

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Marshall Grigsby

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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>	Grigsby, Marshall
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Marshall Grigsby,
<b>Dates:</b>	July 15, 2003
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2003
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:57:03).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Academic administrator, theologian, education chief executive, and education policy consultant Marshall Grigsby (1946 - ) founded Marshall Grigsby and Associates, an educational policy consulting firm. He also served as the former associate dean and associate professor at Howard University Divinity School, president of Benedict College, executive vice president, provost and CEO of Hampton University, and the senior higher education specialist for Democratic members of Congress. Grigsby was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 15, 2003, in Gaithersburg, Maryland. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2003_155
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Educational adviser Marshall Grigsby was born in Charlotte, North Carolina, on August 18, 1946. After earning his B.A. in political science from Morehouse College in 1968, Grigsby relocated to Chicago, where he pursued a master's of theology and doctorate in ministry from the University of Chicago, completing his

program in 1972.

Grigsby began his career after earning his master's in 1970, working as the executive director of the Black Legislative Clearing House, which provided educational and research services to the nation's black legislators. After completing his Ph.D., Grigsby moved to Ohio, where he became the associate director of the Association of Theological Schools of the United States and Canada. In that capacity, he worked with the schools to address the concerns of the minority students of the programs. In 1975, Grigsby was named assistant dean and an associate professor at the Divinity School at Howard University, where he remained for the next ten years. Continuing on in the academic world, Grigsby was named president of Benedict College in 1985, and in 1993 he was appointed to the positions of executive vice president, provost and CEO of Hampton University. After serving only a year at Hampton, Grigsby was summoned to Capitol Hill, where he served as the senior higher education specialist for Democratic members of Congress and as special adviser to Congressman William Clay. Grigsby left in 2001 to form his own company, Grigsby and Associates, an educational policy development consulting firm.

In addition to his consulting work, Grigsby serves on the Board of Trustees of USA Funds, which provides guaranteed loans of more than \$10 billion a year to students across the country. He is also a managing consultant with the Council for Opportunity in Education and is the senior scholar with the Claiborne Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Education. Grigsby was one of five college presidents in 1991 to receive the Knight Foundation Presidential Leadership Award. Grigsby and his wife, Harriet, live in Maryland.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Marshall Grigsby was conducted by Larry Crowe on July 15, 2003, in Gaithersburg, Maryland, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Academic administrator, theologian, education chief executive, and education policy consultant Marshall Grigsby (1946 - ) founded Marshall Grigsby and Associates, an educational policy consulting firm. He also served as the former associate dean and associate professor at Howard University Divinity School, president of Benedict College, executive vice president, provost and CEO of Hampton University, and the senior higher education specialist for Democratic members of Congress.

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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:

Grigsby, Marshall

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Katz, Ivan (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

## **Organizations:**

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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## **Occupations:**

Academic Administrator

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Theologian

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Education Policy Consultant

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Education Chief Executive

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

EducationMakers|ReligionMakers

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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 Marshall Grigsby, July 15, 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 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 Marshall Grigsby, Section A2003\_155\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:12 2003/07/15

Marshall Grigsby describes his upbringing. Grigsby was born to Jefferson Eugene and Roslyn Marshall Grigsby on August 18, 1946. Rosalyn Marshall Grigsby was born in 1919 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and graduated from Johnson C. Smith University, where she went on to teach science. Here, she met art teacher and HistoryMaker Jefferson Eugene Grigsby, who was born in 1918 in Greensboro, North Carolina. In 1942, Jefferson Grigsby joined the U.S. Army, and he and Marshall married a year later. After leaving the U.S. Army, Grigsby was recruited to head the art department at Carver High School in Phoenix, Arizona in 1946. As a child, Marshall Grigsby interacted with individuals like Jacob Lawrence and Langston Hughes due to his father's career as an artist. Grigsby also participated in sit-ins through the NAACP Youth Council. Grigsby was a well-behaved student, as his parents taught at Booker T. Washington Elementary School and Phoenix Union High School, where he was enrolled.

Video Oral History Interview with Marshall Grigsby, Section  
A2003\_155\_001\_002, TRT: 0:28:11 2003/07/15

Marshall Grigsby attended Booker T. Washington Elementary School in Phoenix, Arizona, where he favored his fifth grade teacher, Mrs. Knox. Grigsby's family later moved, forcing him to transfer to the all-white Emerson Elementary School as a fifth grader. In 1960, Grigsby enrolled at Phoenix Union High School. He was very involved in the local NAACP Youth Council, and participated in many sit-ins. Grigsby's parents participated in pickets with the local NAACP. However, Grigsby's high visibility activism alarmed them, as they were public school teachers, and feared losing their jobs. Grigsby completed his high school credits in 1963, and then enrolled at Phoenix College. He also left the NAACP Youth Council and organized a CORE chapter on the college's campus. Grigsby graduated from Phoenix Union High School in 1964, and then transferred from Phoenix College to Morehouse College. Here, Grigsby focused on his studies and subdued his civil rights involvement on the advice of his advisor, Dr. Benjamin Mays.

Video Oral History Interview with Marshall Grigsby, Section  
A2003\_155\_001\_003, TRT: 0:30:10 2003/07/15

Marshall Grigsby was devastated by the 1968 assassination of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., which occurred while he was a student at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. At Morehouse College, Grigsby's interest in religion increased while taking classes with Lucius Tobin. He desired to learn more about the intersections of religion and law, and enrolled at the University of Chicago Divinity School in 1968 upon graduating from Morehouse College. Here, Grigsby studied under Charles Long, who helped him to understand how religion shapes culture. Long's teachings, coupled with his exposure to Universal Unitarianism as a youth, motivated Grigsby to be ordained as a Universal Unitarianism minister. Grigsby was also involved in organizations like Operation Breadbasket in Chicago. Grigsby received his D.D. degree in 1973, and went on to work for the Association of Theological Schools. Here, he was responsible for making theological school in the

United State and Canada more inclusive.

Video Oral History Interview with Marshall Grigsby, Section  
A2003\_155\_001\_004, TRT: 0:29:30 2003/07/15

Marshall Grigsby talks about the Mega Church Movement, which he characterizes as a “bigger is better” phenomenon. Grigsby also commented on the black church. In 1975, Grigsby was hired as a professor at the Howard University School of Divinity. Grigsby helped revitalize the school, which was being threatened by closure, by centering the curricular focus on the study of African American religion. Grigsby left Howard University in 1985 to serve as president of Benedict College. Here, he strengthened the school’s infrastructure, as well as its academic program by creating innovative programs like an teacher training program for Armed Forces retirees. Due to the strain of the presidency, and his wife’s illness, Grigsby left Benedict College in 1993 to reform high educational policy in Washington, D.C. Grigsby shared his hopes and concerns for the African American community, and talked about living in the present. Grigsby also reflected upon his legacy and how he would like to be remembered.