

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Myrlie Evers-Williams

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Evers-Williams, Myrlie
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Myrlie Evers-Williams,
Dates:	December 11, 2017
Bulk Dates:	2017
Physical Description:	7 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:22:56).
Abstract:	Civil rights activist Myrlie Evers-Williams (1933 -), widow of Medgar Evers, served as national director for community affairs for the Atlantic Richfield Company. She was named chairperson of the NAACP board of directors in 1995, and honored with the NAACP Spingarn Medal in 1998. Evers-Williams was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on December 11, 2017, in Jackson, Mississippi. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2017_219
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Civil rights activist Myrlie Evers-Williams was born on March 17, 1933 in Vicksburg, Mississippi to Mildred Washington Beasley and James Van Dyke Beasley. Raised by her paternal grandmother and aunt, who were both schoolteachers, Evers-Williams graduated from Magnolia High School in 1950, and enrolled at Alcorn A&M College.

She married Medgar Evers in 1951, who she met on her first day at Alcorn A&M College. The couple moved to Mound Bayou, Mississippi in 1952, where Evers-Williams worked as a secretary at Magnolia Mutual Life Insurance Company. In 1954, Evers-Williams relocated to Jackson, Mississippi, where her husband was hired as the first Mississippi field secretary for the NAACP and she worked as his secretary. In 1963, Medgar Evers was assassinated, and the following year, two all-white juries failed to reach a verdict, resulting in two mistrials. After the second trial, Evers-Williams moved to Claremont, California. In 1967, she co-wrote the book "For Us, the Living" about Medgar Evers' life and work. Evers-Williams earned her B.A. degree in sociology from Pomona College in 1968, becoming the director of planning at the Center for Educational Opportunity for Claremont Colleges later that year. In 1969, Evers-Williams was hired as an editor and columnist for *Ladies' Home Journal*, where she covered the signing of the Paris Peace Accords treaty in Paris, France. From 1973 to 1975, she worked as vice president for advertising and publicity at the advertising firm of Seligman and Latz. She became the national director for community affairs for the Atlantic Richfield Company in 1975. In 1987, Evers-Williams was appointed by Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley as commissioner of the Board of Public Works, a position she held until 1991. In 1994, she was named vice chair of the NAACP, serving as chairperson of the board of directors in 1995. In 1999, Evers-Williams' autobiography, "Watch Me Fly: What I Learned on the Way to Becoming the Woman I Was Meant to Be," was published.

Evers-Williams founded the Medgar Evers Institute in 1998, which was later renamed the Medgar and Myrlie

Evers Institute. In 2001, she was featured as one of the 100 Most Fascinating Women of the Twentieth Century in *Ebony* magazine. She received the National Freedom Award in 2009 from the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee. She also joined the board of directors of the Oregon arts education organization Caldera. In 2013, she delivered the invocation at the second inauguration of President Barack Obama. She received an honorary degree from the College of New Rochelle in 2016.

Myrlie Evers-Williams was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on December 11, 2017.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Myrlie Evers-Williams was conducted by Randall Pinkston on December 11, 2017, in Jackson, Mississippi, and was recorded on 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Civil rights activist Myrlie Evers-Williams (1933 -), widow of Medgar Evers, served as national director for community affairs for the Atlantic Richfield Company. She was named chairperson of the NAACP board of directors in 1995, and honored with the NAACP Spingarn Medal in 1998.

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:

Evers-Williams, Myrlie

Pinkston, Randall (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Evers-Williams, Myrlie--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Civil Rights Activist

HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers

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 Myrlie Evers-Williams, December 11, 2017. 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 Myrlie Evers-Williams, Section A2017_219_001_001, TRT: 1:30:45 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Myrlie Evers-Williams, Section A2017_219_001_002, TRT: 2:28:56 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Myrlie Evers-Williams, Section A2017_219_001_003, TRT: 3:29:06 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Myrlie Evers-Williams, Section A2017_219_001_004, TRT: 4:23:27 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Myrlie Evers-Williams, Section A2017_219_001_005, TRT: 5:28:21 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Myrlie Evers-Williams, Section A2017_219_001_006, TRT: 6:28:27 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Myrlie Evers-Williams, Section A2017_219_001_007, TRT: 7:33:54 ?