

CONSULTANT: Michael Gatlin  
AGE: 23  
RESIDENCE: Durham, NC  
OCCUPATION:  
INTERVIEW DATE: July 30, 2016, approx. 10:00 am  
LOCATION: Durham Farmers Market @ Durham Central Park

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Audio introduction:

Michael Gatlin, I'm 23, and I live in Durham. I'm originally from Georgia, though. I haven't been here that long.

**What part of Georgia?**

I lived about 30 minutes from the U of Georgia in a little town called Pendergrass.

**I'm from Anderson, South Carolina, which is just over the border, right near there. Is that where you were living back then?**

Yeah.

**So take a minute to think about it, and then take me back to New Year's Eve 1999 and tell me what you remember.**

I actually don't remember the night. I remember being at school. They had the 2000 glasses, and I was in first grade. I remember vaguely people talking about the Y2K apocalypse, about how all of our computers were going to mess up and the world was going to end. Um, turn of the century, or millennium. I know that my teachers explained to us what a millennium was. And I felt like that was pretty important, even though it was just a couple of years difference, you know, I got to live in two different millenniums. As a first grader, I was like, "Aw, I'm really cool."

**So you felt like it was important? It wasn't that it was it *told* to you that it was important.**

No, I definitely felt like it was important.

**Why? Is it just because of the date changing?**

Yeah. Just the...I think at that point, in my first-grade mind, watching TV shows and things like that, the future in 2015 was this magical place where we were gonna have all of this future technology. And I was definitely going to be a part of flying cars, and kind of like 'The Jetsons', you know? Because some of the movies I had seen as a kid, when it said 2020 or 2015 or something like that, it seemed so far away, and so futuristic. And that's why I thought it was important.

Because everybody was, you know, saying, “The millennium is changing. A thousand years,” and all of this big language, and I was in first grade, and I was like, “Yeah, this is super important.”

*I mention that Michael is one of the youngest people I’ve talked to, and as a result, he probably has a unique perspective on technology.*

**Do you remember before all that, like, before cell phones?**

Yeah! Actually, my parents didn’t have...they weren’t into the latest tech, and stuff like that, so I didn’t get a cell phone until I could pay for it, in high school. And let’s see...I remember we had dial-up Internet. Before we had Internet, I remember that. I remember getting Internet for the first time; that was a big deal.

**Really? So you must have been really young then.**

Well, we just lived out in the middle of nowhere. So when we got Internet, that was a big deal. I remember talking on a phone with a cord, and that was interesting. And I remember TVs with antennas. VCRs and big stereo equipment before...you had CD players and stuff like that. I had a Walkman. Having a CD player was like a huge technology thing, something that, like, you’d get a Christmas, “This is a big deal.” I remember pay phones. People used to use pay phones. Going to video stores, where you had to rent the movies and the games. I actually went and looked for one not too long ago, and they don’t exist anymore.

**Isn’t it crazy that we’re talking about that in the past now?**

Yeah. Video stores. This thing where it was, like, they had DVDs, which were huge.

**And back then, you’re talking about VHS.**

Yeah, VHS, and then DVDs were like, brand new. Or at least it wasn’t, maybe not that far back, a couple of years after that. It all blurs together, childhood.

**Do you remember people being afraid?**

Because of the millennium change?

**Yeah.**

Um, nobody in my family. I think...I vaguely heard about this thing called Y2K, and –

**Did they talk about that at school?**

No. I vaguely heard it, Y2K. Wasn't sure what it meant. People talked about how our computers were going to mess up, but at that young, I don't think anybody was going to tell me that the world was going to end, or something like that. Nobody seemed to really care. My parents were...they're very, I don't know the word for it. They wouldn't get caught up in all the hysteria, even if it was going to be the Apocalypse.

**Sounds like they're pretty tech savvy.**

Not really, no.

**You said they were early adopters; they got a lot of the technology relatively early, considering where you lived.**

Um, I think it was a while before my mom had a cell phone.

**Okay, I might have misunderstood you.**

Yeah. And then by the time we got things like DirecTV and stuff like that, it was pretty widespread at that point. We got Internet...I remember the first computer we had was, like, Windows XP. Which is saying something, because you had, like, 98, 99, 2000 and then XP. Yeah.

**Now, do you still use PC or are you Mac?**

I'm PC. I mean, except for, I guess I have an iPhone.

**Yeah. I guess everybody is Mac in some way.**

Yeah. My wife has a Mac. We have an Apple TV. So I'm on both, I guess. I would like to have a Mac. Let's just put it that way [laughs].

**Your wife will hear this, and "Here comes Christmas gift!" No.**

Probably not.

**Be a nice Christmas gift.**

*We discuss the pros and cons of Mac computers. I thank Michael for his time and end the interview.*