

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Walter Hill, Jr.

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Hill, Walter B., Jr., 1949-2008
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Walter Hill, Jr.,
Dates:	September 11, 2003
Bulk Dates:	2003
Physical Description:	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:51:15).
Abstract:	Archivist, historian, and african american history professor Walter Hill, Jr. (1949 - 2008) teaches at Howard University and was a senior archivist for the National Archives and Records in Washington D.C. As a noted historian, Hill appeared in several documentaries and has written for numerous publications including, 'Newsletter of the American Historical Association' and the 'Journal of Minority Issues'. Hill was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on September 11, 2003, in College Park, Maryland. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2003_254
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Walter Hill, Jr., was born in St. Louis, Missouri, on May 22, 1949. After finishing high school, Hill enrolled in the College of Wooster, earning a B.A. degree in history in 1971. From there, he attended Northern Illinois University, studying American history. Earning an M.A. degree in 1973, he returned to school to earn a Ph.D. from the University of Maryland in 1988.

After completing his master’s degree, Hill taught at St. Louis University from 1974 to 1977. He returned to school in the fall of 1977 to work towards the Ph.D. in U.S. History at the University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland. He worked as a graduate teaching assistant and later as an instructor in the Afro-American Studies Program between 1982 and 1983. While working towards the Ph.D., he also worked at the National Archives and Records Administration as a graduate intermittent research student until 1983 in the Office of the Archivist and Office of Federal Records. From 1983 to 1984, he held a pre-doctoral fellowship at the Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution.

Upon completing the fellowship in 1984, he returned to the National Archives and Records Administration as an archivist with the Office of the National Archives where he remained for seven years. In 1990, he left to work in the Office of Public Program, assuming the role of director of the Modern Archives Institute and subject specialist for Afro-American history. He remained with the office until 1995 when he departed for the new facility in College Park, Maryland, and assumed the position of senior archivist and subject area specialist for Afro-American history and federal records. In 1984, Hill became an adjunct professor of Afro-American history in the Afro-American Studies Department, Howard University, Washington, D.C., and taught courses in Afro-American history for the next two decades.

As a noted historian, Hill appeared in several documentaries, as well as on Good Morning America, Washington Journal and Fox TV. He served on the editorial board of the African American History Bulletin, the Executive Council of the Association for the Study of Afro-American History and on the advisory board of The HistoryMakers, among others. He has also written extensively, his work appearing in such journals as the Newsletter of the American Historical Association and the Journal of Minority Issues.

Hill passed away on July 29, 2008 at the age of 59.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Walter Hill, Jr. was conducted by Larry Crowe on September 11, 2003, in College Park, Maryland, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Archivist, historian, and african american history professor Walter Hill, Jr. (1949 - 2008) teaches at Howard University and was a senior archivist for the National Archives and Records in Washington D.C. As a noted historian, Hill appeared in several documentaries and has written for numerous publications including, 'Newsletter of the American Historical Association' and the 'Journal of Minority Issues'.

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:

Hill, Walter B., Jr., 1949-2008

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Hill, Walter B., Jr., 1949-2008 --Interviews

African American educators--Interviews

Howard University--Faculty--Interviews

Archivists--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews

African American families--Missouri--Saint Louis

Saint Louis (Mo.)--Social Conditions

Pruitt-Igoe (Housing project : Saint Louis, Mo.)

Education--Missouri--Saint Louis

College of Wooster

Civil rights movement

Black power--United States--History--20th century

College students--Political activity--United State

Vietnam War, 1961-1975

Foreign study--Kenya

Kenya--Social life and customs

University of Maryland (College Park, Md.)

United States. Army Air Forces. Fighter Squadron, 99th

Lynching--History

United States. Army--African American troops

African American abolitionist

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Participation, African American

United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--Participation, African American

Oral history

History in motion pictures

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

National Archives (U.S.)

Howard University

Occupations:

Archivist

Historian

African American History Professor

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 Walter Hill, Jr., September 11, 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 Walter Hill, Jr., Section A2003_254_001_001, TRT: 0:29:30 ?

Historian and archivist Walter B. Hill begins by describing his family background, detailing the lives of his mother and father. Hill recalls his childhood in St. Louis, Missouri, describing his neighborhood. He focuses on growing up in the Pruitt-Igoe housing projects of St. Louis, explaining how the community there was integrated and upwardly mobile. Hill also describes his childhood personality and recalls his elementary school days.

African American educators--Interviews.

Howard University--Faculty--Interviews.

Archivists--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews.

African American families--Missouri--Saint Louis.

Saint Louis (Mo.)--Social conditions.

Pruitt-Igoe (Housing project : Saint Louis, Mo.).

Education--Missouri--Saint Louis.

College of Wooster.

Civil rights movements.

Black power--United States--History--20th century.

College students--Political activity--United States.

Vietnam War, 1961-1975.

Foreign study--Kenya.

Kenya--Social life and customs.

University of Maryland (College Park, Md.).

United States. Army Air Forces. Fighter Squadron, 99th.

Lynching--History.

United States. Army--African American troops.

African American abolitionists.

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Participation, African American.

United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--Participation, African American.

Oral history.

History in motion pictures.

Video Oral History Interview with Walter Hill, Jr., Section A2003_254_001_002, TRT: 0:28:40 ?

Walter B. Hill recounts his high school years in St. Louis University, discussing his early study of black history. He then talks about his undergraduate years at

The College of Wooster, where he studied history and advocated for the establishment of a Black studies department. He pays particular attention to the influence of the 1960s social movements -- the Civil Rights Movement, the Black Power movement, and the anti-Vietnam War protests -- on his intellectual and emotional development.

Video Oral History Interview with Walter Hill, Jr., Section A2003_254_001_003, TRT: 0:29:55 ?

Walter B. Hill recalls his experiences as an exchange student in Kenya, and shares his observations of Kenyan culture and social order. He remembers the social and political context of his undergraduate years at The College of Wooster, and talks about influential scholarship he read. Hill names some of the prominent historians of African American life who influenced his intellectual development.

Video Oral History Interview with Walter Hill, Jr., Section A2003_254_001_004, TRT: 0:30:30 ?

Walter B. Hill talks about his graduate studies at the University of Maryland-College Park, where he earned a Ph.D. in history. He then details his career with the National Archives and Records Administration. He discusses at length some of the important and popular areas of interest contained in the National Archives, such as records of the Tuskegee Airmen, the United States Colored Troops, and lynchings of African Americans. He explains how the National Archives preserve the African American history for scholars around the world.

Video Oral History Interview with Walter Hill, Jr., Section A2003_254_001_005, TRT: 0:30:15 ?

Walter B. Hill discusses the history of African Americans in the military, dating back to the Revolutionary War and forward through the Civil War and the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II. Citing documents from black soldiers in the National Archives, Hill explains the connections between African American military service and African American abolitionist and civil rights movements. He talks about Hollywood representations of history, and comments on the importance of collecting oral histories. Hill also shares his hopes and concerns for the black community.

Video Oral History Interview with Walter Hill, Jr., Section A2003_254_001_006, TRT: 0:22:25 ?

Walter Hill reflects on his life and career, considering his legacy and how he would like to be remembered.