

31 October 2016

Length: 23:33

Location: RC South Commons

Heath: It's 6:36 and we're at the um... Residential College at Ole Miss. Can you please state your name?

J: Jacqueline

H: What race do you identify with?

J: White.

H: Where are you from.

J: Um... Brunswick, Ohio, which is a really small town near Cincinnati.

H: How long have you lived in Mississippi?

J: Um... if I count the summer then at least 5 months.

H: Okay, so not long. Um... so describe the feelings you had or were taught to have about the Confederacy growing up.

J: Um... I feel like we weren't taught that much at my school kinda like... brushed over a little bit. I mean we talked about the Civil War but it wasn't really in detail and it wasn't in any way I was forced to feel. I don't really think as growing up. I did AP US History and so we talked about the civil War... and... you know... the truth about what has happened, so it's kind of like I guess I wanna say... some people might think it's negative... a negative kind of way of thinking about it, but I don't think it's really negative. They were just telling us what happened in my class. And so I was free to think about about it.

H: Okay so were there any like... outside school... like social cues that maybe like... I don't know like made you think like... gave you an opinion about some of the Confederate memorabilia one way or the other?

J: Actually I guess now that I think about it, from Twitter and like a lot of my friends would always be like "That's ignorant. I can't believe such ignorant people still like... Fly the Confederate flag. They need to let go of the past." All my friends

from high school though people who still used the confederate flag today were ignorant and talked a lot of crap about them... so I guess that's the most.

H: Um... so that perception that you had... does that differ now that you're living like in the heart of all of it?

J: Um... a little I guess cause I don't want to you know... offend some people who feel that way... like I don't want to insult someone so I'm just coming here to Mississippi... I've tried to become more open-minded about the flag, but I'm always kind a little but of a mind about it cause it's just a flag, and I think there are more important things to be arguing about kind of... But it's still a very important issue... but I guess coming here has forced me to... be more open-minded about it... because I can't just say everyone is ignorant... I still think they kind of are, but I don't want to be so vocal about it.

H: Um... so how would you describe... you've already said ignorance, but how would you describe native Mississippians' feelings towards the Confederacy and the Confederate flag.

J: Well I've really tried to understand where they're coming from because... they always say "It's tradition. We want to bring back tradition. We're very proud we're from the South." And I understand that... everyone's proud of where they came from, and they don't wanna be... embarrassed. They don't want people to call the South ignorant and stupid and... I feel like they're not... they're trying to bring back tradition... it's not the right tradition. It's bring back tradition, but then we have to say what is that tradition? It's like... they can't even say it... they're like oh just tradition. The way things used to be. The good ole days. It's like... the good ole days? Like... slavery? So... I guess... I guess I would describe them as ignorant because they don't know... what this tradition really entails besides just tradition the good ole days. And so I think that they're not trying to necessarily be racist... Yeah but I don't know... I try to see it through they're perspective so I try... I don't they're trying to bring purposely like... racism or anything, but they don't realize that that's what the Confederate flag symbolizes.

H: So do you see... like you... you see... they tried to justify the Confederate memorabilia with the argument that it's tradition, but what about the phrase that you might've heard, "the South will rise again". What... what kind of like is that a... how do you feel about that?

J: I think that... they need to let go of the past. The one thing that I'm still trying to see it from their point of view and I feel like they think that... you know... the South is kind of joke in the US... like I've been travelled a lot to different countries everyone's like "Why are you going to college in Mississippi? That's embarrassing. That's... you're not gonna learn anything. Everyone's ignorant."

So I feel like the South is sick of being the joke of the United States. They're sick of being laughed at. They're sick of being called racist. So they're trying to be like "bring back the South. The South will rise again!" If they're all the powerful... but they don't realize what they're saying like... they're not gonna rise above the North... like they're one country.

H: I think something else that I really... I was reading "Ghosts of Mississippi" for my honors class, and I heard that the South will rise again is something they would say when James Meredith... they were trying to enroll James Meredith here at the University, so especially... when-when... thinking about that like... that this has become... like not only like... you know the confederacy is the south's old tiny thing, but when you think like... it is directly connected with race... like how does that make you feel?

J: like I just can't believe that people still say that. "The South Will Rise Again." Now. Today. Like it's just ridiculous to me... They don't realize the implications- or maybe they do realize the implications and are saying that are purpose to... because they are racist. I don't know. I kind of at least hope they're doing it without realizing it and that... ignorant... like I don't even know to be honest with you Heath. So I guess it just makes me kind of... kind of a little sad. Cause I always stuck up for the South you know when I was up in the north and other places. I was like "Have you been there? Have you been to Mississippi? Do you know what it's like?" and whoever I'm talking to would be like "No I've never been there." So I'm like, "No it may not be that bad. It may just be the media just blowing things out of proportion." And then I came here and I kind of realized that a lot of it is true. Actually I think... a lot of things have happened on campus like... the tailgating you see people with the stickers you know... like "The South will rise again" or you know comments on Facebook, and a fraternity wouldn't let somebody the other night I was there... because of their skin color, so you realize that these things are true and exist. It just... it's sad cause I always stood up for the South. Cause I thought... I'd been here before in high school studying... summer college... so I didn't really see anything back then that made me think badly of the south... that was also was when I was younger, so maybe I didn't notice it as much. Not sure. I was only here for two months, too.

H: So you mentioned social media. If you recall several weeks ago there were some comments on Facebook that had like a very... you know like... they kind of reignited some racial divides here on campus. Was that... how did you react to that not being from Mississippi? Like you see that. You're on this campus. You're a student here, and then a fellow student is speaking out against... um... minority races.

J: Yeah I was outraged by that, and I also didn't really think that the Chancellor did much more to combat that. Kind of just slapped him on the wrist and they don't

really... they're not standing up to it, and I feel like students also... you know that many students were talking about it... I was... like we talked about it in my honors class because... like we were on that subject but it wasn't really something that in my experience day to day people were really outraged. So kind of... I felt like it should've gotten more attention but it should've been shot down... like struck down as being completely wrong... and I feel like... the biggest thing to me from being from the North is that there's different sororities here. Like there's historical black sororities and you know... "other" Panhellenic sororities and fraternities as well, and I feel that that's the thing that was just like... that is so weird to me that there's two different sororities. I feel like that... that... that to me is like one of the biggest things. I was just like, this feels weird. I don't know. I didn't really get that. I think it should just be one system, and everyone should be welcomed and it shouldn't matter.

H: So... we talked about race a lot already also... um... so you see these-these confederate symbols that are prevalent today, and you've seen a connection with race. Can you describe that connection? Like when you see the Confederate flag is race the first thing you think about? Do you think about tradition?

J: Hmm... I feel like the first thing I think about is it's the Confederate flag so it's you know the Confederate symbol, so like I think about race and what the Confederates fought for in the Civil War, and it's just... I feel like it should be let go. It was a long time ago. I mean it wasn't that long ago actually... but it definitely just needs to be let go. So I connect to race, but also just to this... obsession with the past, and like reliving these so-called glory days. Which to me aren't even glory days... they're... they're bad times in our history that should be... relived and glorified. They should kind of like be forgotten like if I was from Mississippi, I would not want to like wave this in everyone's face and make them feel like crap. I feel like we should... acknowledge what happened and get over it and not... it doesn't really make sense to me. They're just making themselves look bad. Cause it's definitely tied to race, and whether they want to admit it or not, people in the South don't think it's tied to race. They think it's you know, tradition, but that tradition is slavery, that tradition is tied to slavery. You can't distinguish the two I don't think. I... if you say tradition that tradition is... enslaving people... it's... indistinguishable.

H: So I've heard um... a lot of arguments before though that very few people in the South really owned slaves, and this plantation image that we oftentimes see is propaganda. Do you... do you think that that should matter, even if it is propaganda? Do you think this is ultimately... like that these old times are ultimately like connected to slavery, they need to go? Or are there any parts that can be salvaged from this ole old-timey culture?

J: I guess... if they wanna salvage... like... being polite I guess... something like that. I'm trying to think of anything really because I think based on like Southern culture being like now a days. I don't know cause like that's like the only thing you see... charm... and also you know like "How are you?" like all polite... which might be fake I don't know but anyway...[laughs] probably fake but I don't know that's like the one thing that a lot of people- that I've noticed is like, a good thing about the south is that everyone is nice to each other I guess... not really they're not nice. That's not the right word. Just like polite. So I guess they're to like get these manners from the good ole days that would be... something you could salvage, but it kind of exists, so you don't really need that... I mean even if it is propaganda-which I don't think it is though-it's true and even people who you know wouldn't own slaves, they still belived in the institution of slavery, so even if you didn't own a slave yourself, you still supported and you still segregated people. You still discredited you know who could come into your store or shop... even after slavery. I'm sure most people still discriminated, so even if someone didn't own a slave or have a big plantation... I mean I'm sure there was also people who didn't discriminate in the South. Some people... some.. some tiny minority, but even if you don't own slaves, you can still be discriminatory, so...

H: So... here on campus... there's been an ongoing conversation the past couple of years to contextualize the Confederate... um... remnants that are left on campus... um... I have a few pictures of some of those attempts to contextualize it, and kind of be like, aware of our history. There's this one from the... just the University of Mississippi outside the library where it... um talks about... you know the James Meredith experience... um... and then on the other side we have... this is the plaque underneath the confederate statue in the circle, and it's kind of hard to read, but it refers to... these were often used to promote something- an idea of the Lost Cause. Which claimed the Confederacy had been established, slavery was not the principal cause of the Civil War, etcetera, but ultimately it was like a bad thing, and um... how do you feel about this attempt to like... you know contextualize the stuff that we have, yet keep it there for everybody to see?

J: Um... I feel... I think that it's important to have these plaques and to have this... information so that people... can... I don't-so these people can understand what happened, but I don't think that most people... like in my honors class we watched-my professor showed us this video of when James Meredith came on campus... and there was all these people with guns coming and... there was so much violence. People died and I don't-a lot of people in my class you know even from Mississippi, said they had never seen that video before, and had no clue that it was so violent... like those... those are a good starter you know because it says like this is what happened on this campus here, so you know what happened here, but it doesn't really describe the amount of violence... at least I don't think anyway... it doesn't talk about the level of violence, and most people

Don't really know, and I feel like that was a very important aspect of what happened. You can't just brush under the rug the fact that people died... in these protests. Which I don't know if that was mentioned.

H: ...Um it has nothing about anybody dying in it. No.

J: So... that's a little detail [laughs].

H: Um... so do you think that these... these efforts are enough, or should we try to do more- the university do more to show a specific perception of the past?

J: I think that it's a good start I guess, but it's not enough, and I don't know like in my honors class—and I don't know all the-all the honors classes are studying *Beloved* which is a really-was really a great book and really show... it was really disturbing but it shows in complete detail and accuracy the horrors of what went on in slavery, and I feel like maybe something like that would be really great for everybody to read or even *Ghosts of Mississippi*. We read that in my honors class as well which non-honors students don't read that, so it's good, but maybe something like that should be available to every student, and in my class, we watched the video of when the protests happened, and... you know really in detail on how we can bridge racial gaps on our campus and what can be done better, and how we feel about the confederate flag. We went around and talked about it. Got all our opinions out, and tried to really understand others... where others were coming from, so we got a better understanding... of what happened in the time period and we watched the video, and had the documentary to watch, so it was just a whole wealth of knowledge for all of us in my class. I think is was really valuable, and something like that should be maybe in an EDHD class or whatever that class is called. I don't know what they do in that class. I don't know if they do something like that in them, I'm not sure I'm not in any of them, but I haven't heard anything about that. Somebody told me they learned about sports in that class. They did a whole lesson about... positions on a football team. And I'm like, "No, that's not important." I think they should read like *Beloved* or *Ghosts of Mississippi* and get a better understanding of what it was like in those times.

H: Yeah we're here on this campus so... so we should make more efforts to understand where we are... um and where this university has been right? So just one last picture here um... this is of someone's door in my hallway, and they have this sticker posted. It says "Ole Miss, state Funds, State Flag" with two exclamation marks on a state flag backdrop, and there's actually a website that I didn't notice. It's [www.ourstateflag.com](http://www.ourstateflag.com). Like... how-how do you react to that um... should the university be flying the state flag as it is funded by state money? a whole other story f

J: No I mean... It's not even funded by that much like... state money. I mean look at our tuition, but anyway, that's a whole other story for another day but um... no I don't think it should be flying the flag. I remember when... um a couple years ago—my dad's an alumni. He got a letter in the mail saying that... that um... campus was... no it wasn't a couple months... it was a couple er... it was a couple months ago when the um... I forget the name of the bill... that you can refuse people based off their sexuality you know... small business. When that happened, we um got a letter in the mail. My dad as he is an alumni. From the university saying it wasn't changing the university's policy like that doesn't reflect the university. It's still gonna be equal and following the creed and whatever... equal opportunity no matter what. And I remember my dad was like—that was a big thing that I, like “Oh I'm so glad I'm going to this university. They're not gonna... be different you know, and show that everyone is the same.” Then... Like so I don't think that they should start flying the state flag. I-I thought that was really great too when I found out they're not gonna fly the state flag cause then it appeals... it shows that Ole Miss isn't following this narrative of being the most racist state in the whole country. Which everyone thinks Mississippi is the most racist state in the country. It might be. I don't know, but the fact that Ole Miss is trying to separate itself from this narrative cause Ole Miss has such great honors college, Chinese flagship. It has Croft. It has pharmacy, accountancy. Whatever, it has so many great programs, but it goes overlooked because of this... ties all these ties to racism... trying to keep the state flag and hold onto tradition or whatever, and it's really hindering its progress as a good state university... and... it should be... it should be better known for all it has to offer I think. People from out of state should want to go there and be proud of going there, but I feel like sometimes I'm a little... I mean I'm not really embarrassed. I say that I go to Ole Miss, but I definitely get some remarks up North about it you know, and I don't think it should be that way and I feel like part of the way that could change is if... you know this whole bring back the state flag. If that just ended and we just moved on and focused on academics and the programs you have to offer, and not hold onto this stupid... I'm sorry... not hold onto this... um... ignorant thing.

H: So you may or may not be aware of this, but there's like a small-almost kind of cultish movement on campus to actually remove Ole Miss from our... our title like to eliminate that as part of our thing and just become the University of Mississippi because of a perceived negative connotation of the title Ole Miss. How do you... like while speaking to people up North back at home, did you ever feel like... more inclined to say the University of Mississippi or... or as opposed to Ole Miss?

J: People actually up North don't even—they didn't realize that it's the same university. Like I'll say, “Oh I go to Ole Miss.” And they're like... they don't... they don't know what that is, if it's in Mississippi always. And then like, the University of

Mississippi. Like “Oh okay! It’s the same thing.” So I don’t know if that’s just because they’re not from the South. They don’t really know about schools down south. But yeah we talked about this in my honors class but... I don’t know cause it’s... the whole thing is that it’s like Ole Miss is short for Old Miss right but it’s like the old traditions they wanna keep that. Ole Miss which is the same name that it had when... several ties with that old tradition and values in... and the University of Mississippi... I feel like that shouldn’t be necessary. I feel like the name is kind of sorta obsolete in a way cause it’s just a name so I kind of feel like the school should be able to be called Ole Miss and should have that reputation based on other factors so people don’t care about the name as much if that makes sense. Like just because a school is named Ole Miss shouldn’t mean... I don’t know I think like it’s just a name it shouldn’t... I mean like maybe it would help, but I just think it’s kind of like... too much, and the school should focus not on changing its name, but on fixing the problems within.

H: So the name can evolve with us?

J: Yes!

H: Like Madonna. She’s gone through... she’s gone through so many different phases, but at the end of the day, ultimately she’s Madonna. Right? So... we should... You’re saying we should transform our university, not focus so much on what we call ourselves?

J: Yeah... the name... I don’t know... most people don’t even realize what the name is. They don’t even know. So I-I don’t really think that’s causing anything. I think the problems are like the student body or... depending on what’s going on at the school and start from there. Groups. Start from the bottom and work our way up. Not really changing the name.

H: Alright... I think that’s it.

Where are you from?

**Ocean Springs, MS**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**White**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Positive**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**There should be a vote w/in the ASB for these programs and events to occur or not occur.**

Where are you from?

**Ridgeland, MS**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**White**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Negative**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**If people say that a certain thing offends them, then it is not worth “Southern pride” to keep the symbols that make them feel uncomfortable/unsafe. Also we lost the war.**

Where are you from?

**Picayune, MS**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**White**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Negative**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**I think if something creates such a big problem and offends so many it should be removed. The flag and songs are an easy fix, but I don't believe statues should be taken down. However, they could be put in a light that is not so negative**

Where are you from?

**Lagos, Nigeria**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**Black or African American**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Neutral**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**I do not have so much background information on the Confederacy as a whole. But from what I know, the flags and songs do not convey negative comments. It simply reflects the mission, vision, origin of the Confederacy.**

Where are you from?

**O'Fallon, IL**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**Caucasian**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Neutral**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**I would prefer not to perpetuate things that make native Southerners uncomfortable.**

Where are you from?

**Madison, MS**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**Caucasian (White)**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Negative**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**I believe things related to the Confederacy must be contextualized or else the harbor animosity and division among people.**

Where are you from?

**Brunswick, Ohio (near Cleveland)**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**White**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Negative**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**People who want to bring back "tradition" don't realize that "tradition" evokes slavery, racism & inequality.**

Where are you from?

**Jasper, Georgia**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**White**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Neutral**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**I understand the controversy over the meaning, but I do not have a strong opinion either way.**

Where are you from?

**Brisbane, AUS**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**White**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Negative**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**I have always thought that the Confederacy was a terrible thing- from media representation, etc.**

Where are you from?

**Picayune, MS**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**White**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Negative**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**I get angry because of the hate that is associated with the Confederacy.**

Where are you from?

**Brunswick, OH**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**Caucasian**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Negative**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**I believe that Confederate symbols, whether intended to or not, refer back to the idea of slavery & racism. As Americans, we have to realize our negative past, and work on reshaping the present & forming the future rather than expending so much energy and emotion on the past.**

Where are you from?

**New Albany, OH**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**Black**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Neutral**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**Because I am from OHIO and things associated with the flag I attribute to miseducation and lack of education.**

Where are you from?

**Madison, MS**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**White**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Negative**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**I hate it.**

Where are you from?

**Madison, MS**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**White**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Negative**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**There is so much racism linked to all of these objects, and the time for them is gone. It is time for them to leave, and it is time for us to move on and progress.**

Where are you from?

**Japan**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**Japanese and African American**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Neutral**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**People have their own beliefs they wish to withhold and everyone has a right to that. However, once it starts affecting others in a negative fashion, that is when a line should be drawn.**

Where are you from?

**Magnolia, MS**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**African-American**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Negative**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**I feel that these figures are symbols of hate and don't represent the progression of our university.**

Where are you from?

**The Floridian Panhandle**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**Foreign American (asked for clarification—he means white)**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Neutral**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**I have just always felt people should never allow themselves to feel offended by items that do not directly affect them.**

Where are you from?

**Southaven, MS**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**White**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Negative**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**The confederacy is a symbol division in the U.S. As well as a racist sign of pride.**

Where are you from?

**Suwanee, GA**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**Caucasian**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Negative**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**It truly depends on the person and context, but in general I believe society has attributed negative values to “confederacy”.**

Where are you from?

**Jackson, MS**

With what race(s) do you most closely identify?

**White**

Would you describe your overall opinion on those objects associated with the Confederacy (flags, songs, statues) as positive or negative?

**Negative**

Please briefly explain why you chose the answer you chose.

**Symbols adopt the meanings that society associates with them. Confederate symbols spark feelings of controversy that even supporters recognize.**