up, but women will like talk about you and like uhh, like hurt you emotionally and it's just... I feel like girls are really accepting here but I don't... I don't know what happens at Morehouse, but I been a couple of times and, umm, and they're not nice to women and women are, you know, what they're kinda... I don't know what, they're kinda there for... so I don't know, yeah, but they said... ah man, okay I know one guy he was like "If they allow transgender people to come to my school," he's leaving! Yeah, it's super intolerant and I feel like it's because it's because we allow that, so yeah.

M: Have you heard from Spelman alumnae?

P: In general?

M: In general, and about LGBTQIA+ topics.

P: Umm, I know a couple Spelman alumnae, but about LGBTQ, nah, unless they're the people that send the emails, I don't think so.

M: Gotcha, and the alumnae that you do know, what information did they share about Spelman just about experience?

P: Oh, umm, okay so the reason, well okay... my mom came here and she was like “Oh you need to go, it’s the best thing ever,” you know, and it’s great—like I love it, I love being surrounded by black women, it’s great. Umm, but I don’t know, I just I feel like she came at a different time and so I was having problems saying yes, you know, because I was like, well you were here in ’99, I was born then, right? But also another alum is my mentor and she was like, “It’s great, it’s the best experience ever,” and so every time I talk to somebody, they’re like “It’s the best experience ever,” and I learned something from here, and I’m not sure if I’m supposed to say this, but when you leave the gates Spelman is the best thing ever, but when you’re here it’s like you can say things that need improvement but god forbid you say anything outside the gates, so yeah, that’s what I’ve heard.

M: Is there any advice you would give someone in the LGBTQIA+ community who was thinking of coming to Spelman?

P: Oh my god, this is gonna sound so bad...

M: It’s okay.

P: If you’re transgender? I don’t think you should come here, because I got this perspective from another friend of mine, and they were like, “Yeah, I wouldn’t wanna come here if I was transgender,” and I was like why not, and she was like, “Because of the boys at Morehouse,” because they won’t be... I mean they’re not gonna be mean—I don’t wanna put everybody in a box—but I feel like in general they won’t be super accepting, because that’s just not how our guys across the street are. Yet you know, umm, what else would I say? Ohh, but if you do come there’s a great community. It is—it’s a lot of people. Umm, I don’t know, it just makes you feel not so alone, so yeah.

M: Is there anything else you want to talk about in terms of your experience, being queer on campus, finding information and sharing information with others and just connecting with people?

P: Umm, okay so I guess my best thing is when I’m around my friends who are in the LGBT community, then we kinda talk how umm Gay Straight Alliances do, but yeah, I feel like that’s very therapeutic.

M: So that’s all the questions I have for you, thank you so much.