

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Marlene Rankin

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Rankin, Marlene Owens, 1939-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Marlene Rankin,
Dates:	March 31, 2003
Bulk Dates:	2003
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:14:10).
Abstract:	Foundation chief executive and social worker Marlene Owens Rankin (1939 -) is the daughter of Jesse Owens and executive director of the Jesse Owens Foundation. Rankin was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 31, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2003_060
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Daughter of world-famous track star Jesse Owens, Marlene Owens Rankin was born in Cleveland, Ohio, on April 19, 1939. Moving with her family first to Detroit, Rankin graduated from high school in Chicago in 1957. After graduation, Rankin returned to Ohio, where she attended Ohio State University, becoming the first African American homecoming queen in the school's history in 1961. Graduating in 1961 with her bachelor's degree in social work, Rankin later attended the University of Chicago, earning her master's degree in 1978.

Growing up watching her father win worldwide athletic events only to be rejected by racism at home inspired Rankin to work to foster interracial understanding and help youth throughout her career. After earning her B.A. degree, Rankin went to work for the Cook County Department of Public Aid in the Children's division as a social worker. Rankin worked for a year with the Chicago Youth Centers/Project Learn as a social worker for a year, before joining the Chicago Committee on Urban Opportunities/Model Cities program as the senior planner; she remained at this position for six years. In 1978, Rankin went to work for the United Charities of Chicago as a clinical social worker and the director of human resources; she stayed in this position for ten years before becoming the director of human resources at the Museum of Science and Industry.

Upon the death of her father in 1980, Rankin, her two sisters, and friends, formed the Jesse Owens Foundation to perpetuate his beliefs and indomitable spirit to future generations. The foundation established scholarships through the Ohio State University and provided hundreds of young adults with support for their education. In 1990, Rankin became the executive director of the Jesse Owens Foundation, where she was working at the time of her interview.

Rankin remained active over the years in a number of organizations, serving as a member of the board of the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration, and as the chairperson of the Ohio State University Annual Fund from 1991 to 1995. Rankin also served on the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club and the Sporting Chance Foundation. *Today's Chicago Woman* named Rankin one of 100 Women Making a Difference in 1992; she was awarded the Annual Orchid Award from the Top Ladies of Distinction. Rankin and Stuart, her husband of

over forty years, raised one son.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Marlene Rankin was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 31, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Foundation chief executive and social worker Marlene Owens Rankin (1939 -) is the daughter of Jesse Owens and executive director of the Jesse Owens Foundation.

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:

Rankin, Marlene Owens, 1939-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Rankin, Marlene Owens, 1939---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Social Worker

Foundation Chief Executive

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 Marlene Rankin, March 31, 2003. 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 Marlene Rankin, Section A2003_060_001_001, TRT: 0:29:42 ?
Director of the Jesse Owens Foundation, Owen's daughter Marlene Owens Rankin details her family background and parents personalities She details the

economic challenges her father faced after his Olympic triumphs.

Video Oral History Interview with Marlene Rankin, Section A2003_060_001_002, TRT: 0:30:05 ?

Jesse Owens Foundation executive director Marlene Rankin details her father's Olympic achievements in the 1936 competition. She recounts the stories her father told of his training at Ohio State and the swirling controversy surrounding Adolf Hitler and his Aryan athletes and how Owens shattered his racist philosophy.

Video Oral History Interview with Marlene Rankin, Section A2003_060_001_003, TRT: 0:27:46 ?

Executive director of the Jesse Owens Foundation, Marlene Owens Rankin describes her high school years in Chicago and college years at Ohio State. She recalls being crowned as the first black homecoming queen and the pressures she felt being the daughter of Olympian Jesse Owens.

Video Oral History Interview with Marlene Rankin, Section A2003_060_001_004, TRT: 0:29:46 ?

Executive director of the Jesse Owens Foundation, Marlene Owens Rankin discusses some of her father's struggles as a former Olympian and black man before athletes were highly paid. Rankin also discusses the purpose of the Jesse Owens Foundation and its accomplishments over the past 20+ years. She also shares what she hopes to leave as a legacy.

Video Oral History Interview with Marlene Rankin, Section A2003_060_001_005, TRT: 0:16:51 ?

Marlene Owens Rankin narrates her photographs.