

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Monique Davis

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Davis, Monique, 1936-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Monique Davis,
Dates:	July 7, 2000
Bulk Dates:	2000
Physical Description:	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:35:20).
Abstract:	State representative The Honorable Monique Davis (1936 -) is a member of the Illinois House of Representatives, where she has sat on the committees on appropriation, consumer protection, urban redevelopment, public utilities and election law. She is also the vice chairperson of the Elementary-Secondary Education Committee. Davis was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 7, 2000, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2000_048
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Monique Dionne Davis was born August 19, 1936, in Chicago, Illinois to James and Constance McKay. After graduating from Calumet High School at age sixteen, Davis attended one semester at Chicago State University, leaving to get married and move to Denver, Colorado. After having two children, Robert and Monique, Davis returned to Chicago State University and received her bachelor's degree in elementary education in 1966, and later her master's degree in guidance

and supervision. Davis also went on to earn graduate hours in administration supervision and special education, as well as credits toward her doctoral degree in administration and supervision from Roosevelt University.

Davis first worked in education in the Chicago Public School system where she taught for eighteen years. She later served as an administrator for the Chicago Board of Education, and a training specialist for City Colleges of Chicago.

Davis' political career began as a volunteer to Democratic candidates Gus Savage, Monica Faith Stewart and Harold Washington. In 1987, Davis was elected to the Illinois General Assembly, where she has served since. She has served as chair of the Insurance Committee, vice chair of Financial Institutions, member of the Appropriations – General Services Committee, Appropriations – Higher Education Committee, Elementary & Secondary Education Committee, State Government Committee, The Amistad Commission, Racial Profiling Prevention and Data Oversight Board, and co-chairperson of the Commission to End Disparities Facing the African American Community.

Davis has received several awards, including Teacher of the Year from the Gresham Elementary School, Teacher Who Makes a Difference from the Center for New Schools, and Excellent Legislator from Operation PUSH and the Department of Aging.

Davis is a member of Trinity United Church of Christ, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., NAACP, and Operation PUSH. She is the mother of two, grandmother of four, and great-grandmother of seven.

Monique Davis was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on July 7, 2000.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Monique Davis was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on July 7, 2000, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. State representative The Honorable Monique Davis (1936 -) is a member of the Illinois House of Representatives, where she has sat on the committees on appropriation, consumer protection, urban redevelopment, public utilities and election law. She is also the vice chairperson of the Elementary-Secondary Education Committee.

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:

Davis, Monique, 1936-

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Davis, Monique, 1936---Interviews

African American legislators--Illinois.

Illinois. General Assembly--House of Representatives.

African American politicians--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Illinois

Occupations:

State Representative

HistoryMakers® Category:

PoliticalMakers

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 The Honorable Monique Davis, July 7, 2000. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 2/5/2020 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 The Honorable Monique Davis,
Section A2000_048_001_001, TRT: 0:30:36 2000/07/07

Monique Davis describes her family. Her father, James McKay, was a scarfer at the United States Steel Mill for fifty years and her mother, Constance McKay, was a department store traffic clerk and a beautician. Davis recalls her parents as avid readers whose greatest desire was for their children's education. Davis recalls her childhood on the South Side of Chicago at 95th and Harvard as loving and nourishing. She also describes her sisters' piano recitals, playing school with a collection of moldy textbooks, pretending to fish with the neighbors in the vacant lot across the street, and her father giving the neighboring families rides to the grocery store.

African American families--Illinois--Chicago.

African American neighborhoods--Illinois.

African American children--Education (Elementary)--

Illinois--Chicago.

African Americans--Education.

African Americans--Illinois--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Monique Davis,
Section A2000_048_001_002, TRT: 0:30:22 2000/07/07

Monique Davis discusses her family, childhood, and early career as a teacher. Her mother, Constance McKay, was born in Monroe, Louisiana and raised in Houston, Texas by Virginia, or "Mother V," and "Papa Dutton." Virginia's mother, Davis's great-grandmother, had been a slave. Davis' father, James McKay, was born in Savannah, Georgia and was raised in Macon, Georgia by "Grandma Van" and "Papa." Papa originally had an African name, but took his wife's Irish name when they married. Davis recalls her close-knit community, her parents' emphases on education and church, her competitive siblings, and the racism she faced in school. Davis married Robert Davis in 1956 and had two children before returning to Chicago State University at the age of twenty-seven to finish her education. After graduating, Davis raised her two children and taught at Gresham Elementary School from 1967 to 1986. Davis discusses the importance of teachers for raising children in a nurturing environment.

African American high school students--Illinois--Chicago.

African American families.

African Americans--Illinois--Chicago--Religion.

African Americans--Military service--1940-1960.

Racism in education--United States.

Racism in higher education.

African American teachers and the community.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Monique Davis,
Section A2000_048_001_003, TRT: 0:29:49 2000/07/07

Monique Davis discusses the challenges she faced and her accomplishments as a State Representative in the Illinois General Assembly. She discusses the history of racism within Chicago Public Schools that has made it difficult for African Americans to become teachers. Davis entered politics as a volunteer for the campaigns of United States Congressman Gus Savage, Illinois State Congresswoman

Monica Faith Stewart, and Chicago Mayor Harold Washington. In 1987, Davis was elected to the Illinois General Assembly, where she has fought to help the African American community by heightening awareness of infant mortality rates, increasing funds for black businesses, reforming schools and scholarships, building a State Police station in Chicago, and providing money to African American cultural institutions such as the Vivian Harsh Collection and the DuSable Museum. She reflects on the progress of African Americans in the Illinois General Assembly, including John W. E. Thomas, Cecil Partee, Charlie Chew, and Ray Ewell.

Board of Education of the City of Chicago.

Byrd, Manford

Washington, Harold, 1922-1987.

African American politicians.

Illinois State Police

Racism in education--Illinois--Chicago--History--20th Century

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Monique Davis, Section A2000_048_001_004, TRT: 0:04:33 2000/07/07

Monique Davis reflects upon her legacy.

Illinois. General Assembly--House of Representatives.

African American educators.

African American women in politics--Illinois--Chicago

African American neighborhoods--Illinois--Chicago--South Side