

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Reverend Frances Murphy Draper

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Draper, Frances Murphy, 1947-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Frances Murphy Draper,
Dates:	September 26, 2003
Bulk Dates:	2003
Physical Description:	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:48:50).
Abstract:	Pastor Reverend Frances Murphy Draper (1947 -) is the former president of the Afro-American newspaper and is the pastor of John Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church. Draper was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on September 26, 2003, in Baltimore, Maryland. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2003_235
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Born on December 18, 1947, in Baltimore, Maryland, the Reverend Frances Murphy Draper is the great-granddaughter of the founder of the Afro-American. Draper attended Morgan State University, earning a B.A. in Spanish education in 1969, and then enrolled in Johns Hopkins University to earn a M.Ed. in 1973. Draper then attended the University of Maryland, earning an M.B.A. in 1981, and picked up graduate credits at St. Mary's Seminary before receiving an M.S. in pastoral counseling in 1996 from Loyola College in Baltimore. That same year, she received a doctorate in ministry from the United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio.

After completing her bachelor's degree, Draper began teaching in the Baltimore public schools in 1969 and continued to do so for four years. Joining the family business in 1973, she became the manager of the New Jersey edition of the Afro-American. In 1976, she left the paper to become an account executive at Merrill Lynch Pierce Fenner & Smith, before returning to her alma mater of Morgan State to serve as an assistant vice president of development in 1978. She remained there for eight years, becoming an instructor in 1984, and then returned to the Afro-American in 1986 as president. Leaving the paper for a second time in 1999, Draper is today the pastor of Freedom Temple African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Baltimore, formerly known as John Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church.

As a lifelong citizen of Baltimore, Draper has been extraordinarily active in the community. She serves as vice chair of the Board of Regents of Morgan State University, treasurer of the Board of the Afro-American Newspapers and Loyola College, has served on the boards of the United Way of Central Maryland and Loyola University Maryland and was the vice chairperson of the Baltimore's Literacy Foundation. Three times she has been honored as one of Maryland's Top 100 Women, and she has been placed in the Maryland Circle of Excellence for women demonstrating sustained achievement. Draper and her husband live in Baltimore. They have four children.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Reverend Frances Murphy Draper was conducted by Larry Crowe on September 26, 2003, in Baltimore, Maryland, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Pastor Reverend Frances Murphy Draper (1947 -) is the former president of the Afro-American newspaper and is the pastor of John Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Draper, Frances Murphy, 1947-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Draper, Frances Murphy, 1947- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

African Methodist Episcopal Church

Occupations:

Pastor

HistoryMakers® Category:

ReligionMakers

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Frances Murphy Draper, September 26, 2003. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Frances Murphy Draper, Section
A2003_235_001_001, TRT: 0:28:20 ?

Reverend Frances Murphy Draper was born on December 18, 1947 in Baltimore, Maryland. She is the daughter of journalist Frances Louise Murphy, II. Draper's maternal great-grandfather founded the Baltimore Afro-American newspaper in 1892. Her maternal grandfather, who was a professor at Howard

University, took over the management of the paper in 1922. Her maternal grandmother was one of the founders of Delta Sigma Theta sorority. Draper's father, James Edward Wood, Sr., was born in Kentucky and worked in entertainment managing artists such as the Four Tops. Draper's parents had three children before divorcing. Both remarried. Her father married jazz singer Damita Jo. Draper was raised in Northwest Baltimore. As a child, she sang in her church choir, played sports, and listened to the music of Motown. She also remembers touring with her father and working at the Afro-American newspaper. She once met Smokey Robinson in New York City. She describes her parents' personalities and talks about the 'Buddy Deane Show.'

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Frances Murphy Draper, Section A2003_235_001_002, TRT: 0:30:50 ?

Reverend Frances Murphy Draper describes her elementary school experience in Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, Maryland. She talks about playing sports, her experience at William H. Lemmel Junior High and Western High School in Baltimore, and attending the March on Washington. In eleventh grade, she transferred to Frederick Douglas High School and recalls her teachers and high school career aspirations. Draper attended Morgan State University and earned a bachelor's degree in Spanish in 1968. After graduation, she taught middle school in Maryland, before moving to New Jersey in 1974 to run the New Jersey Afro-American newspaper. In 1976, she returned to Baltimore and worked as a stockbroker at Merrill Lynch. Later, she accepted a position as a vice president at Morgan State University. During this period, she served on the board of the Afro-American Newspapers and became increasingly interested in the business side of the paper. In 1986, she became president of the Afro-American Newspapers.

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Frances Murphy Draper, Section A2003_235_001_003, TRT: 0:28:20 ?

Reverend Frances Murphy Draper assumed control of the Baltimore Afro-American in 1986. At that point, the paper was in serious debt, and the organizations that had agreed to re-finance The Afro in 1984 were no longer interested. Area newspapers ran bogus stories about the Afro's going out of business. In response, Draper organized the fundraiser Operation Afro to settle the paper's debts and increase subscriptions. The operation was a success; The Afro increased its readership and influence base. Draper talks about her learning how to run a newspaper through trial and error, and the consequences of having replaced the senior management. In 1991, Draper accepted her call to the ministry. She worked at the paper part-time, and left altogether for the church in December of 1998. Draper joined the John Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church of Baltimore as an associate minister. She speaks about her experiences as a pastor, the demographics of her congregation, and evangelizing within the Baltimore community.

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Frances Murphy Draper, Section A2003_235_001_004, TRT: 0:21:20 ?

Reverend Frances Murphy Draper was involved in the Civil Rights movement from a young age. She remembers her parents bringing her along to a demonstration to protest the segregation of a Maryland park at the age of five or six years old. Draper talks about the possibility of being pigeonholed by the Murphy family legacy. Draper also considers her legacy as a pastor and talks about her role at the John Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church in Baltimore, Maryland and how she would like to see the church supporting the Baltimore community. Draper considers what she would have done differently in her life and describes

her concerns for the African American community. Draper concludes by narrating her photographs.