

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Diane McCoy-Lee

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Lee, Diane McCoy, 1947-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Diane McCoy-Lee,
Dates:	February 20, 2006
Bulk Dates:	2006
Physical Description:	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:57:36).
Abstract:	Social activist Diane McCoy-Lee (1947 -) served as client service manager with the Chicago Battered Women's Organization. Lee was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on February 20, 2006, in Atlanta, Georgia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2006_029
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Diane McCoy-Lee was born on February 3, 1947 in Chicago, Illinois to Charles and Dimples McCoy. After graduation from high school in 1966, she attended the University of Southern Illinois for a brief period. McCoy then married a service man that she had known and dated since they were freshmen in high school. She earned her B.A. degree in sociology in 1981 from Chicago State University's University Without Walls program. In 1988, McCoy earned her M.A. degree from the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago.

McCoy's first observation of family violence was an incident she observed between her parents prior to their divorce. In 1978, McCoy's life experience as a

battered wife with children led her to work as a volunteer addressing the issues of battered women. She is a founding member of the Chicago Abused Women's Coalition and served on its Board of Directors from 1978 to 1986. In 1982, McCoy developed and directed the first hospital based crisis intervention program for battered women at Jackson Park Hospital in Chicago. From 1989 through 1992, McCoy worked with the Council on Battered Women, in Atlanta, as the Client Service Manager and served as Acting Director of the agency for a brief period.

From 1990 until 1992, she served as Supervisor of Foster Care for Ada S. McKinney. From 1992 until the present, McCoy serves as curriculum writer for the Georgia Department of Human Resources – Department of Family and Child Services.

Married to Robert C. Lee since 1986, they are the parents of three adult children, one of whom is deceased, and six grandchildren. They reside in Atlanta, Georgia.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Diane McCoy-Lee was conducted by Ed Anderson on February 20, 2006, in Atlanta, Georgia, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Social activist Diane McCoy-Lee (1947 -) served as client service manager with the Chicago Battered Women's Organization.

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:

Lee, Diane McCoy, 1947-

Anderson, Ed (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Lee, Diane McCoy, 1947---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Social 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 Diane McCoy-Lee, February 20, 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 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).

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 Diane McCoy-Lee, Section

A2006_029_001_001, TRT: 0:28:08 2006/02/20

Diane McCoy-Lee was born on February 3, 1947 in Chicago, Illinois to Dimples Broadway Hester and Charles McCoy. Her mother was born in 1927 in Chicago to Arkansas-natives Rosa Broadway and Horner Broadway, who worked in construction and security. McCoy-Lee's father was born in 1928 in Arkansas to Cora McCoy and Ivy McCoy. His father was an Irishman whose family disowned him for marrying an African American woman. Her paternal grandparents owned an apartment building and the C. McCoy Furniture stores in Chicago. After McCoy-Lee's mother was in an accident that paralyzed her, her parents separated. During her mother's three-year hospitalization, McCoy-Lee was raised primarily by her paternal grandparents. Thereafter confined to a wheelchair, her mother worked as a hairdresser and for organizations that provided services to people with disabilities. McCoy-Lee recalls being among the first families in the neighborhood to own a television and the adjustments her family had to make after her mother's accident.

Video Oral History Interview with Diane McCoy-Lee, Section
A2006_029_001_002, TRT: 0:29:04 2006/02/20

Diane McCoy-Lee's mother was hospitalized after being paralyzed in a fall from a ladder. Once her mother returned home, McCoy lived in the Ida B. Wells Homes in Chicago, Illinois. She reflects upon how the housing project has changed since her childhood. She remembers the smell of Avon fragrances, having tea parties in the stairway of their apartment and attending mass. McCoy-Lee attended Doolittle Elementary School and Holy Angels Catholic School in Chicago, Illinois. As a girl, McCoy-Lee's aspired to be involved in the community as a lawyer or social worker. With help from the local Young Women's Christian Association and the priest at Holy Angels Catholic School, she received a scholarship to attend high school at Loretto Academy. There, McCoy-Lee was a member of the forensics team and competed in Junior Citizen. She recalls experiencing discrimination from teachers who thought she should not attend college, and the day of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy's assassination.

Video Oral History Interview with Diane McCoy-Lee, Section
A2006_029_001_003, TRT: 0:29:12 2006/02/20

Diane McCoy-Lee met her husband, Barry Brown, when she was in her early teens. She briefly attended Southern Illinois University, but left to be married. She and her husband lived at Camp Lejeune in Jacksonville, North Carolina before moving back to Chicago. Her husband was abusive, and his violence escalated after his military service in Vietnam. McCoy-Lee filed for divorce, but the couple remarried and had a son in 1974. McCoy-Lee eventually fled to Denver, Colorado with her children, but Brown forced her to return to Chicago. She escaped to a homeless shelter, where she began working with battered women. McCoy-Lee worked with Greenhouse Shelter and Chicago Abused Women's Coalition, and at Chicago's Jackson Park Hospital from 1981 to 1986. She received degrees in social work from Chicago State University and the University of Chicago before moving to Atlanta, Georgia in 1988 to work with the Council on Battered Women and the Division of Family and Children Services.

Video Oral History Interview with Diane McCoy-Lee, Section
A2006_029_001_004, TRT: 0:31:12 2006/02/20

Diane McCoy-Lee worked with the Division of Family and Children Services in Atlanta, Georgia to write training manuals for case managers and child protective services. She married her second husband, Robert C. Lee, who she had met as a teenager. The two went to prom together, although she did not have romantic feelings for him at the time. McCoy-Lee reconnected with Lee twenty years later, and the couple married. McCoy-Lee has two children and six grandchildren. McCoy-Lee describes misconceptions about the prevalence of domestic violence in the African American community. She reflects upon her experiences with abuse, the importance of history, her life and legacy, and how she would like to be remembered. McCoy-Lee concludes the interview by narrating her photographs.