

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Angeles Echols

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Echols, Angeles, 1957-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Angeles Echols,
Dates:	March 20, 2006 and October 4, 2005
Bulk Dates:	2005 and 2006
Physical Description:	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:23:10).
Abstract:	Education chief executive Angeles Echols (1957 -) founded Educating Young Minds, a tutoring program that collaborates with the Los Angeles Unified School District. Echols was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 20, 2006 and October 4, 2005, in Los Angeles, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2005_230
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Angeles LaRose Patricia Echols was born January 11, 1957, in Memphis, Tennessee, to Will Eva Harmon Echols and J.D. Echols. Echols attended Georgia Elementary School, Hamilton Middle School, and graduated from Hamilton High School in 1975. A singer actress, model, and dancer, Echols, who performed in Erma Clayton's *An Evening of Soul* review in Memphis, was awarded \$5,000 by Willard Straight Hall to produce the show for Cornell University. Echols earned her B.A. degree in psychology from Cornell University in 1979, and also completed a one-year graduate program at Cornell in Arts and Sciences. At the time of her interview, Echols was preparing for a Ph.D. program in Education and Child Development and Human Development.

From 1980 to 1989, Echols worked in a variety of social service and educational programs that included the Harvard University Upward Bound Program; Alexander Berger Junior High School #139 in Bronx, New York; Holy Name Multipurpose Center, Memphis; and Hale House, New York City. During that time period, Echols also landed acting and modeling jobs. In 1987, Echols was cast in the off Broadway production of *Staggerlee*; in 1989, she moved to Los Angeles and was cast in the film *She Knows Too Much*, and became artistic program director of the Parks Arts Program in Pasadena, California. That same year, Echols began tutoring two children after school in her own apartment. As her program began to grow, Echols founded Educating Young Minds (EYM). From 1990 to 1994, Echols taught math and English at Trinity Lutheran School in Los Angeles, and film history at Chaffey College in Rancho Cucamonga. In 1994, Echols made EYM her full-time work; working cooperatively with the Los Angeles Unified School District, EYM eventually would provide an attractive learning environment for 350 inner city youth, from kindergarten through high school.

Echols has been the recipient of numerous honors. In 2003, Echols was selected as part of the President's Council of Cornell Women. Echols received the 2003 PRISM Award in education from *Minorities in Business* magazine; KTLA's "Unsung Heroes Award"; ACT 1's Angel of Education Award; Crenshaw Christian Center's Lifetime Achievement Award; Oscar Joel Bryant's Community Humanitarian Award; the Jackie Robinson and United

Way's Community Service Awards. Other awards from Yvonne Braithwaite-Burke, the City of Los Angeles, the California State Assembly and the United States Senate speak to the community support of Echols and EYM. In 2005, Echols portrayed the title character in *Sojourner*, a play about 19th century black activist Sojourner Truth.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Angeles Echols was conducted by Larry Crowe and Paul Brock on March 20, 2006 and October 4, 2005, in Los Angeles, California, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Education chief executive Angeles Echols (1957 -) founded Educating Young Minds, a tutoring program that collaborates with the Los Angeles Unified School District.

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:

Echols, Angeles, 1957-

Brock, Paul (Interviewer)

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Echols, Angeles, 1957- --Interviews

African American actresses--Interviews

African American teachers--Interviews

African American social workers--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Education Chief Executive

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 Angeles Echols, March 20, 2006 and October 4, 2005. 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 Angeles Echols, Section A2005_230_001_001, TRT: 0:29:00 ?

Angeles Echols was born on January 11, 1957 in Memphis, Tennessee to Will Eva Harmon Echols and J.D. Echols. Echols' mother was born on March 13, 1935 in Yazoo City, Mississippi, one of eighteen children born to Jessie Harmon. While attending college in Memphis, she became pregnant, and her son, Earl, was adopted by one of her brothers. Echols' parents met and started a family in Memphis before separating when she was three years old. Growing up in the LeMoyne Gardens projects of Memphis, Echols lived near her paternal grandparents, Katie Franklin and Thomas Echols, and her paternal aunt, Jamila Echols. She maintained a close relationship with them despite being estranged from her father. Echols describes her mother's strength, kindness and strict emphasis on education, and how she resembles her mother. Echols reconnected with her father as an adult, when she visited him in Chicago, Illinois. At the age of eight, Echols directed the youth choir and was an active member at Mountain View Baptist Church.

African American actresses--Interviews.

African American teachers--Interviews.

African American social workers--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Angeles Echols, Section A2005_230_001_002, TRT: 0:28:40 ?

Angeles Echols was raised by her mother, Will Eva Harmon Echols, in Memphis' LeMoyne Gardens projects until she was about twelve years old. Echols recalls her nurturing neighbors, her mother's support and the familiar sounds of life in the projects. She attended Georgia Avenue Elementary School, Hamilton Elementary School, Hamilton Middle School and Hamilton High School, where she enjoyed math and the arts. She felt socially isolated until joining the production of HistoryMaker Erma L. Clanton's play 'Roots, Rhymes & Righteous Times (An Evening of Soul),' alongside HistoryMaker Isaac Hayes. After performing in the play, she provided background vocals for Stax Records. Upon graduating from high school in 1975, Echols attended Cornell University, where she obtained her bachelor's degree in science while maintaining her interest in drama. In 1979, she enrolled in the graduate program in drama, but quit a year later when she realized that acting was not her calling. She also reflects upon the meaning of her name.

Video Oral History Interview with Angeles Echols, Section A2005_230_001_003, TRT: 0:28:20 ?

Angeles Echols lived in New York City throughout the 1980s, where she landed roles in productions such as 'The Wiz,' modeled, and taught at various summer school programs, including one at Alexander Burger Junior High School in the Bronx. In 1987, Echols was cast in the off-Broadway production of 'Staggerlee.' Disillusioned with her career in New York, she moved to Los Angeles in 1989. Six months later, she was cast in the film 'She Knows Too Much.' From 1990 to 1994, Echols taught math and English at Trinity Lutheran School, and film history at Chaffey College in Rancho Cucamonga. She also began tutoring children after school in her own apartment. As her tutoring program grew, Echols founded Educating Young Minds (EYM). Her funders included Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's Samuel Goldwyn, Jr. Through word-of-mouth recruitment and a high standard of accountability for each student in the program, EYM achieved a 100 percent high school graduation rate and an 89.9 percent four-year

collegiate graduation rate.

Video Oral History Interview with Angeles Echols, Section A2005_230_001_004, TRT: 0:30:10 ?

Angeles Echols incorporated her nonprofit tutoring program, Educating Young Minds (EYM), in Los Angeles, California in the early 1990s. Working cooperatively with the Los Angeles Unified School District, EYM provides an attractive learning environment and state-of-the-art facility for hundreds of inner city youth ranging from kindergarten to college-aged, many of whom struggle with poverty, gangs and drugs. EYM provides each of its students with a \$6,000 to \$10,000 college scholarship. Echols chose to forfeit her personal ambitions for wealth to instead focus on developing her program. Echols reflects upon her students' success stories, her disciplinary interventions, her commitment to EYM, and her dream of opening more centers in California and nationwide. Echols describes her hopes and concerns for the African American community and how she addresses cultural differences among students at EYM.

Video Oral History Interview with Angeles Echols, Section A2005_230_001_005, TRT: 0:11:50 ?

Angeles Echols founded Educating Young Minds in Los Angeles, California in 1987 to provide tutoring services and educational development for hundreds of inner city youth. Echols shares her thoughts about parents and educators working together to ensure student success. Echols also describes the need for more Educating Young Mind centers nationwide, especially in areas grappling with gangs and in the poor interiors of the Deep South. She believes EYM to be her legacy. Echols talks about her family, including her two sisters, Winnie Echols Berry and Wanda Echols; her three nephews; and her half-brother, Earl Harmon. She also describes how she would like to be remembered.

Video Oral History Interview with Angeles Echols, Section A2005_230_002_006, TRT: 0:15:10 ?

Angeles Echols narrates her photographs.