

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Robert C. Hayden

PERSON

Hayden, Robert C.

Alternative Names: Robert C. Hayden;

Life Dates: August 21, 1937-January 23, 2022

Place of Birth: New Bedford, Massachusetts, USA

Residence: Oak Bluffs, MA

Occupations: School Superintendent;

Biographical Note

Robert C. Hayden, Jr., was a historian, author, and educator who contributed to African American historiography for over thirty-five years. He was the author, co-author, and editor of over nineteen books and special publications in the field. Alongside his historical research, writing, and teaching, Hayden served for thirty-two years in numerous educational positions, including as an ethnic studies curriculum developer and as a project administrator in urban school projects across the country. He was the founder and president of RCH Associates, a provider of African American history services and resources to educators and a range of public and private institutions, organizations, and community groups.

Born in New Bedford, Massachusetts, on August 21, 1937, Hayden graduated from New Bedford High School in 1955. He attended Boston University, receiving his B.A. degree in 1959 and his master's degree in 1961. He completed two post-graduate fellowships – one at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education and another in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), between 1976 and 1977. Between 1994 and 1995, he was a Scholar-in-Residence at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York City.

Between 1961 and 1965, Hayden worked as a middle school teacher. In 1966, he became an editor with the Xerox Education Division, serving in that capacity for three years. From 1970 to 1973, Hayden was the executive director of the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity in Boston. In 1974, he moved to the Education Development Center in Newton, Massachusetts, where he directed ethnic heritage studies projects for urban school districts. In 1980, he became the director of MIT's Secondary Technical Education Project. From 1982 to 1987, he served as an assistant

superintendent in the Boston Public School System. Before retiring in 1992, Hayden served for five years as the executive director of the Massachusetts Pre-engineering Program.

Hayden was well-known for his three pioneering works in the 1970s on the history of African Americans in science, technology, and medicine. From 1974 to 1983, he wrote a weekly column, "Boston's Black History," for the Bay State Banner newspaper in Boston. He was a contributing writer for the Dictionary of American Negro Biography (1982), the Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History (1995), and American National Biography (1999).

Notable, too, were his African Americans in Boston: More Than 350 Years (1991) and African Americans and Cape Verdean Americans in New Bedford: A History of Community and Achievement (1993). In 2003, his first definitive biography was published – Mr. Harlem Hospital: Dr. Louis T. Wright. He published African Americans on Martha's Vineyard: A History of People, Places and Events in 2005.

Hayden became a lecturer in the College of Public and Community Service at the University of Massachusetts at Boston in 1992. From 1978 to 2001, he was a senior lecturer at Northeastern University and held the same position at Lesley University from 1992 to 2005.

A resident of Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, Hayden served on the Oak Bluffs Historical Commission from 1998 to 2000. He was the national secretary of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) and the founding president of the Martha's Vineyard Branch of ASALH.

Robert C. Hayden, Jr., was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on August 17, 2004.

Hayden passed away on January 23, 2022, at the age of 84.

Related Entries

New Bedford High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

H.S.

Thomas R Rodman [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Elementary

Boston University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

B.S.

Boston University School of Education [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.Ed.

RCH Associates [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to 1981]

Founder and President

Xerox Corporation [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from ? to ?]

Editor

Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1970 to 1973]

Executive Director

Education Development Center [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1974 to 1980]

Ethnic Heritage Studies Projects Director

Bay State Banner Newspaper [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1974 to 1983]

Columnist

Harvard University Graduate School of Education [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1976 to 1977]

Post-Graduate Fellow

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1976 to 1977]

Post-Graduate Fellow

Northeastern University [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1978 to 2001]

Senior Lecturer

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1980 to 1982]

Secondary Technical Education Project Director

Boston Public Schools [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1982 to 1987]

Assistant Superintendent

Dictionary of American Negro Biography [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1982 to ?]

Contributing Writer

Massachusetts Pre-Engineering Program [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1987 to 1992]

Executive Director

University of Massachusetts, Boston [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1992 to ?]

Lecturer

Lesley University [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1992 to 2005]

Senior Lecturer

Schomburg Center For Research In Black Culture [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 199302 to 199803]

Scholar-in-Residence

Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1995 to ?]

Contributing Writer

American National Biography [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1999 to ?]

Contributing Writer

Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) [MEMBEROf]
[from 1970 to ?]

Secretary

Museum of African American History [MEMBEROf]
[from 1970 to ?]

Board Member; Treasurer

Past Action for Boston Community Development [MEMBEROf]
[from 1980 to ?]

Board Member

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People [MEMBEROf]
[from 1987 to ?]

Board Member and President

Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) [MEMBEROf]
[from 2002 to ?]

President