

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with William King

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	King, William M., 1940-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with William King,
<b>Dates:</b>	June 18, 2002
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2002
<b>Physical Description:</b>	7 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:30:00).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Ethnic studies professor William King (1940 - ) taught at the University of Colorado, and was a founding member of The National Council for Black Studies. King was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 18, 2002, in Boulder, Colorado. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2002_116
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Scholar William King was born on February 11, 1940 and raised in Cleveland, Ohio by Daisy and Melvin King. He has enriched the minds of young people as a college professor.

King graduated from Glenville High School in 1958 and attended Kent State University, where he studied psychology and earned a B.A. in 1966. He used his skills as an educator by teaching mentally retarded children in Canton, Ohio's public schools. Simultaneously, King served as a rehabilitation counselor for the State of Ohio. In 1968, King turned to the students at Walsh College, lecturing

them about sociology. He became involved in Walsh's UPWARD BOUND program. Focusing on urban studies, he earned a master's degree in 1970 from the University of Akron. King moved to Syracuse, New York and enrolled in a Ph.D. program at Syracuse University's Maxwell Graduate School of Citizenship and Public Affairs while serving as assistant professor in urban studies at Utica College. When he received his Ph.D. in 1974, he was appointed to the graduate school faculty, where he still teaches. His course offerings include the politics and ethics of social research, African American scientists and inventors, blacks in the West, W.E.B. DuBois and Afrocentric research methods.

King has served as the publications unit director for the University of Colorado-Boulder's Center for Studies of Ethnicity and Race in America and the director of its black studies program. A member of the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, the National Congress of Black Faculty and the National Institute of Science, he is widely published. King, who married Carla S. King in 1999, has two adult children: Kenneth and Camron.

King, William. *Going to Meet a Man: Denver's Last Legal Public Execution, 27 July 1886*. Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1990.

--*How to Write Research Papers: A Guide for the Insecure*. Boulder, CO: Center for Studies of Ethnicity and Race in America, 1991.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with William King was conducted by Larry Crowe on June 18, 2002, in Boulder, Colorado, and was recorded on 7 Betacame SP videocassettes. Ethnic studies professor William King (1940 - ) taught at the University of Colorado, and was a founding member of The National Council for Black Studies.

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## 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®.

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## **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.

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## **Controlled Access Terms**

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### **Persons:**

King, William M., 1940-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### **Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews

King, William M., 1940- --Interviews

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## **Organizations:**

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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## **Occupations:**

Ethnic Studies Professor

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

EducationMakers

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## **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 William King, June 18, 2002. 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).

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## **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.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with William King, Section  
A2002\_116\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:00 2002/06/18

William King talks about his family history. His mother, Daisy Simms King, was born in 1896 in Greensboro, Alabama and moved to Cleveland, Ohio in 1910. His father, Melvin King, was born in Lynchburg, Virginia and moved to Cleveland, Ohio in 1919 after serving in the Buffalo Division during World War I. King's parents married in 1921. King's father worked for the postal service and had a real estate company, and his mother was a homemaker. King remembers growing up in the tree-lined Glenville neighborhood in Cleveland, Ohio where he was one of the few black children in his elementary school. A quiet child, King enjoyed reading, going to the movie theater on Saturday afternoons, and delivering the Cleveland Press newspaper in his neighborhood. King recalls that his parents were both light-skinned, and his mother was particularly color conscious.

Video Oral History Interview with William King, Section  
A2002\_116\_001\_002, TRT: 0:30:00 2002/06/18

William King recalls learning of his adoption at eleven years old when his sister found his adoption papers in a drawer. Later in life, King found out that his birth mother, Sarah Adele Marks, was an Ashkenazi Jewish woman, and his father was a black man. King never met his birth parents, although he was able to access public records about his mother after her death. King attended Patrick Henry Junior High School in Cleveland, Ohio where racial tensions stemmed from an ethnic neighborhood in transition. Although he was an average student in school, King had a deep intellectual curiosity and was drawn to the teaching profession from the age of thirteen. King graduated from Glenville High School in 1958.

Video Oral History Interview with William King, Section

A2002\_116\_001\_003, TRT: 0:30:00 2002/06/18

William King recalls working at Ruben Drugs, the Cleveland Public Library, and Kresge's Five and Dime Store while attending Glenville High School in Cleveland, Ohio. King also played the drums in the school band and was a radio operator. King had a few close friends, but he did not date while in high school. Following graduation in 1958, King joined the U.S. Navy at his father's urging and trained at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center near Chicago, Illinois. During his military service, King experienced personal growth and traveled the Pacific Ocean to Japan, Guam, and Vietnam. After serving for a little over four years, King enrolled at Kent State University [Kent, Ohio].

Video Oral History Interview with William King, Section  
A2002\_116\_001\_004, TRT: 0:30:00 2002/06/18

William King talks about his interest in black history and black culture. During the 1960s, King was inspired by a radio interview with Malcolm X which prompted him to read about the black experience. King attended Kent State University in Kent, Ohio and worked the night shift at Goodyear Tire and Rubber to pay for school. King graduated with a B.A. degree in Psychology in 1966 and spent a year teaching at a school for mentally retarded children; two years as a Rehabilitation Counselor for the state of Ohio; and taught for the Upward Bound program. In 1969, King joined the Southeast Community Improvement Association and taught Black History at Canton McKinley High School. King then graduated with his M.A. degree in Urban Studies from the University of Akron and his Ph.D. in Social Sciences from Syracuse University in 1974.

Video Oral History Interview with William King, Section  
A2002\_116\_001\_005, TRT: 0:30:00 2002/06/18

William King talks about being influenced by blacks in the academy like his dissertation advisor, Dr. Willie Lamouse-Smith and John Henry Clarke. With strong views on social power and change, King posits that people must demand change when confronted with social injustice. King describes the black aesthetic as a point of view that grows

out of the historical experiences of black people. King wrote his M.A. thesis on the student strike at San Francisco State College. He also discusses his book “Going to Meet a Man: Denver's Last Legal Public Execution, 27 July 1886” which was published in 1990.

Video Oral History Interview with William King, Section  
A2002\_116\_001\_006, TRT: 0:30:00 2002/06/18

William King describes the case of Andrew Green which he featured in his book, “Going to Meet a Man: Denver's Last Legal Public Execution, 27 July 1886.” A young black man who robbed a streetcar and killed a man, Green was found guilty of felony murder and publicly executed. He raised a number of criminal justice issues before he was put to death. King explains his research on the history of African Americans in Denver, Colorado as well as his experience as a black professor at the University of Colorado.

Video Oral History Interview with William King, Section  
A2002\_116\_001\_007, TRT: 0:30:00 2002/06/18

William King talks about his family and career as a professor of ethnic studies at the University of Colorado in Boulder, Colorado. His reputation is as a tough teacher but his own objective is to challenge students to understand themselves better. King published a research writing guide “How to Write Research Papers: A Guide for the Insecure” after sharing his tips with students during a writing seminar. King married four times with two sons. He wishes to be remembered as a storyteller who made people think. King concludes by sharing his thoughts on oral history and his hopes and concerns for the black community.