

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. Delutha King

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	King, DeLutha, 1924-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Delutha King,
Dates:	February 17, 2006, February 21, 2006 and March 18, 2006
Bulk Dates:	2006
Physical Description:	9 Betacame SP videocassettes (4:30:45).
Abstract:	Urologist Dr. Delutha King (1924 - 2020) was the first urologist of color in the state of Alabama at the V.A. Hospital in Tuskegee. King operated his own urology practice for many years. King was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on February 17, 2006, February 21, 2006 and March 18, 2006, in Atlanta, Georgia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2006_025
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

DeLutha Porter Harold King, Jr. was born January 17, 1924 in Weir City, Kansas. His father DeLutha King Sr., a graduate of Lincoln University and minister in the C.M.E. church and his mother, Julia Banks King, a restaurant owner, moved King and his sister, Veatrice, to Kansas City, Missouri where they grew up. King attended the University of Kansas until he was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1942. From 1943 to 1945, he served in Europe in the all Black 43rd Signal Battalion as the company's German interpreter.

King obtained a B.S. degree in zoology and english and a teaching certificate from Case Western Reserve University in 1952 while he worked full time for the U. S. Postal service since he was unable to find employment in his field when he returned from the war. He completed his M.D. degree in 1956; his internship in 1957 and his residency in surgical urology in 1961 at the Howard University College of Medicine and Freedmen's Hospital in Washington, D.C. In 1956, King established the Student American Medical Association (SAMA), a chapter of the national A.M.A. at Howard University College of Medicine. He was the first person of color to be elected to the national office of SAMA Councilors. King was also the second recipient of the Daniel Hale Williams Award from the Association of Former interns and residents of the Freedmen's Hospital.

King began his medical career as one of two urologists and was the only urologist of color in the state of Alabama at the V.A. Hospital in Tuskegee. He was Chief of Urology Services at the Veteran's Administration from 1961 to 1965 and a Urology Consultant at John A. Andrew V.A. Hospital from 1966 to 1972. King moved to Atlanta and opened a private urology practice from 1966 to 1970 at 985 Hunter Street. In 1968, he moved his offices to 2600 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, a multi-specialty building that he and eight other African American investors built. He operated his business out of 2600 Martin Luther King Drive, now a part of Grady Hospital Clinic, until 1999.

King's career and accomplishments span over a forty-five year period. In 1971, he co-founded the Sickle Cell Foundation of Georgia, dedicated to the education, screening and counseling for Sickle Cell Anemia; the Atlanta

Health Care Foundation in 1973; Metro Atlanta Health Plan Inc., the forerunner of the establishment of the Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) in 1980; Health First, the HMO in 1985 and the Health First Foundation which contributes grants to non-profit health-oriented organizations in Georgia in 1986. King has been certified and licensed to practice medicine and urology in the states of Alabama, California, Maryland and Georgia. He has been licensed since 1966 in Georgia. He is on the Board of Trustees and a member of the Medical Advisory Board at Morehouse School of Medicine where he held Faculty positions from 1980 to 1986.

His article, “Prostatic Calculi Associated with Priapism” is published in the *Journal of the NMA* (1952); “Parathyroidism and Calculi”, co-authored with Dr. Yancy is in the *Journal of the SMA* (1967) and editorial, “HMOs Come to Georgia—Responsible Cost Control Without Radical Change” in *Urban Health* (1979).

In 2001, King received the Honorary Doctor of Humanities Degree from Morehouse College. In 2006, he received an award for fifty years of practicing medicine. King is an active member of the American Urological Association, AMA, NMA, Georgia State Medical Association and Southwest Atlanta Urology Associates, Inc., an organization that he founded in 1970. He is a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and a life member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. and the NAACP.

King resided in Atlanta with his wife, Lois Weaver King.

King passed away on April 3, 2020.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Dr. Delutha King was conducted by Evelyn Pounds on February 17, 2006, February 21, 2006 and March 18, 2006, in Atlanta, Georgia, and was recorded on 9 Betacame SP videocassettes. Urologist Dr. Delutha King (1924 - 2020) was the first urologist of color in the state of Alabama at the V.A. Hospital in Tuskegee. King operated his own urology practice for many years.

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:

King, DeLutha, 1924-

Pounds, Evelyn (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

King, DeLutha, 1924- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Urologist

HistoryMakers® Category:

MedicalMakers

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 Dr. Delutha King, February 17, 2006, February 21, 2006 and March 18, 2006. 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 Dr. Delutha King, Section A2006_025_001_001, TRT: 0:29:30
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Dr. Delutha King was born on January 17, 1924 in Weir, Kansas to Julia Banks King and Delutha King, Sr. His mother was born in Girard, Kansas to Mary Banks, who was of Chinese descent, and James Banks. They owned a farm, where King and his sister, Veatrice King Gray, visited as children. On the weekend, King's maternal grandmother took him to see Buck Rogers' films at the movie theater. King's paternal grandfather, Fred King, who was of Cherokee descent, was the principal of the local school in Weir. King's father was born in Paris, Missouri, and worked as a coalminer before attending the Lincoln Institute in Jefferson City, Missouri. He owned a carwash business during the 1920s, and pastored the Russell Chapel C.M.E. Church in Columbia, Missouri. King spent his early childhood in Weir, where he attended Juneteenth celebrations in the downtown area, and learned to swim. He remembers the Ku Klux Klan activity in Weir, and the riots between black and white coalminers.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Delutha King, Section A2006_025_001_002, TRT: 0:29:30
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Dr. Delutha King's paternal great-grandfather, John King, made a living selling ice in Paris, Missouri. When King was five years old, his family moved from Weir, Kansas to Kansas City, Missouri. There, he lived in an all-black neighborhood next door to postal worker Paul Burgin, an entrepreneurial man who taught King to refurbish car batteries. King began his education at W.W. Yates Elementary School, where he learned about astronomy; and went on to attend R.T. Coles Vocational and Junior High School. He played baseball in the parks, and enjoyed Kansas City Monarchs games with his parents, Julia Banks King and Delutha King, Sr. He also played card games like blackjack with his sister, Veatrice King Gray. At Lincoln High School, he was influenced by woodshop teacher Percy H. Lee, and history teacher Girard T. Bryant, who recommended that King apply to college. King's mother also encouraged him from a young age to pursue a career in medicine.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Delutha King, Section A2006_025_001_003, TRT: 0:30:54
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Dr. Delutha King grew up in Kansas City, Missouri, where he delivered the Kansas City Call newspaper, and delivered packages for a local drug store. He also read books like Sir Walter Scott's 'Ivanhoe,' and spent the summers in Weir, Kansas with his maternal grandmother, Mary Banks, and sister, Veatrice Gray King. Upon graduating from Lincoln High School in 1940, King matriculated at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas. There, African American students were barred from campus housing, so King lived at the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity house, where he later pledged. He also worked as

wait staff for the all-white Chi Omega Sorority. In 1943, King left college for a semester to work, and was drafted into the U.S. Army. He completed basic training at Fort Clark in Texas, and was then transferred to Camp Crowder in Missouri, where he was assigned to the 2nd Cavalry Division with the 43rd Signal Heavy Construction Battalion, and learned to operate and repair telephones and switchboards.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Delutha King, Section A2006_025_002_004, TRT: 0:29:20
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Dr. Delutha King was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1943 during World War II. On his way to basic training at Fort Clark in Texas, he sat with a white family on the train; but, upon entering the segregated South, was escorted to an all-black car. After basic training, King was assigned to the 43rd Signal Heavy Construction Battalion, which was comprised of twenty-five African American soldiers. He completed specialty training in telephone and switchboard installation at Camp Crowder in Missouri, and was then deployed to Normandy, France. From there, his battalion travelled to Bastogne, Belgium and Bremen, Germany, where King managed the communication tents. He served in the U.S. military for over two years, and was awarded four Bronze Star Medals and one Good Conduct Medal. Before returning to the United States, King and his all-black troop published the 'History of the 43rd Signal Heavy Construction Battalion' to document their accomplishments in the segregated U.S. Army.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Delutha King, Section A2006_025_002_005, TRT: 0:30:10
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Dr. Delutha King served in the U.S. Army during World War II. A member of the 43rd Signal Heavy Construction Battalion, his duties included maintaining communication lines, and acting as the interpreter for his troop in Germany. After delisting in 1945, King moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he applied to work at the Northwestern Bell Telephone Company, but was rejected because of his race. He then moved to Cleveland, Ohio, where he worked as a clerk at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and then at the post office; and also enrolled part-time at Western Reserve University, where he majored in biology and zoology. Upon graduating in 1952, King worked as a substitute teacher at Patrick Henry Junior High School, until being admitted to the Howard University College of Medicine, where his professors included bacteriologist Ruth Ella Moore and physical anthropologist William Montague Cobb. While interning at Washington, D.C.'s Freedmen's Hospital, he studied urology, internal medicine and pediatrics.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Delutha King, Section A2006_025_002_006, TRT: 0:30:40
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Dr. Delutha King attended the Howard University College of Medicine, where he admired anatomy professor William Montague Cobb and medical college president Joseph L. Johnson. He helped establish the university's chapter of the Student American Medical Association, and was elected to the organization's national council. After graduation, King began a medical internship at Freedmen's Hospital in Washington, D.C. There, his assignments rotated between the emergency unit and specialties like urology. King then completed a four-year residency in urology at Freedmen's Hospital under Dr. Richard Francis Jones. At Jones' recommendation, King went on to work at the Tuskegee Veterans Administration Medical Center in Alabama, where he was the only urologist of color. King also worked at the private, all-black John A. Andrew Memorial Hospital in Tuskegee, where boycotts against white businesses were ongoing during the Civil Rights Movement. In 1965, King and his wife, Lois

Weaver King, moved to Atlanta, Georgia.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Delutha King, Section A2006_025_002_007, TRT: 0:30:20
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Dr. Delutha King moved in 1965 to Atlanta, Georgia, where he joined a private practice owned by his former medical school classmate, internist Louis C. Brown. King was also affiliated with Atlanta's McLendon Hospital, Harris Hospital and the Hughes Spalding Pavilion. In 1968, King and a group of doctors that included orthopedic surgeon E. Bruce Phillips, Sr., gastroenterologist Edward Layne, pediatrician Booker T. Poe and general practitioner James H. Kelley, opened a multi-specialty medical facility in Atlanta. King later helped develop a health maintenance organization (HMO) called the Health First Health Plan. Upon sale of the HMO, he cofounded the Health First Foundation, and served as its board chairman. In addition, King served as the president of the Atlanta Medical Association. He remembers his colleague, Dr. Clinton Warner; and his anatomy professor, William Montague Cobb, who was a noted anthropologist and medical doctor, as well as the editor of the Journal of the National Medical Association.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Delutha King, Section A2006_025_003_008, TRT: 0:30:01
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Dr. Delutha King helped establish the Metro Atlanta Health Plan, a health maintenance organization (HMO), through the federal government in 1971. He went on to create the Health First Health Plan, which was sold to the UnitedHealth Group in 1985. King used the money from the sale to found the Health First Foundation, where he served as president. The foundation provided grants to the Morehouse School of Medicine, Southwest Atlanta Hospital and Metro Atlanta Respite and Developmental Services, Inc. King also served as the vice president and president of North Central Georgia Health Systems Agency; and, in 1980, was nominated by Georgia Senator Herman Talmadge to the National Health Planning and Resources Development council. After retiring in 1999, King founded the Sickle Cell Foundation of Georgia, Inc. with Dr. Nelson McGhee, Jr. He also recalls the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the role of Dr. Albert M. Davis and civil rights leader Xernona Clayton in the desegregation of Atlanta's hospitals.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Delutha King, Section A2006_025_003_009, TRT: 0:30:20
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Dr. Delutha King served as president of the North Central Georgia Health Systems Agency, which assessed the needs of healthcare facilities in the State of Georgia. King reflects upon his life and legacy, his concerns for the African American community and how he would like to be remembered. He concludes the interview by narrating his photographs.