

3-13-1989

## UA3/8/9/2 Press Conference

WKU President's Office-Meredith

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**Western Kentucky University**  
**UA3/8 WKU President's Office – Meredith**  
**Subseries 9 Interviews/Oral History**  
**Item 2 Press Conference**

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**Administrative History:** The president's office was created in 1906. The search for a new president began with Kern Alexander's resignation announcement on April 11, 1988. The Board of Regents elected Thomas Meredith as president August 5 and installed September 21, 1988. Under Meredith's leadership, the campus expanded with the purchase of the Bowling Green Center, creation the Institute of Economic Development and the implementation of the first strategic plan Western XXI. He also hired WKU's first female vice president, Barbara Burch. Meredith had served the university for a little over eight years when he announced his resignation February 5, 1997.

Thomas Carter Meredith was born in Owensboro December 7, 1941. He obtained his BS from Kentucky Wesleyan in 1963, his MS from WKU in 1966 and his PhD from the University of Mississippi in 1971. His early career was spent teaching high school in Owensboro, Kentucky and LaHarpe, Illinois. From there he moved into administrative positions in Jeffersonville, Indiana and the board of trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning in Mississippi. Meredith was vice chancellor for executive affairs at the University of Mississippi when he came to WKU in 1988.

**Description:** Press conference regarding basketball team and NCAA investigation. Tape 1, side 1 digitized, tape 2 side 1 digitized and transcribed.

**Dates:** March 13, 1989

**Extent:** 1 audiotape

**Subject Analytics:**

Athletics (WKU)	Press conferences
Basketball	Western Kentucky University
Meredith, Thomas Carter, 1941-	

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**Accession Information:** These records transferred to the WKU Archives from WKU President's Office in accordance with the records retention schedule.

**Access Restrictions:** none

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# Oral History Recording List UA3.8.9.2 ~ Records

09/10/2019

Media ID	Side	Start time	Subject
Tape 2	1	00:00:08	<p><i>TM: . . . here, I mean you know I'm a brand new president in the state of Kentucky. Why on earth is this happening? Why on earth is it announced the day that I'm announced? What in the world is going on? Why would someone choose that, to do that? Well is there a common thread between something else going on in the state that another newspaper broke the story on and what's going on here? Well there was a common assistant coach that crossed over both of those. So is that some reason behind why this might have occurred? I don't know. It's all a guess. He asked the question and I'm just trying to answer your question.</i></p>
Tape 2	1	00:00:41	<p><i>Reporter: . . . _____ Thomas assistant coach said the committee interviewed Wednesday.</i></p> <p><i>TM: No.</i></p>
Tape 2	1	00:00:53	<p><i>Reporter: They chose not to or . . .</i></p> <p><i>TM: It wasn't part of the original allegation.</i></p>
Tape 2	1	00:01:02	<p><i>TM: Other questions?</i></p> <p><i>Reporter: Who else was on the committee? How many members . . . .</i></p> <p><i>TM: You should have that. It'll tell in there.</i></p>
Tape 2	1	00:01:12	<p><i>TM: Gene.</i></p> <p><i>Gene Birk of WBKO: It appears that the committee interviewed the players and the coaches involved. The players and coaches apparently told the paper one thing and the committee another. Did you do a follow up investigation to find out who was actually telling the truth and when or did you let it go . . .</i></p> <p><i>TM: No our committee as I said before was very diligent and persistent in trying to get to the truth. The questions, the kinds of questions they asked were not run in and sort of keep the door open a little bit and say "Did you do this or did you not do it?" "If you didn't do it, fine," and run out the door. It was not that kind of investigation. It was a hardcore keep pushing, keep pushing see if somebody will break kind of deal. Because the committee knew that my stance on this was we want to know the truth and we want to bring it to an end whatever it is. And as I said in the beginning if the news was bad for Western then we would confess and say this is what happened, we found that out and we throw ourselves on the mercy of the NCAA. But if it turned out that there was not conclusive evidence that these things occurred or if it even split out some were and some were not that those things which there was not conclusive evidence then we would stand up tall for Western and say "Wait a minute we may have been accused falsely. The evidence is not conclusive." And we would make that statement as well. And we went through this investigation. The committee pursued it as hard as any committee I could have asked to pursue anything and the results were inconclusive. And that's what we're here to state today.</i></p>
Tape 2	1	00:02:57	<p><i>Gene Birk: And you feel that you have the full . . .</i></p> <p><i>TM: I have no reason to doubt what the report says.</i></p>
Tape 2	1	00:03:04	<p><i>Reporter: One other thing and I'm sorry to back up to this again, but it's also Point C on page two a definite conflict here. It says on its face "all interviewed players except for two." And I believe during your remarks on that you mentioned that the two included the one player who was not interviewed.</i></p> <p><i>TM: That's correct.</i></p> <p><i>Reporter: So on the sheet it's wrong.</i></p> <p><i>TM: No. All interviewed players, well let me see, see if you've got a good point here, John. You got to win something out of this. Let me see if I can give you that one. I guess technically you're right. I want to give you credit for that. Congratulations.</i></p>
Tape 2	1	00:03:54	<p><i>TM: Yes sir.</i></p> <p><i>Reporter: Paul ____ from the Daily News. Who were the merchants involved in the allegations?</i></p> <p><i>TM: I think any reference we want to make to that we'd ask you to pull from the Courier-Journal story.</i></p>

Media ID	Side	Start time	Subject
			<p><i>Reporter: So like it's common knowledge among the students they are able to get discounts from these stores?</i></p> <p><i>TM: I can't answer that. Of course ours just went through '86. I don't know if that still occurs today or not.</i></p>
Tape 2	1	00:04:24	<p><i>Reporter: Did you or the committee try to find any sort of advertisements, notices that might have been published in the community paper or the College Heights Herald announcing to students that they could get discounts . . . .?</i></p> <p><i>TM: We did not.</i></p>
Tape 2	1	00:04:45	<p><i>Reporter: Where do you go from here?</i></p> <p><i>TM: Stay clean. We make sure we're running a clean program and go forward. As far as we're concerned the issue is closed.</i></p>
Tape 2	1	00:05:03	<p><i>Reporter: Will this committee stay together? Will you use it again?</i></p> <p><i>TM: No. I last met with that full committee before Christmas. Met with the chairman after Christmas. Let me back off that a little bit, because I met with the committee, Franklin right before I sent the report or right after I sent the report I believe, didn't I? To the NCAA just to inform the committee of the final steps that were taken, but to talk about all of the issues I haven't really met with the committee since December. Everything else has sort of been in my hands working this out with the NCAA and having a representative come to our campus and so forth. And that was where we lost some time through there working out all that scheduling for them to come, for us to send them a report, for them to respond. That's what all has been taking place after Christmas.</i></p>
Tape 2	1	00:05:57	<p><i>TM: Any other questions? I'd like for you to ask them. We'd like to put it to rest. If not, thank you very much for coming.</i></p>
Tape 2	2	00:00:00	<p><i>Side 2 blank.</i></p>