

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Malcolm Hemphill, Jr.

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	Hemphill, Malcolm Montjoy, 1931-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Malcolm Hemphill, Jr.,
<b>Dates:</b>	May 31, 2005
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2005
<b>Physical Description:</b>	9 Betacame SP videocassettes (4:10:51).
<b>Abstract:</b>	High school principal, sports official, and physical education coordinator Malcolm Hemphill, Jr. (1931 - ) was coordinator of Physical Education Programs for the entire Chicago Public Schools system, in addition to holding other high ranking positions within the organization. Hemphill was also one of the founders of the Metropolitan Officials Association, and one of the first African American officials assigned to a Big Ten conference game. Hemphill was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on May 31, 2005, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2005_124
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Educator and sports official Malcolm Montjoy Hemphill, Jr., was born June 24, 1931, in Chicago, Illinois; his father was Third Ward Republican Committeeman and his mother played piano and organ for A.A. Rayner's Funeral Home. Hemphill attended Forestville Elementary School, which at the time was the

largest and most crowded grade school in the country. A basketball player and president of his class, Hemphill graduated from Wendell Phillips High School in 1949. At Fisk University, Hemphill played basketball with Wilson Frost, and was counseled by Dr. Billie Wright Adams; he later transferred to Arkansas AM & N where he earned his B.S. in health and physical education in 1953.

In 1954, Hemphill taught elementary physical education in the Chicago Public Schools, but was drafted in 1955, after which time he served in the United States Navy aboard the U.S.S. Hector. Returning to Chicago in 1957, Hemphill married Gloria Owens and became the son-in-law of Olympic great, Jesse Owens. At Marshall High School (1960 to 1973), Hemphill rose from teacher to assistant principal to acting principal for over 5,000 students; during this time he also coached basketball and baseball. Hemphill joined the rising chorus of Chicago's black teachers who complained about the Chicago Public School's (CPS) discriminatory promotion procedures. Earning his M.Ed. from Northeastern Illinois University's Center for Inner City Studies in 1971, Hemphill became assistant principal at Manley High School and later Hyde Park High School. Until his retirement in 1997, Hemphill was coordinator of Physical Education Programs for the entire CPS.

Concerned that there were no African Americans officiating high school games in Chicago, Hemphill, with John Everett and Wilfred Bonner, formed the Metropolitan Officials Association (MOA) in 1962. MOA successfully trained and agitated for the assignment of black officials to referee CPS games. MOA went on to become the largest minority sports organization in the country, with alumni officiating at the NBA level. In 1974, Hemphill was one of the first three black officials assigned to a Big Ten Conference game; he officiated in the Big Ten for 15 years. Hemphill organized and trained the first group of African American women officials, and was director of the Nate Humphrey Memorial Officials Basketball Camp. Hemphill and his wife, Gloria, remained residents of Chicago, where they raised two daughters.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Malcolm Hemphill, Jr. was conducted by Larry Crowe on May 31, 2005, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 9 Betacame SP videocassettes. High school principal, sports official, and physical education coordinator Malcolm Hemphill, Jr. (1931 - ) was coordinator of Physical Education Programs for the entire Chicago Public Schools system, in addition to holding other high ranking positions within the organization. Hemphill

was also one of the founders of the Metropolitan Officials Association, and one of the first African American officials assigned to a Big Ten conference game.

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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®.

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## 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.

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## Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### Persons:

Hemphill, Malcolm Montjoy, 1931-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

## **Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews  
Hemphill, Malcolm Montjoy, 1931---Interviews

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African American educators--Interviews

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Sports executives--Interviews

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Coaches (Athletics)--Interviews

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Sports officials--Interviews

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## **Organizations:**

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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Chicago Public Schools

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Chicago Public Schools

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## **Occupations:**

High School Principal

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Sports Official

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Physical Education Coordinator

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

EducationMakers|SportsMakers

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# 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 Malcolm Hemphill, Jr., May 31, 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 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).

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## 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.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Malcolm Hemphill, Jr., Section A2005\_124\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:20 2005/05/31

Malcolm Hemphill, Jr. was born on June 24, 1931 to Malcolm Hemphill, Sr. and Elizabeth Dickey Hemphill in Chicago, Illinois. His mother was born in 1910 in

Dyersburg, Tennessee. She played basketball and piano and danced. Her father, Steve Dickey, was a barber who opened his own shop when the family moved to Chicago. Hemphill's mother attended Wendell Phillips High School in Chicago with Hemphill's father. He was born in 1908 in Hickman, Kentucky. When Hemphill was a child, his father worked as a hotel busboy until a local precinct captain recommended him for a position at Chicago's Union Stock Yards. While working at the stock yard, Hemphill's father became interested in local politics. When Hemphill was a teenager, his father was elected the Third Ward Republican Committeeman for the City of Chicago. A proud Republican, he became friends with local politician A. A. "Sammy" Rayner. Hemphill's mother worked as an organ player at A.A. Rayner & Sons Funeral Home. She passed away while working there years later.

African American educators--Interviews.

Sports executives--Interviews.

Coaches (Athletics)--Interviews.

Sports officials--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Malcolm Hemphill, Jr., Section A2005\_124\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:50 2005/05/31

Malcolm Hemphill, Jr.'s family belonged to Bethel A.M.E. Church in Chicago, Illinois and were close with its pastor, Reverend A. Wayman Ward. Hemphill attended Forestville Elementary School when the school had the largest number of students in the country. Due to a lack of space, the primary students were only taught for half a day. Hemphill used the address of a family friend to attend his parents' alma mater, Wendell Phillips High School. Fourteen other boys Hemphill's age lived on his block, and they played basketball, softball and swam together at Washington Park. Although they were surrounded by a strong community, some of Hemphill's friends later abused drugs and alcohol and died young. While Hemphill played many sports, he disliked baseball after being hit by a ball at one of his father's semi-pro games. Ironically, he coached high school baseball later as a physical education teacher. He also recalls working at a local drugstore and

serving malt shakes to local politician Oscar Stanton De Priest.

Video Oral History Interview with Malcolm Hemphill, Jr., Section A2005\_124\_001\_003, TRT: 0:30:30 2005/05/31

Malcolm Hemphill, Jr. saw Goose Taylor and Satchel Paige play in Negro League baseball games. Hemphill played on both the junior and senior basketball teams at Wendell Phillips High School in Chicago, Illinois. Phillips was known for its athletics program and its famous alumni, including football players Claude Buddy Young and Sherman J. Howard. The principal, Maudelle Bousfield, emphasized athletics and academics and instilled school pride. A fun-loving student, Hemphill was class president and captain of the softball and basketball team. He graduated from high school in January of 1949 with plans to be a barber. Hemphill's mother persuaded him to consider dentistry, so he enrolled at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. Hemphill remembers his father coaching members of a record breaking Xavier University of Louisiana basketball team. Hemphill describes how he later became a baseball coach at Marshall High School in Chicago.

Video Oral History Interview with Malcolm Hemphill, Jr., Section A2005\_124\_001\_004, TRT: 0:29:40 2005/05/31

Malcolm Hemphill, Jr. first experienced segregation in the South while attending Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. At Fisk, he played basketball with HistoryMaker The Honorable Wilson Frost and Carl Bonner and was mentored by Historymaker Dr. Billie Wright Adams, who remained a good friend. His maternal great-grandmother Mary Burriss, a self-educated woman, lived in Nashville and routinely visited the university to listen to visiting speakers. After transferring to Arkansas Agricultural, Mechanical and Normal College in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, Hemphill reconnected with his childhood friend HistoryMaker Darwin N. Davis, Sr., who played for the college's football team. Hemphill still found segregation difficult, but enjoyed his time at Arkansas. He majored in health and physical education. As part of his program, Hemphill officiated the high school state championship basketball tournament, thus beginning his

sports officiating career. Hemphill also recalls Fisk University President Charles S. Johnson.

Video Oral History Interview with Malcolm Hemphill, Jr., Section A2005\_124\_001\_005, TRT: 0:28:40 2005/05/31

Malcolm Hemphill, Jr. graduated from Arkansas, Mechanical and Normal College in 1953. He then worked as a substitute teacher for the Chicago Public Schools since the City of Chicago did not allow African Americans to take the required licensing exam to become a teacher at that time. In 1960, Hemphill was able to take and pass the exam, and he became a coach and teacher at Marshall High School in Chicago, Illinois. He was promoted to assistant principal and then eventually acting principal. In 1973, he became assistant principal at Manley High School. There, he hired Willie Little to teach physical education and coach the basketball team. Under Little's leadership, the men's basketball team won the Illinois State Championship during the 1979-1980 season. In 1981, Hemphill and his colleague Grady Johnson received an achievement award from Northeastern University. Hemphill explains how physical education was impacted with the passage of Title IX and with fewer courses offered at local schools.

Video Oral History Interview with Malcolm Hemphill, Jr., Section A2005\_124\_001\_006, TRT: 0:30:00 2005/05/31

Malcolm Hemphill, Jr. was drafted into the U.S. Navy in 1955. Because of his typing skills, most of his service involved clerical duties. He also played for the U.S.S. Hector's basketball team while stationed off the coast of Japan. After returning from military service in 1957, he married HistoryMaker Gloria Owens Hemphill, the daughter of Jesse Owens, and began teaching at Marshall High School in Chicago, Illinois. One of Hemphill's favorite students was Wayne Stingley, NFL football player Dwayne Stingley's brother, who played on the track, football, and basketball teams. In 1980, Hemphill was hired as an assistant principal at Hyde Park Career Academy in Chicago. Hemphill remembers watching the 1954 DuSable High School Men's Basketball team and its talented players, like HistoryMaker Charles Brown. This was the first Chicago high school team to qualify for the



Illinois state championship. Hemphill also recalls attending the 1972 Munich Olympic Games with his daughter and father-in-law Jesse Owens.

Video Oral History Interview with Malcolm Hemphill, Jr., Section A2005\_124\_001\_007, TRT: 0:28:20 2005/05/31

Malcolm Hemphill, Jr. co-founded the Metropolitan Officials Association (MOA) to counteract the segregated Central Officials Association (COA). Exclusion from the COA meant minority referees were not selected to officiate games. MOA modeled its program and instruction after COA's, and Chicago Public Schools began hiring MOA officials to referee games. MOA became the largest minority officiating association in the country, and sent officials to the NBA and NFL. In 1974, Hemphill became one of the first three African American basketball officials for the NCAA Big Ten Conference. Hemphill regularly clashed with other white officials in the conference; he refused to change his appearance to please supervisors, spoke up when officials told racist jokes, and urged other minority officials to stand up to discrimination. Hemphill does not recall having issues with any coaches, not even the controversial Indiana University basketball coach Bob Knight.

Video Oral History Interview with Malcolm Hemphill, Jr., Section A2005\_124\_001\_008, TRT: 0:29:30 2005/05/31

Malcolm Hemphill, Jr. served as a sports official for over twenty years and as a basketball official for the Big Ten Conference for fifteen years. He also officiated high school and local community games. He never had a chance to officiate a Final Four Championship game; however, he was able to referee a game in the first round of the NCAA Tournament at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. Hemphill describes how basketball has changed over the years, the effects basketball greats like Michael Jordan and HistoryMaker Earl "The Pearl" Monroe have had on the game, and how the sport's rules have been reinterpreted. His last position with Chicago Public Schools was at the Office of Health and Physical Education, where he coordinated the physical education programs. He retired in 1997 after forty years of working in the Chicago Public Schools system. Hemphill reflects

upon his hopes for the African American community, his life, his legacy, and how he would like to be remembered.

Video Oral History Interview with Malcolm Hemphill, Jr., Section  
A2005\_124\_001\_009, TRT: 0:15:01 2005/05/31

Malcolm Hemphill, Jr. narrates his photographs.