

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Frank Morris

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Morris, Frank L.
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Frank Morris,
Dates:	October 27, 2004
Bulk Dates:	2004
Physical Description:	7 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:21:40).
Abstract:	Academic administrator and political science professor Frank Morris (1939 -) served as the executive director of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, and became the associate dean of the Graduate School of Public Affairs at the University of Maryland. In 1988, he was hired by Morgan State University, where he retired as the dean of graduate studies in 1996. Morris was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on October 27, 2004, in Dallas, Texas. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2004_217
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Educator Frank Morris, Sr., was born in Cairo, Illinois on July 21, 1939. At age six, he moved to Boston, where his grandparents and his aunt and uncle raised him. An honor student in high school, Morris was awarded a scholarship to attend Colgate University. From there, he attended Syracuse University, earning his M.P.A. degree. Morris later went on to earn a Ph.D. in political science from MIT and he later completed the requirements for his master's in international affairs from Georgetown University.

After graduating from Syracuse University in 1962, Morris joined the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, working out of the Seattle office. He joined the U.S. State Department in 1966, and by 1969, he was the deputy regional coordinator for the Latin America Office of Program and Policy Coordination. In 1972, Morris moved to Chicago, where he became an associate professor of political science at Northwestern University. After working with the National Education Institute and the Community Services Administration, Morris joined the U.S. Foreign Aid Program to Jamaica, where he retired as deputy director in 1983. Returning from Jamaica, Morris became the executive director of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation. In 1986, Morris was named the associate dean of the Graduate School of Public Affairs at the University of Maryland, College Park. In 1988, he left for Morgan State University, where he retired as the dean of graduate studies and research in 1996. After moving to Texas in 1997 to be closer to his grandchildren, Morris became a visiting professor in government and politics at the University of Texas, where he remained until he retired in 1999.

Throughout his distinguished career, Morris was highly influential in all the positions he held. While working with the State Department in Jamaica, he oversaw the growth of U.S. federal aid to the country to become one of the three highest per capita U.S. AID programs in the world. While serving as dean at Morgan State, he formed a partnership with the Hokkaido Foundation of Japan and instituted a program to teach Japanese. He has also served

as a consultant to organizations in the U.S. on issues relating to Africa and Europe.

Morris has received numerous awards over the years, including having been named “Father of the Year,” by the *Chicago Defender* and recipient of the Superior Honor Award by the Department of State. He and his wife have four children.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Frank Morris was conducted by Larry Crowe on October 27, 2004, in Dallas, Texas, and was recorded on 7 Betacame SP videocassettes. Academic administrator and political science professor Frank Morris (1939 -) served as the executive director of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, and became the associate dean of the Graduate School of Public Affairs at the University of Maryland. In 1988, he was hired by Morgan State University, where he retired as the dean of graduate studies in 1996.

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:

Morris, Frank L.

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Morris, Frank L.--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Academic Administrator

Political Science Professor

HistoryMakers® Category:

EducationMakers

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 Frank Morris, October 27, 2004. 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 Frank Morris, Section A2004_217_001_001, TRT: 0:30:20 ?

Frank Morris was born on July 21, 1939 in Cairo, Illinois to Frankie Taylor Honesty and Lorenzo R. Morris, Jr. Morris's mother was born in Little Rock, Arkansas to Alice Taylor, a beautician, and Frank Taylor, a sleeping car porter. After her family's home was burned down during a race riot, they moved to Boston, where Morris's grandmother was active in the NAACP. Morris's mother attended Boston University and became an administrative assistant for the National Labor Relations Board. Morris's paternal grandfather, Lorenzo R. Morris, Sr. a foreman at a lumber mill, founded the Mobile County Training school, the county's first high school. Morris's father was born in Mobile, Alabama. His family also moved to Boston for better opportunities. After quitting Suffolk Law School, Morris's father worked as a laborer. At the age of six, Morris was taken in to be raised by his paternal grandparents, who often hosted extended family at their home. He recalls his paternal aunts' and uncles' education and careers.

Video Oral History Interview with Frank Morris, Section A2004_217_001_002, TRT: 0:29:50 ?

Frank Morris lived in Cairo, Carbondale, and Chicago, Illinois before moving to Boston, Massachusetts at age six. Morris remembers the attack on Pearl Harbor. While in Chicago, Morris ate fried grasshoppers, was baptized at Olivet Baptist Church, and attended John B. Drake Elementary School. At first, Morris had trouble adjusting to school in Boston, but he impressed his teacher and classmates with his knowledge of atomic energy during a field trip to the Museum of Science. Morris made many friends at Boston's Twelfth Baptist Church, like Dr. Joseph Neville. Morris attended Williams School, William Lloyd Garrison School and the prestigious Boston Latin School until he fought a classmate who used a racial slur. Morris then transferred to Roxbury Memorial High School. As a teenager, Morris played basketball and enjoyed jazz. He saw Duke Ellington and Paul Gonsalves at the 1956 Newport Jazz Festival. Upon graduating in 1957, Morris received a scholarship to attend Colgate University in Hamilton, New York.

Video Oral History Interview with Frank Morris, Section A2004_217_001_003, TRT: 0:29:20 ?

Frank Morris attended Colgate University in Hamilton, New York, where he played football on a team opposite Jim Brown before deciding to focus on his studies. He majored in economics and political science, headed the Young Republicans, and interned at Senator Leverett Staltonstall's office, where he worked with HistoryMaker Edward Brooke. Morris completed his master's degree in public administration at Syracuse University in New York. When Morris experienced housing discrimination in Syracuse, Dean Guthrie Birkhead, Jr. helped place him in Naval Reserve housing. Upon joining the Federal Management Intern Program, Morris moved to Seattle, Washington to work on urban renewal and housing rehabilitation. Morris was also appointed president of the Seattle NAACP in 1962. In 1966, Morris entered the U.S. Foreign Service. While working for USAID's Latin American Bureau, Morris had access to classified information. Morris recounts how he met his wife, M. Winston Baker Morris, at a party.

Video Oral History Interview with Frank Morris, Section A2004_217_001_004, TRT: 0:29:40 ?

Frank Morris transferred from Georgetown University to MIT to complete his doctoral degree. At MIT, Morris published a paper criticizing the limitations of IQ tests. He also studied abroad at the University of Ghana and Kumasi University of Science and Technology in Ghana. After graduating in 1976, Morris became an associate professor of urban affairs at Northwestern

University in Evanston, Illinois alongside HistoryMaker Lerone Bennett. Angered by the Evanston Review's coverage of police brutality, Morris confronted the editor, Frank Coakley, who gave him his own column. Morris completed a fellowship at the U.S. National Institute of Education in Washington, D.C. and then served as chief of policy planning evaluation for the Community Services Administration. Morris was education chairman for the NAACP in Montgomery County, Maryland. He then returned to the U.S. Foreign Service to serve as USAID's deputy director and chief of operations in Jamaica, shortly after the election of Prime Minister Edward Seaga.

Video Oral History Interview with Frank Morris, Section A2004_217_001_005, TRT: 0:30:10 ?

Frank Morris worked for USAID in Jamaica during President Ronald Reagan's administration. Morris was promoted to affirmative action officer and investigated racial discrimination in hiring and job evaluations. Upon Morris' recommendation, Morris' secretary was awarded secretary of the year worldwide in the Department of State in 1984, after being the only non-American foreign national nominated at the time. Morris describes seeing Bob Marley and Monty Alexander perform in Jamaica. Upon retiring from the U.S. Foreign Service and returning to Washington, D.C. in 1983, Morris was recruited by HistoryMaker Louis Stokes to serve as executive director of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation. While heading the foundation, Morris increased its fundraising and started intellectual forums about policy issues. However, Morris was disappointed in the foundation's stance on international issues. Morris recalls being fired from the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation in 1985.

Video Oral History Interview with Frank Morris, Section A2004_217_001_006, TRT: 0:30:40 ?

Frank Morris attended FESTAC '87 and met Senegalese President Abdou Diouf. Morris worked under HistoryMaker John Slaughter at the University of Maryland at College Park. Morris followed Slaughter to Morgan State University in 1988 and served as the dean of graduate studies and research. At Morgan State, Morris hired HistoryMaker Robert B. Hill to head the Urban Research Institute. Morris travelled with HistoryMaker Edward "Buzz" Palmer to the Soviet Academy of Sciences in 1988 and 1990, and also travelled with Palmer and a group of African American scholars to the European Union to learn about European affairs. He served on the board for the Center for Immigration Studies. Morris talks about the impact of immigration on the American workforce, the tendency for graduate schools to recruit foreign graduate students rather than American minorities, and the misallocation of funds he uncovered at the Daniel Hand Fund. Morris reflects upon his hopes and concerns for the African American community and his career.

Video Oral History Interview with Frank Morris, Section A2004_217_001_007, TRT: 0:21:40 ?

Frank Morris talks about affirmative action and reparations for African Americans. In reflecting upon his legacy, Morris expresses his hope that the African American community will value education, engage in entrepreneurship and appreciate how small businesses can lead to economic development. Morris describes how he would like to be remembered. He concludes the interview by narrating his photographs.