

Interview with Chris Secord, Marquette, Michigan, January 29th 2007. This interview is about student life at Northern.

Melinda Stock: So Chris, when were you born?

Christopher Secord: May 1st 1987

MS: And what is your background?

CS: My heritage is half Dutch, with some English, some Irish, a lot of other things, but half Dutch.

MS: Where did you grow up?

CS: I grow up in several different places, Grayling was the last place I lived in.

MS: Why did you decide to go to Northern.

CS: Because my major is botany, and this is one of three schools in Michigan that offer a botany degree.

MS: How many years have you been at Northern?

CS: This is my second year here. My fourth semester. I'm a Junior though.

MS: What activities, or extra curricula's are you in?

CS: All I can think of is that I'm starting to join into CCM, Catholic Campus Ministries.

MS: What is your favorite class at Northern, over the semesters?

CS: I would say evolution. And after that, even though I'm not completely sure yet, acting.

MS: And why were those your favorite classes?

CS: Evolution because of the fact that Dr. Graves was a very interesting teacher. Taught us a lot. Sort of loopy, but you know. And then for acting the teacher was completely crazy, but at the same time, I'm being forced to do stuff I normally wouldn't. Another one of my favorite classes was CH 195.

MS: That was a chemistry class?

CS: Chemistry, Molecular Modeling that's its title. It was interesting because I only had two of the prerequisites for that class. Still did verily well, but I learned a lot in that class, quite fun. Although it was kind of odd being the only non chemistry major there.

MS: What is your Major?

CS: Botany.

MS: What would a typical school day at northern me like for you?

CS: Lots of class, lots of work, and a tiny little bit of fun, then, yeah, religious studies and then sleep. And a little tiny bit of fun.

MS: What do you do for fun?

CS: Mostly staying with friends, stay in the room and watch whatever they're watching, and read a book while watching, and then occasionally talk.

MS: Watching?

CS: Cartoons, that's what they watch. Unless it's my roommate watching in which case it's reality TV shows, that involve really dumb blond housewives living with the guy, and you know.

MS: What is your least favorite class at Northern?

CS: Least favorite. Well, Cellular Molecular and Genetics. I like the labs, I love the labs. You actually kind of do stuff in those labs, except some molecular grew a bit repetitive, but the classes. You basically knew everything about the classes before you went there, for Cellular and molecular, I only went, the class met four days a week, I only went to class five times that semester. Still got an A. That's how pathetic that class is, and I think it should just be tested out of.

MS: Which class was that in?

CS: Cellular Molecular and another class that's in that same category is Genetics. I went to Genetics a bit more often but that was because my friends were there and they were like "It's not just knowing the class, it's the class experience." They were really, really mean. Not really but.

MS: Do you live in the dorms?

CS: Yes, I live in Van Antwerp, third floor, American Graffiti.

MS: And do you get along with your roommate?

CS: Actually, I get really along with my roommate. We've known each other since sophomore year of high school. He's like a brother to me. I don't want to say I love him, for obvious reasons. But nonetheless, yeah.

MS: Do you have a girlfriend at college?

CS: No, nor a boyfriend.

MS: Are you looking, for either?

CS: I am looking for a girlfriend. Do I have a crush on someone? Yes. Will that crush ever be fulfilled? No. (Laughs)

MS: Do you have a job?

CS: Yes, I work at the delightful, lovely job, of the Market Place. Though, most people don't know it because I work at pot wash where no one ever sees me.

MS: So what are your responsibilities?

CS: I wash pots. And do whatever the people ask me to, which unfortunately they do a lot because they like to pick on pot wash.

MS: Do you enjoy you job?

CS: I used to; right now it's sort of dragging on me. And I don't like how things have changed for the Market Place.

MS: Do you mean the change in?

CS: From last year to this year, a bit, yes, mostly yes. But also the fact that I'm, just tired of working there. It's my fourth semester, I'm starting to work there. No one should work there for more than a year, a year in a half.

MS: How do you like the weather here, in the Upper Peninsula?

CS: I love it. Because it makes so many other people complain. And it's just like, it's not cold out. In fact, the first snowfall of both years I've been here, I go outside, wearing nothing but, I'm not one of those crazy guys that go naked, but, I go out wearing, I don't think exactly this shirt but, it's like a close replica of this shirt. It's red, has palm trees, the one I wear ahead is like the names of Guam, Taipei, not Taipei. Just the various names of countries, oceanic countries, and then a pair of green shorts and black socks. Although this year I also added some gloves and since my hand always get cold. And then I dance around in the snow, well, not really dance, but I have people stare, or take pictures. For some reason they like to take pictures of a not color coordinated guy standing out in the snow throwing snowballs, people throwing snowballs at him.

MS: How often do you visit your family while you're here at school?

CS: Eh, never.

MS: Do they ever visit you?

CS: Eh, never.

MS: Not even for Christmas vacation?

CS: Unfortunately, I had to go, but that's because

MS: What?

CS: Unfortunately, I do have to go, but that's because I'm forced to, because at school they close the dorms.

MS: So you also go home for the summer?

CS: No you don't want that. I stayed with a best friend of mine and his family. So I avoid my family, for better. I did have to live with them for about two weeks, but that's not too bad.

MS: What is your most interesting memory?

CS: Just let me think. I can't really think of my memories right now, but that's fine. I'll tell you one of the more interesting ones. It's not the most interesting. Let's see, I was being babysat when I was five, which would have been 1992, and let's see. I was being babysat for the first time with my siblings. I have four siblings, not four siblings, three siblings. And nonetheless I was being babysat, and they had like a small trampoline, and the, the babysitter, was more our families neighbors and they had kids. And they had a trampoline in one of the kids bedrooms. And what happened was, I was jumping on the trampoline, and, well, we don't jump on trampolines inside rooms, because it's not safe. Why? I ended up crashing my head into a dresser and bleeding a lot. I still have a scare. Nonetheless they still had to take me to an emergency room. It was a very small hole, per say. They could cover it up with a very large band-aid, but the problem is it was deep. But because it was covered with a very large band-aid, the emergency

room wouldn't take me unless my parents showed up. So, I had to wait to get my treatment. I basically watched board shows until my parents came back, and drove me to the hospital. I got, I don't know how many stitches, but.

MS: What current events do you think will be more important in the future?

CS: Current events...

MS: Or what current events are you most interested in?

CS: Well current events most affecting the future. The decline in birthrate in a lot of countries will be one of them. Europe is going to have a lot smaller population. Japan's have a smaller population. China is. And basically that means that the next generation, or current generation will have to support a larger, elderly population. That would be one of them.

Another would be the lack of conservationism. Though I'm not a big tree hugger myself, unfortunately, or fortunately depending on your opinion. It's just that we don't have as much resources as we once did. And we're not using the ones we do have as wisely as we should be.

Then the last thing, would probably be, well, I guess there would be a few more things. Religious conflicts especially between Muslim and Christians, and especially between the extreme sects of both religions. The forth being the diseases of AIDS and diseases that are becoming antibiotic resistant. And finally the fact of rich nations not really helping out the rich nations, and just exploiting them, 'til they revolt. And since they have a larger population they might just win.

MS: How do you informed on your current events?

CS: thescenein.com, but when I'm back in Grayling, I like to watch the European Journal and Religion and Ethics weekly. Like, I should have other news sources up here while attending school, but I don't. I always feel isolated, but I don't have any time, and I have to concentrate on other things.

MS: Where is your accent from?

CS: I picked up my accent from my mother. I've never been to the Netherlands, but I do have a Dutch accent.

MS: So your mother was from the Netherlands?

CS: Yes, and my father met her while she was there.

MS: How did they meet?

CS: I don't know.

MS: What was your mother's name?

CS: My mother name, her maiden name, Monique Josephina Vriezelaar. Monique is obvious, and if you want the U.S. has it recorded as Monica. Which is easy to spell. And then Vriezelaar is V-R-I-E-Z-E-L-A-A-R, I believe.

MS: And your fathers name?

CS: Clyde Douglass Secord,

MS: When did your mother come to the United States?

CS: I'm not quite sure but, after they were married, and after they had my sister. But almost right before they had me. So it would have been, my sisters two years older than me, she was one when they moved back to the U.S. So it would have been 1986. I think I'm not sure.

MS: Do you only have that one sister?

CS: No I have three siblings, an older born in the Netherlands, and has dual citizenship. Something I've always wanted. It probably easy for me to get. My older sister, Heather, is 2 years older than me. And a younger sister, Amber, who's 2 years younger than me. And my younger brother, who is 4 years younger than me.

MS: So you have family in the Netherlands that you haven't met?

CS: Yes, grandparents, cousins.

MS: Do they ever come to the United States?

CS: No, although they do seem nice because, even though I never met them. I did get a birthday card from them. But it had been resent from another relative who had kept the original envelope. So I didn't know the address to send a response back and there was no e-mail address or any way to connect back to them. And I only got one card so. But very few people send birthday cards to someone they've never met.

MS: Do you have any friends here at Northern other than your roommate?

CS: I hope so. Whether they actually think of me as a friend? Hopefully. I am trying to get new friends next year. Because next year I will be moving out of the dorms and a lot of my old friends are also going to be moving out of the dorms. A lot of people in American Graffiti, really I should say a few unfortunately because this years new comers weren't able to connect to the old comers at all. And then I'm trying to get involve in CCM.

MS: What is American Graffiti?

CS: American Graffiti is the third floor house of Van Antwerp Hall. And it had nice little cool things around the halls, and pictures too. Unfortunately it's going to be renovating, and it's going to suck because all of the halls are going to be white wash. Some of [the pictures] are stupid but some of them are amazing.

MS: Could you describe more of the things that are painted on the walls?

CS: There is a pallas picture that is really cool. Not most people think of it as cool. Well they do but not as much as I do. One picture that everyone really likes is a picture of a frog, in the rainforest. The frog that's green, with orange feet toes and really red eyes. It's and awesome picture. Another picture that one of my wall mates last year likes was the sign at the end of the hallway that said, "Stop, don't go to fast. You might just get AIDS." That is one of the weird ones, I'm not going to lie. Another one is like an ad from Snapple. And it's since this is flavored by natural juices and such and such. It might very from drink to drink since it's all natural flavorings.

MS: Are you involved with your house or hall government?

CS: I'm house Secretary. Actually now that I think about it. It's a bit too late. But there's a house meeting going on in 4 minutes. Oops. Don't worry. There probably not going over anything important seeing as how this year as opposed to last year has been pretty useless. My house haven't been involved in anything. Although, me not going to them is not going to help that problem. My house president won't take care of everything, ideally.

MS: As house secretary, what are your responsibilities?

CS: I basically record the meetings and then send out an e-mail to everyone telling them what the meeting was about. Which is something I'm still going to have to do but I'll just have to get the notes. Make up some stuff. It happens. House president has missed meetings. Strangely enough the president from last semester moved. The vice house president who is now the president, wanted to leave our house. I'm the only one in the house government who did not want to leave the house, at the beginning of the semester, so yeah. That does speak well for me, even if I do miss a meeting.

MS: You mentioned a difference between this years government and the previous years government...

CS: It wasn't so much the government. It was the people involved in the house. This year it's way to quite. I'm starting to get use our RA now, he's trying a lot harder this semester to get on peoples goods sides and not. Our RA are Aaron Sable. Aaron, last year, didn't go much on the rules. The rules didn't allow him to do what he though and said he could. Like courtesy hours sometimes he over stepped his boundary with courtesy hours and I just got sick and tire of him yelling at people about being quite, when they were actually being quite. I didn't like the fact that he went to a party telling them that they were to loud and they were obviously drinking alcohol, and he didn't bust them for the alcohol. Another funny thing is that he only wants quite when he's quite, but it's "oh, sports are on." That's different. But really the people from last year were a lot more outgoing. We use to hear to words "whore" from one person being yelled down. It was just the term of affection.

MS: Whore?

CS: Yes, Whore. I know it's odd. People then were a lot more out going. We were still a good house. Only once was a party ever busted. It was a very stupid party, I'm not going to lie. There was an all girls party. The punishment was really funny. They had to do a non-alcoholic girls party.

(missed the question/ part of the answer)

CS: I believe his ancestry was Argentina, Hispanic obviously. This year he went to Argentina, Chile, and Peru. That's basically Where he's been for half a year. He was very interesting. He liked to play music. He played Really good music.

The across the hall person. Who I'm not so glad came, but he left. For community college. But he played awful music. He was a white guy, who tried to mix religion, country, and rap and be black all together. Which just doesn't work, for whites. He only really had black friends. And I remember him singing, "She wants to ride my joystick." Trust me, it was awful. He's gone now, I'm happy. Nonetheless that's only part of the examples of interesting people in our house.

The person you should interview is Darcy. Which is someone I would like to interview. She has the most interesting stories. She's a very good story teller. She lived in house by herself.

And one of her friends lived by herself. They had just moved there recently, like when she was 3. And her sibling, she also had three siblings, but the nearest sibling (in age) to her, was 15 years older, no 12. Her older sibling was 15. And her older sister was going to high school and was picking up friends. She invited them to her house, because it had a nice lake. And she had warned her friends that Darcy would be naked. Back out there, and at her age, no one would care. Darcy came up running to her sister to her sister, all happy to see her sister, and the fact that she was naked wasn't the surprise. But then what Darcy did, which wasn't exactly her fault she says later, was she basically sat down and defecated on the beach in front of the swimming party. And that basically made everyone leave. As I said, the most interesting stories come from Darcy.

Another story of hers is that being a very young sibling to people in high school is not good because she was once put in the dryer, for a few minutes. And then the mother came. But they also described her as a very happy child because she always smiled, and no one could ever be mad at her even when she defecated on the beach in front of friend, well going to be friends.

MS: Before, you were talking about courtesy hours, what are courtesy hours?

CS: Ok, courtesy hours are technically, as they are defined, you can't be heard more than four doors down. Although the question is, by whose hearing. Really it's more like. As long as you aren't bothering anyone you're, it's courteous.

MS: When does your house have courtesy hours?

CS: All the time. Quite hours on the other hand start at ten on weekdays, and 12, well 10 on Sunday through Thursday and 12 on Friday and Saturday. But unless you're Aaron, no one pays attention. Unless you really are pissing someone off. But that's only if you actually are being to loud.

MS: Does your house do any fundraising activities?

CS: Not this year, because we have so much money from last year. Unfortunately, another thing against Aaron. Even though I am liking Aaron. He is very nice and such. But some things just get to you and last semester. And he has offended a few people in the house, and he could do a better job. Anyway, back to the fundraising. Last year we had the Date Service Auction. Which is an annual thing. But it ended this year. Why? Because Aaron didn't want anyone's feelings getting hurt. Even though, once last year. People would bid for you from your own house, if they thought you were going for to little price. That's how it was fundraised. People just bought people for dates or services. All they had to do was clean a toilet and a shower. Not that bad.

MS: Did you do any other fundraising activities?

CS: I believe so, but the Date Service Auction was definitely one of the most successful. And the fact is. It got so much money that we haven't had to do it again. But at the same time it's like. Yes we have all this money, but we could have so much more. I would think.

MS: So what are you doing with the fundraised money?

CS: Right now, since our house is doing nothing, nothing. There has always been talk of getting a white board bigger than the one in this room, which is 3ft by 6 ft. So that people could do physics problems. That's what really one person is advocating. Otherwise. Well, there is a Super Bowl party being planned but that's something that will actually cost us a bit of money. Which is actually a good thing. Cook our own food and bring it. I'm planning on making bonbon cookies.

Although, what most think of as bonbons, is not what I'm making. Its the cookies with a really special dough with a Hershey kiss inside.

MS: Does your house government, or just your house in general, do anything to help the students living there bond and get together?

CS: There was more last year. And for this school year it was more of last semester. We haven't really done anything much this semester.

MS: What have you done in the past?

CS: Cliff jumping was definitely one of them.

MS: Where do you cliff jump?

CS: Black rocks. Yeah, Black Rocks I only jumped off once, and that was because I couldn't swim before last year. That's one thing I like about college, I learned how to swim. I did take the jump. Still so freaked out. Because I took swimming class last semester. And I actually learned how to swim quite a bit better. When I jumped off the cliff it was basically help someone else who couldn't swim to jump off the cliff. The so were reluctant after I jumped but they did eventually do it. And then they did it two more times, so I was like, I'll wait until I can actually swim. I don't float, unlike the other person who could just float, miraculously. I sink.

MS: Was it weird learning how to swim in university when most other people learn it as a child?

CS: I was the worst student in that class. I still got an A, luckily. Simply for trying. Nonetheless, I was the worst. For me, before I could barely swim two laps but without getting tire. By the end, depending on the day. I could swim twenty and not be tire. On some days I'd get tired, I'm not going to lie. It depended on the day and how much I'd done before.

It was weird because some of those people were on the football team. And that means that they swam like every week, or every other week for football. And then there were lifeguards, there were swim team members. This is a beginning swimmers class, and they wanted to know flips, and I'm like. I can't swim. Actually by then I could swim, but I had to learn by myself. Not last semester, but last year. Although I could swim And I could basically do pitiful swimming. I didn't know what freestyle was at all, so basically I did breaststroke. Because I knew what breaststroke was, and it was like the only stroke I knew. And I thought that freestyle meant anything you want. Breaststroke. And it took me a week to figure out that freestyle is this. The actual freestyle. Oh okay. I'm not going to do the actual freestyle because I can't. I don't care about going fast, I just want to live. I don't want to try, that's the whole point. I did learn backstroke really well, so backstroke and breaststroke are my two strokes I can do. And ideally, even though I won't say it has completely so gone my fear of going into deep deep water. And by deep I mean, over my head deep. Not two inches.

MS: Is there anything you want to add?

CS: About swimming, no. I am involved in Intramural. Tomorrow I have a broomball tournament, actually we're not in the tournament state, broomball game, tomorrow at eight I do basically any sport except football and Automate Frisbee, and basketball. Otherwise I'm pretty much open.

MS: What is broomball?

CS: Well, very good question. I've never played it before myself. Luckily it's in intramurals, unfortunately it's in intramurals. Which means there's unfortunately going to be very good people who are just like broomball! The broomball we have at NMU is not broomball. Broomball at Tech is the actual thing. The true broomball is smooth ice. When you whack, a volley ball, I believe, around with a broom that is taped, with I think duct tape. I will know when I get the broom and duct tape. And then basically you try. It's a combination of hockey and soccer I guess. And basically you try to get the ball into the other person's goal. And there's like a goalie. And then there's typically two offensive, one mid, and two defensive.

Other intramural I've played are soccer, dodge ball, can't think of any others right now but dodge ball. Well none of our intramural teams really get that far. Last years dodge ball team did actually make it to the championships. And we only had to beat one team, and we were won, but unfortunately we lost. I'm good at dodge ball because all I have to do is turn sideways and disappear. I'm not good at throwing balls, I'm not so good at catching them. My ability is basically, a tie fighter screen. Basically people try to hit me and they miss. For some reason people are just determined to hit me. But trust me, they're hard. I once had six balls come at me. Like no one else through any balls. And basically all the balls from both sides were thrown at me. And they all missed. But nonetheless it gave my teammates the chance to survive. I think the reason people want to try and hit me is to simply see if they can. That's the only reason I can think of. Try to hit that skinny guy who can't catch or throw.

MS: So why did you join intramurals?

CS: Despite what I look like, even though I am really skinny. I do like athletics. And being outdoors. I never camped, which is both my family and friends fault. But I do like to go on long, long walks. The longest walk I've ever done was 40 miles. But I had to add miles to that because I had to feed horses and goats. And I had to still do my chores after that. Nonetheless here, I've walked to Harvey, from Van Antwerp that was fun. I like to do it at night because I like to see the stars. I do like blizzards. As long as they're like 30 degree blizzards. Which are unfortunately quite rare. I do like warm showers because then it's nice, and not depressing. No coat.

MS: Is there anything you'd like to add?

CS: Your keys look nice,

MS: Thank you.

Then thanks for letting me interview you.