

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Fannie Rushing

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Rushing, Fannie, 1940-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Fannie Rushing,
Dates:	December 5, 2003 and July 20, 2005
Bulk Dates:	2003 and 2005
Physical Description:	8 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:36:21).
Abstract:	Civil rights activist, african diaspora historian, and history professor Fannie Rushing (1943 -) focuses her research and writing on the African influence in Central America. Rushing was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on December 5, 2003 and July 20, 2005, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2003_288
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Specializing in the history and culture of African people in Latin America and the Caribbean, Professor Fannie Theresa Rushing was born in Chicago on February 3, 1943, and grew up in the community of Hyde Park. With family roots in Holly Springs and Meridian, Mississippi, Rushing traces her ancestors back four generations, three of which were college graduates on her mother's side. Her paternal great uncle, the Reverend Charles Wesley Burton, earned a B.D. from Yale University and was a confidant of A. Phillip Randolph.

As a volunteer for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Rushing developed a keen interest in the civil rights movement while still at Hirsch High School. In 1961, Rushing briefly attended University of Illinois before serving as a SNCC field secretary and Freedom School teacher from 1962 to 1966. The recipient of numerous grants and fellowships, Rushing earned a B.A. in anthropology from Roosevelt University in 1974 and an M.Ed. in psychology from Chicago State University in 1986. She received her Ph.D. in history from the University of Chicago in 1992. Her dissertation is entitled *Cabildos de Nacion, Sociedades de la Raza de Color: AfroCuban Participation in Slave Emancipation and Cuban Independence 1865-1895*.

As coordinator of the Southern Africa Program of the American Friends Service Committee from 1976 to 1977, Rushing organized a major international conference on Trans National Corporations and Southern Africa. She has taught several courses over the years including: *The African Diaspora in Latin America*, *Black Resistance in the Americas*, *Race and Power in Contemporary Brazil*, and *Culture and Literature of the Caribbean*. She has also worked as Director of Minority Services at Rosary College, and as a lecturer at Northwestern University, Governors State University, Dominican University, Columbia College, University of Illinois, and DePaul University. Rushing is currently an associate professor in the Department of History at Benedict University.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Fannie Rushing was conducted by Larry Crowe on December 5, 2003 and July 20, 2005, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 8 Betacame SP videocassettes. Civil rights activist, african diaspora historian, and history professor Fannie Rushing (1943 -) focuses her research and writing on the African influence in Central America.

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:

Rushing, Fannie, 1940-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Rushing, Fannie, 1940- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Civil Rights Activist

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 Fannie Rushing, December 5, 2003 and July 20, 2005. 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 Fannie Rushing, Section A2003_288_001_001, TRT: 0:29:20 ?
Fannie Rushing was born on February 3, 1943 in Chicago, Illinois. Her mother, Ella Jones Rushing, was born in 1907 in Holly Springs, Mississippi. Ella Rushing was the daughter of a schoolteacher and a farmer. Her parents died young and Ella was raised by her grandmother, who paid for her to attend Rust College in Holly Springs. Rushing traces her ancestry on her mother's side to a great-great-great-grandmother, Sadie, who was born in Africa and brought to America as a slave. Sadie's sons worked as carpenters in order to purchase their whole family's freedom. Rushing's father, Albert Rushing, was born in Meridian, Mississippi in 1905. His uncle, Charles Wesley Burton, was a minister

and lawyer who founded Lincoln Congregational Church in Chicago, Illinois. Rushing's father was a blacksmith for the Pullman Company, but was laid off due to his support of labor unions. Rushing's mother was head of the dining room at the Chicago Women's Club, later ran her own catering company, and trained with Francois Pope.

Video Oral History Interview with Fannie Rushing, Section A2003_288_001_002, TRT: 0:29:40 ?

Fannie Rushing's family moved to the Hyde Park neighborhood of Chicago, Illinois in 1943 when she was an infant. Her family experienced hostility from whites in Hyde Park and their apartment building was bombed with a Molotov cocktail. As a child, she took music, drama and dance lessons, and enjoyed reading. She also remembers the family bonfires on Halloween. Rushing attended Kozminski Elementary School, where she was the only black student, and Hirsch High School, whose black student population rose from 3 percent to 75 percent by the time she graduated. Rushing felt discriminated against by her teachers and did not enjoy school; thus, she did not earn good grades. Her mother forced the school to put her on the track to attend college; and, after doing well on the SAT Rushing was admitted to the University of Illinois at Chicago. During high school, Rushing began to take an interest in the Civil Rights Movement. Rushing's father lost his job at the Pullman Company after working there for over fifteen years.

Video Oral History Interview with Fannie Rushing, Section A2003_288_001_003, TRT: 0:29:30 ?

Fannie Rushing began attending civil rights demonstrations while she was still a student at Hirsch High School in Chicago, Illinois, including sit-ins to protest discrimination by the F.W. Woolworth Company. Rushing was unpopular in high school due to her activism. After graduating from high school in 1961, she attended the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), where she stayed active in the Civil Rights Movement by organizing a Friends of SNCC chapter. After eighteen months, Rushing left UIC, to the disappointment of her parents, to work full-time for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), organizing Freedom Schools in both the North and the South. She received no formal training to teach in the Freedom Schools. While working at a school in Cordele, Georgia, Rushing and her fellow teachers were terrorized by members of the Ku Klux Klan, who pursued them back to their house and fired upon the building. Rushing explains how the SNCC's goals evolved with the movement.

Video Oral History Interview with Fannie Rushing, Section A2003_288_001_004, TRT: 0:26:40 ?

Fannie Rushing narrates her photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with Fannie Rushing, Section A2003_288_002_005, TRT: 0:29:01 ?

Fannie Rushing worked with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) until 1966, when she returned to Chicago, Illinois. She describes how the organization was undermined by U.S. government efforts known as COINTELPRO and the organization's greater engagement with the continent of Africa. After Rushing left SNCC, she traveled for the first time to Latin America, living in Oaxaca, Mexico during 1966 and '67. Due to that experience and the 1973 assassination of President Salvador Allende of Chile, Rushing took an interest in Latin American affairs. This influenced her decision to study the African Diaspora in Latin America while pursuing her B.A. degree in anthropology at Roosevelt University in Chicago. Upon her graduation in 1974, Rushing taught at St. Mary's Center for Learning in Chicago, and, then joined the Quakers' American Friends Service Committee directing the Southern African Coalition in Chicago. She eventually became the local coordinator for the Puerto Rican Solidarity Committee.

Video Oral History Interview with Fannie Rushing, Section A2003_288_002_006, TRT: 0:30:50 ?

Fannie Rushing continued her work with the Puerto Rican Solidarity Committee in the face of opposition from the U.S. government; and, worked with Ella Baker and Arthur Kinoy who were organizing a socialist third party, known as the Mass Party. Rushing was the director of minority services at Dominican University and earned her M.Ed. degree in psychology. She earned her Ph.D. degree in history from the University of Chicago in 1992. She wrote her dissertation on Cuban history. Rushing was the first person in Chicago to teach a college course on the African Diaspora in Latin America and has contributed to the growth of the relatively new field. Rushing describes the tensions between people with European and African origins in Latin America, and explains how those tensions influenced early liberation movements in the region. She also talks about the role of religion in early Latin American liberation movements and explains the distinction between race and nationality in Latin America.

Video Oral History Interview with Fannie Rushing, Section A2003_288_002_007, TRT: 0:28:20 ?

Fannie Rushing describes the prevalence of the Santeria religion among Cubans of both European and African descent, the development of Brazilian favelas, and the continuing oppression of people of African descent in the Western Hemisphere. Rushing was disappointed by the results of the Black Radical Congress of 1998. At the time of the interview, she was planning a conference on the history of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and a resource center on the role of SNCC in the Civil Rights Movement in Chicago, Illinois. Rushing shares her perspective on many written accounts of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s by SNCC activists, including works by Stokely Carmichael and Fannie Lou Hamer as well as HistoryMakers James Forman, Barbara Ransby, Julian Bond, John Lewis, James Bevel, and Clayborne Carson.

Video Oral History Interview with Fannie Rushing, Section A2003_288_002_008, TRT: 0:13:00 ?

Fannie Rushing considers her relationships with family, her academic career and what she would have done differently in her life. Rushing also reflects upon her legacy and the legacy of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). She describes her hopes for the African American community and how she would like to be remembered.