

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with John Murphy

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Murphy, John, 1916-2010
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with John Murphy,
Dates:	September 20, 2003
Bulk Dates:	2003
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:26:35).
Abstract:	Newspaper publishing chief executive John Murphy (1916 - 2010) has been the chairman and publisher of the Afro-American newspaper, which his grandfather founded, since 1974. Before joining the family business, Murphy worked with the 'Washington Tribune', where he served as the manager from 1937 until 1961. Murphy was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on September 20, 2003, in Baltimore, Maryland. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2003_230
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

John Murphy, III was born into a journalistic family legacy. Born in Baltimore, Maryland on March 2, 1916, Murphy was named for his grandfather, the founder of the *Afro-American* newspaper. Murphy attended Temple University in Philadelphia, earning a B.S. degree in 1937, and he later attended the Press Institute of Columbia University in both 1952 and 1971.

Journalism came naturally to Murphy and the *Afro-American* was rapidly increasing its circulation along the East Coast when Murphy completed college. Before joining the family business, however, Murphy went to work with the *Washington Tribune*, where he served as the manager from 1937 until 1961. After serving on the board of directors of the *Afro American*, Murphy took over as chairman of the board from his cousin, Frances Murphy, II, in 1974. He also served as the business manager and the purchasing agent for the *Washington Afro American*. Murphy continues to hold the post.

Murphy has remained active throughout his life in a number of organizations, including several churches. He is a member of the Churchman's Club, is on the standing committee of the Diocese of Maryland and is a vestryman at St. James Episcopal Church. He also serves on the boards of Amalgamated Publishers and the National Newspaper Publishers Association. Murphy is a supporter of the arts and education, serving on the board of the Baltimore School for the Arts and the Baltimore City Literacy Commission.

For his civic and business activities, Murphy has been honored numerous times by various organizations. The City of Baltimore proclaimed him Citizen of the Year in 1977. He has also received the Publisher of the Year Award from the University of Washington, D.C., and the Appreciation Award from the Race Relations Institute of Fisk University. Murphy and his wife, Camay, daughter of Cab Calloway, have two children.

John Murphy passed away on October 16, 2010.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with John Murphy was conducted by Larry Crowe on September 20, 2003, in Baltimore, Maryland, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Newspaper publishing chief executive John Murphy (1916 - 2010) has been the chairman and publisher of the *Afro-American* newspaper, which his grandfather founded, since 1974. Before joining the family business, Murphy worked with the 'Washington Tribune', where he served as the manager from 1937 until 1961.

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:

Murphy, John, 1916-2010

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Murphy, John, 1916-2010--Interviews

Publishers and publishing--Interviews

Authors and publishers--United States--Interviews

African American business enterprises--Maryland--Baltimore

Newspaper publishing--Washington (D.C.)

African American newspapers--Maryland--Baltimore

African American families--Maryland--Baltimore

Baltimore (Md.)--Social life and customs

Temple University

Elections--Maryland

Mass media and social integration--United States

Mass media and minorities--United States

Minorities--Press coverage--United States

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Afro-American (Baltimore, Md. : National ed.)

Occupations:

Newspaper Publishing Chief Executive

HistoryMakers® Category:

MediaMakersI

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 John Murphy, September 20, 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).

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 John Murphy, Section

A2003_230_001_001, TRT: 0:29:05 2003/09/20

John Murphy details his mother and father's backgrounds as he talks about their careers and personalities. After Murphy lists the names of his siblings he goes on to discuss the deaths of this father and grandfather, who both died in the same year. John Murphy recalls his childhood environment in Baltimore, Maryland.

Publishers and publishing--Interviews.

Authors and publishers--United States--Interviews.

African American business enterprises--Maryland--Baltimore.

Newspaper publishing--Washington (D.C.).

African American newspapers--Maryland--Baltimore.

African American families--Maryland--Baltimore.

Baltimore (Md.)--Social life and customs.

Temple University.

Elections--Maryland.

Mass media and social integration--United States.

Mass media and minorities--United States.

Minorities--Press coverage--United States.

Video Oral History Interview with John Murphy, Section
A2003_230_001_002, TRT: 0:28:20 2003/09/20

John Murphy talks about his high school and college experiences in Philadelphia. He explains how he decided upon attending Temple University. Next, Murphy discusses his transition from college into his family's newspaper business as he took on managerial responsibilities at the Afro-American newspaper's offices in Washington, D.C. He describes his duties in D.C. and then details the circulation and collection processes he was involved in maintaining.

Video Oral History Interview with John Murphy, Section
A2003_230_001_003, TRT: 0:30:05 2003/09/20

John Murphy talks about how Afro-American newspaper has treated its employees over the years. He remembers past coworkers and then talks about his role within the newspaper's administration. Murphy comments on the Afro's political ties and remembers Maryland's governor

race of 1966. John Murphy explains the integration of newspapers and then comments on the times when black-themed news was left out of white papers.

Video Oral History Interview with John Murphy, Section
A2003_230_001_004, TRT: 0:29:40 2003/09/20

John Murphy recalls influential figures from the East Coast newspaper community. Next, he talks about the changes in leadership over the years at the Afro-American newspaper as well as how he decided upon his retirement. Murphy discusses some of the major changes that have taken place in the newspaper industry and looks to the future and gives insight as to what may come in the years ahead. John Murphy shares his hopes for the black community and then considers his legacy.

Video Oral History Interview with John Murphy, Section
A2003_230_001_005, TRT: 0:29:25 2003/09/20

John Murphy talks about how he'd like to be remembered. Murphy then shares and describes numerous personal photographs.