Overview of the Collection

Repository: The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com

Creator: Mitchell, Grayson, 1950-2018

Title: The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Grayson Mitchell,

Dates: December 12, 2003

Bulk Dates: 2003

Physical Description: 9 Betacame SP videocassettes (4:22:17).

Abstract: Business consulting chief executive and newspaper reporter Grayson Mitchell (1950 - 2018) was the founder, chairman and CEO of Summit Consulting, Inc., Corporate Communications and Public Affairs Consultancy. He served as a political reporter for the 'Chicago Sun-Times,' Washington editor for Jet and Ebony magazines, Washington columnist for Black Enterprise magazine and director of corporate communications for Johnson Products. Mitchell was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on December 12, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.

Identification: A2003_295

Language: The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

William Grayson Mitchell was born March 8, 1950 in Mobile, Alabama. The son of educators, he attended Baldwin County Training School in Daphne, Alabama through the 9th grade. A precocious student, Mitchell qualified for and was granted early admission to Morehouse College, but graduated from the University of Illinois at Chicago with a B.S. in economics in 1971.
At Morehouse, Mitchell found himself drawn to journalism as his writing in the school paper earned for him a valuable summer internship. He was a political reporter for the *Chicago Sun-Times* in 1970, at the age of 20. Mitchell was Metro Reporter for the Washington Post from 1972 to 1973, where he knew Watergate reporters, Woodward and Bernstein. Invited by his friend, the late, *Jet* magazine editor Robert DeLeon, Mitchell signed with Johnson Publishing Company becoming Washington editor for *Jet* and *Ebony* magazines from 1973 to 1974. He was Washington columnist for *Black Enterprise* magazine from 1975 to 1979. He switched careers in 1980 when he became Director of Corporate Communications for Johnson Products in Chicago. In 1983, the 33 year old, Mitchell became Press Secretary for Chicago's first African American Mayor, the Honorable Harold Washington. His new job placed Mitchell in the thick of "Council Wars" as city council factions struggled for political control. Leaving the Mayor's service in 1985, Mitchell went on to found Summit Consulting, Inc., Corporate Communications and Public Affairs Consultancy of which he was Chairman and CEO.

Mitchell also served as director of Lakefront Supportive Housing, the Illinois Humanities Council and the Federation of State Humanities Councils. He was a member of the Economics Club of Chicago. Mitchell had two grown children. They all resides in the city of Chicago.

Mitchell passed away on February 23, 2018 at age 67.

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**Scope and Content**

This life oral history interview with Grayson Mitchell was conducted by Larry Crowe on December 12, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 9 Betacame SP videocassettes. Business consulting chief executive and newspaper reporter Grayson Mitchell (1950 - 2018 ) was the founder, chairman and CEO of Summit Consulting, Inc., Corporate Communications and Public Affairs Consultancy. He served as a political reporter for the 'Chicago Sun-Times,' Washington editor for Jet and Ebony magazines, Washington columnist for Black Enterprise magazine and director of corporate communications for Johnson Products.

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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®.

**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:**

Mitchell, Grayson, 1950-2018

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

**Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews
Mitchell, Grayson, 1950-2018--Interviews

**Organizations:**
HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

**Occupations:**

- Newspaper Reporter
- Business Consulting Chief Executive

**HistoryMakers® Category:**

- MediaMakers

**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**


**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).
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 Grayson Mitchell, Section A2003_295_001_001, TRT: 0:28:39 2003/12/12

Video Oral History Interview with Grayson Mitchell, Section A2003_295_001_002, TRT: 0:29:20 2003/12/12

Video Oral History Interview with Grayson Mitchell, Section A2003_295_001_003, TRT: 0:30:40 2003/12/12

Video Oral History Interview with Grayson Mitchell, Section A2003_295_001_004, TRT: 0:28:50 2003/12/12

Video Oral History Interview with Grayson Mitchell, Section A2003_295_001_005, TRT: 0:31:18 2003/12/12

Video Oral History Interview with Grayson Mitchell, Section A2003_295_001_006, TRT: 0:29:20 2003/12/12

Video Oral History Interview with Grayson Mitchell, Section A2003_295_001_007, TRT: 0:29:50 2003/12/12

Video Oral History Interview with Grayson Mitchell, Section A2003_295_001_008, TRT: 0:28:00 2003/12/12

Video Oral History Interview with Grayson Mitchell, Section A2003_295_001_009, TRT: 0:26:20 2003/12/12