

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Evans Crawford

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Crawford, Evans E.
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Evans Crawford,
Dates:	September 23, 2004
Bulk Dates:	2004
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:07:59).
Abstract:	Academic administrator and theologian Evans Crawford (1923 - 2019) served Howard University for almost fifty years in several positions, including professor of ministry and as the dean of Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel. Crawford was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on September 23, 2004, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2004_176
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Theologian and academic administrator Evans Edgar Crawford, Jr. was born on July 2, 1923 in Temple, Texas, to Mary Enge and Evans Edgar Crawford, Sr. A Methodist preacher, his father travelled often due to his job with the Santa Fe Railroad. Following the death of his mother, a former teacher, when he was just three years old, Crawford was raised by his paternal grandmother, Rosie Crawford. Religion was extremely important in his family, and Crawford was called to the ministry at the age of eleven. In 1939, Crawford graduated from Dunbar High School, where his extracurricular activities were devoted to speech and oratory competitions. In 1943, Crawford received his B.S. degree from Huston College (now Huston-Tillotson College). He continued his education at the Boston University School of Divinity, earning his bachelor's degree in sacred theology in 1946 and his Th.D. degree 1957. In 1949, Crawford married his wife Elizabeth.

Crawford spent his professional career at Howard University where he began in 1958 as a theology instructor and acting dean of the university chapel. For nearly fifty years, he served in a number of posts at Howard, including Dean of Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel, Assistant Professor, Acting Associate Dean of the school of Divinity and Interim Vice President for University Advancement. He retired in 1991 as professor emeritus of social ethics but continues to teach courses on preaching and social ethics as an adjunct professor at the Howard University School of Divinity.

In 1996, Crawford served as president of the Academy of Homiletics, an international organization of instructors who teach preachers. He also served as president of the National Association of College and University Chaplains, as a Danforth Associate and a member of the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church. He is the author of several books about the African American church, including *The Hum: Call and Response in African American Preaching* (1995).

Crawford passed away on February 16, 2019.

Evans Crawford, Jr. was interviewed by the *The HistoryMakers* on September 23, 2004.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Evans Crawford was conducted by Racine Tucker Hamilton on September 23, 2004, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Academic administrator and theologian Evans Crawford (1923 - 2019) served Howard University for almost fifty years in several positions, including professor of ministry and as the dean of Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel.

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:

Crawford, Evans E.

Hamilton, Racine Tucker (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Crawford, Evans E.--Interviews

African American theologians--Washington, D.C.--Interviews.

African American college administrators--Washington, D.C.--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Howard University. School of Divinity

Occupations:

Theologian

HistoryMakers® Category:

ReligionMakers

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 Evans Crawford, September 23, 2004. 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 Evans Crawford, Section A2004_176_001_001, TRT: 0:29:42 ?

Evans Crawford was born in 1923 in Temple, Texas. His mother, Mary Enge Crawford, died when he was three years old, so he knew little about her family and was raised primarily by his father, Evans Crawford, Sr., and his paternal grandmother, Rosie Crawford. His grandmother was born in Kentucky and, with her family, relocated to Texas. Her mother was a former slave who may have had Native American ancestry. Crawford's paternal grandfather came to Texas from Louisiana and may have originated from Jamaica; he was known for his heroism. Crawford's father grew up in Troy, Texas where a lynching took place in his youth. He completed the eighth grade, worked in service and was able to help with his siblings' schooling. Crawford was raised in Temple, a railroad town where his father took part in unionizing efforts and was a preacher at Methodist Episcopal Church South. Crawford was influenced by his father and developed an interest in religion at an early age. His family celebrated Christmas and Easter at the church.

African American families--Texas.

African American railroad employees.

Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad Company--Employees.

African Methodist Episcopal Church--Texas--Temple.

African American Methodists.

Methodist conferences.

African Americans--Religion.

Video Oral History Interview with Evans Crawford, Section A2004_176_001_002, TRT: 0:30:04 ?

Evans Crawford grew up in Temple, Texas often hearing noise from passing trains due to the nearby railroads and helping his grandmother do the laundry by hand. His family regularly celebrated Juneteenth in Galveston, Texas. As a young boy in Dunbar School, Crawford loved to read. His elementary school teachers were active in his life and influenced him to pursue education. He dreamed of studying theology. As a teenager, Crawford became involved in public speaking competitions. The religious education director from his church encouraged Crawford to attend Samuel Huston College in Austin, Texas. In college, Crawford continued studying theology, honed his public speaking skills and joined the debating club, which often competed against Prairie View State Normal & Industrial College in Texas. Crawford considered registering for the draft for World War Two, but he enrolled in Boston University School of Theology in Boston, Massachusetts instead.

African Americans--Texas--Social life and customs.

Oratory--Competitions.

Samuel Huston College.

Huston-Tillotson College.

Grannum, Stanley E., 1891-1951.

African Americans--Education (Elementary)--Texas--Temple.

African American universities and colleges--Texas.

African Americans--Education (Higher)--Texas.

Methodist universities and colleges--Texas.

Vocational interests.

Video Oral History Interview with Evans Crawford, Section A2004_176_001_003, TRT: 0:29:09 ?

Evans Crawford experienced a stark contrast in the weather when he moved

from Texas to Boston, Massachusetts in the early 1940s. In addition to the weather, he was also astounded by the accents, the vast resources of the public library and the various ethnic neighborhoods of the city. He worked with Goodwill Industries while attending Boston University School of Theology for his bachelor's of theology, which he obtained in 1946. Crawford decided to continue his studies; he obtained a doctorate in theology in 1957, which enabled him to teach as well as minister. During this time, Crawford encountered fellow Boston University theology student, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Crawford joined the faculty at Howard University School of Divinity in Washington, D.C. in 1958 during the civil rights era and when student movements were growing around the country. He encountered Stokely Carmichael and other students calling for more black studies and other changes to the university's curriculum.

Boston University. School of Theology.

King, Martin Luther, Jr., 1929-1968.

Thurman, Howard, 1900-1981.

Howard University.

Student movements--Washington (D.C.).

Church of All Nations (Boston, Mass.).

African Americans and libraries.

Theology--Study and teaching.

African American universities and colleges.

Video Oral History Interview with Evans Crawford, Section A2004_176_001_004, TRT: 0:30:53 ?

Evans Crawford was a professor of theology at Howard University in Washington, D.C. from 1958 to 1991. During this time, many students protested against certain traditions, such as mandatory attendance at chapel, and began advocating for a greater focus on African American studies. In response, the university began hosting events and bringing in speakers, including HistoryMaker Reverend Jesse L. Jackson and a gospel choir. As a professor, Crawford participated in debates about the nature of knowledge, specifically in relation to black theological history classes taught by non-black professors. He was interested in hermeneutics and illustrated its value by explaining the work accomplished by Kenneth and Mamie Clark's famous doll study for the Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka U.S. Supreme Court case. Crawford reflects upon the historical role of the black church, his life and his legacy. He describes how he wants to be remembered.

Howard University.

Theology--Study and teaching.

African American universities and colleges.

African Americans--Religion.

Theology--Study and teaching.

African American churches.

African American college teachers--Washington, D.C.

Video Oral History Interview with Evans Crawford, Section A2004_176_001_005, TRT: 0:08:11 ?

Evans Crawford narrates his photographs.