



Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Lucille Whipper

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Whipper, Lucille
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Lucille Whipper,
Dates:	February 1, 2007
Bulk Dates:	2007
Physical Description:	6 Betacam SP videocassettes (2:48:21).
Abstract:	Academic administrator and state government administrator Lucille Whipper (1928 -) served as the organizer and director of Operation Catch-Up, the vice chairman of the Democratic Party Convention in 1972, a member of the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission, and the first African American administrator at the College of Charleston. Whipper was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on February 1, 2007 in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2007_039
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Academic administrator and state government administrator Lucille Simmons Whipper was born on June 6, 1928 in Charleston, South Carolina, to Sarah and Joseph Simmons. In 1944, Whipper was a student activist at her high school, Avery Institute, in Charleston, South Carolina; her graduating class sought to desegregate the College of Charleston. While a student at Talladega College, where she received her B.A. degree in economics and sociology, Whipper became involved in a movement to integrate college student organizations throughout the state. Whipper continued her graduate education in political science at the University of Chicago where she received her M.A. degree. Whipper also later earned a certificate in guidance and counseling at South Carolina State University.

In the late 1960s, Whipper served as an organizer and director of Operation Catch-Up, a tutorial program for high school students; Operation Catch-Up was a forerunner of the Upward Bound programs. In 1972, Whipper was appointed to serve as Assistant to the President and Director of the Office of Human Relations at the College of Charleston. Whipper became the College's first African American administrator and developed its first affirmative action plan. With the support of members of the Charleston County delegation and the President of College of Charleston, Theodore Stern, Whipper organized the Avery Institute of Afro-American History and Culture committee. The committee then founded the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture in 1990.

Whipper served as vice chairman of the Democratic Party Convention in 1972 and was later elected to the Charleston District 20 School Board. In 1985, Whipper became the first African American female to serve as an

elected state official from the Tri-County area. Whipper served for years on South Carolina Human Affairs Commission and sponsored two important pieces of legislation — one making marital rape a crime and the other requiring the monitoring of state agencies' hiring goals for minorities and females. In 2004, Whipper co-founded the Lowcountry Aid to Africa project, donating money to foundations and organizations helping people and families in Africa affected by AIDS.

Lucille Simmons Whipper was married to the late Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Whipper, Sr., and lives in Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina. She is the mother of six children and is a grandparent.

Lucille Simmons Whipper was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on February 1, 2007.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Lucille Whipper was conducted by Denise Gines on February 1, 2007, in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, and was recorded on 6 Betacam SP videocassettes. Academic administrator and state government administrator Lucille Whipper (1928 -) served as the organizer and director of Operation Catch-Up, the vice chairman of the Democratic Party Convention in 1972, a member of the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission, and the first African American administrator at the College of Charleston.

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:

Lucille Whipper.

Gines, Denise (Interviewer).

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer).

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews.
Lucille Whipper--Interviews.

African American educators--Interviews.

African American civic leaders--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

South Carolina Human Affairs Commission

HistoryMakers® Category:

EducationMakers

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 Lucille Whipper, February 1, 2007. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 8/25/2011 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, February 1, 2007

Video Oral History Interview with Lucille Whipper, Section A2007_039_001_001, TRT: 0:28:21
2007/02/01

Lucille Simmons Whipper slates the interview and lists her favorites. She talks about her parents, Sarah Marie Washington Stroud's and Joseph Simmons' backgrounds. Sarah was adopted after her mother died in childbirth and she grew up on the east side of Charleston, South Carolina in a working class African American neighborhood. Joseph was born in Charleston as well. Whipper remembers the African American community in Charleston that she grew up in. Her parents separated when she was younger, and her mother remarried Edward A. Stroud, who raised her. Whipper talks about the impact Edward's and her mother's activism had on her. Edward was a carpenter and craftsman by trade, but served as a leader in the strike at the cigar factory, where he and Whipper's mother worked. He lost his job because of his attempts to unionize the workers.

African American families--South Carolina--Charleston.

Children of divorced parents.

African Americans—Social life and customs—South Carolina-Charleston.

Tobacco workers--South Carolina--Charleston--Labor unions.

Tobacco Workers' Strike, Charleston, S.C., 1945.

Factories--Employees--Labor unions--South Carolina.

Video Oral History Interview with Lucille Whipper, Section A2007_039_001_002, TRT: 0:28:12
2007/02/01

Lucille Simmons Whipper reflects upon growing up during the depression. She recalls her educational and social experiences at St. Stephen Episcopal Church, Buist School, Burke Industrial High School and at the Avery Normal Institute. She transferred from Burke to Avery because her mother wanted to put her on the college track. Whipper discusses some of the stereotypes of people who attended Avery and the tensions that occurred within the student body. John Brighton, a substitute teacher at Avery, influenced Whipper's senior class to try to desegregate the College of Charleston. That summer, the College went from being a public to a private institution in order to maintain segregation. After graduating from Avery in 1944, Whipper attended Talladega College on a scholarship. Whipper remembers the circumstances that led her to become the first African American administrator at the College of Charleston in 1972.

African American--Education (Secondary).

African American--Education (Elementary).

Avery Normal Institute.

Segregation in higher education--South Carolina--Charleston.

Desegregation in higher education--South Carolina--Charleston.

Talladega College.

United States--Social conditions--1933-1945.

Video Oral History Interview with Lucille Whipper, Section A2007_039_001_003, TRT: 0:29:25
2007/02/01

Lucille Simmons Whipper reflects on her educational and social experience at Talladega College in Talladega, Alabama. Whipper remembers attending dances at Anniston Army Airfield during her freshmen and sophomore years because there were not many men on campus. During Whipper's sophomore year, she joined the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority (AKAs), where she served as treasurer. Whipper discusses participating in the first integrated student organization in Alabama. When she was working on her thesis, she met her first husband, Stephen Edley, who died three years after they were married. Whipper talks about obtaining her M.A. degree from the University of Chicago in political science as a single mother. When she returned to Charleston to teach she met and married Reverend Benjamin J. Whipper. She taught at Haut Gap Middle School on John's Island, where she was first exposed to people having full conversations in the Gullah language.

Talladega College--Social life and customs.

African American educators--South Carolina--Charleston.

African American couples.

College students--Political activity.

Gullah.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

Suicide victims--Family relationships.

Political science--Study and teaching.

University of Chicago.

Video Oral History Interview with Lucille Whipper, Section A2007_039_001_004, TRT: 0:28:46
2007/02/01

Lucille Simmons Whipper talks about her teaching career at Bonds-Wilson school, where she served as the music teacher and high-school counselor. As counselor she advocated for college preparatory classes and had debates with the principal about how to make this happen. Whipper discusses how she introduced students to A Better Chance (ABC), a program that places African American students in Northeast boarding schools. She continued to help guide students toward college in her role as director of guidance at Burke Industrial School and through the creation of Operation Catch-Up. Whipper remembers her participation in the Democratic Party in Charleston, South Carolina. In 1972, she was offered a position at the College of Charleston to run its affirmative action program and was approached by Margaret Childs to assist in saving the Avery Normal School. The College was under the new, progressive and committed leadership of Theodore S. Stern.

African American educators--South Carolina--Charleston.

African American high school students--United States.

Student assistance programs.

Democratic Party (Charleston County, S.C.).

Desegregation in higher education--South Carolina--Charleston.

College of Charleston.

Avery Normal Institute.

Video Oral History Interview with Lucille Whipper, Section A2007_039_001_005, TRT: 0:28:09
2007/02/01

Lucille Simmons Whipper discusses meeting with Margaret Childs about saving the Avery Normal Institute School from being turned into condominiums. She gives a brief history about why Avery closed in 1954 and what happened to the building. Whipper comments that Childs wanted her to be involved because she was an alum of the school and for her contacts with the faculty and staff at the College of Charleston. She, along with interested faculty, staff, Avery alum and community members, started the Avery Institute of Afro-American History and Culture committee in 1980. Whipper explains how the Avery Research Center was founded in 1990. The committee applied for and received a grant from the National Humanities Council and lobbied both the South Carolina government and the College of Charleston for support. She comments on her political career in the South Carolina House of Representatives and the issues she fought for.

Avery Normal Institute--History.

Avery Center (Charleston, S.C.).

Avery Institute of Afro-American History and Culture.

College of Charleston.

African Americans--South Carolina.

South Carolina. General Assembly. House of Representatives.

Video Oral History Interview with Lucille Whipper, Section A2007_039_001_006, TRT: 0:25:28
2007/02/01

Lucille Simmons Whipper discusses why she chose not to run for an eleventh term for the House and how her eldest son died. In 1998, Whipper traveled to South Africa as a part of the LINKs International Program; the social, economic and health conditions of the villagers made her want to help. Thus, upon returning home she organized Lowcountry Aid to Africa with the Charleston LINKs chapter and other interested parties. Whipper details her tenure as president of the South Carolina Women's Baptist Convention, specifically her involvement with the Born to Serve: A History of the Women's Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention of South Carolina project, which resulted from a South Carolina Humanities Council grant to obtain original documentation of the organization and oral histories. Whipper explains the importance of the creation of the Avery Research Center in preserving African American history. Whipper narrates family and political photos.

Avery Center (Charleston, S.C.).

African American women--Societies and clubs--South Carolina.

Women in charitable work.

Charities, medical--Africa.

Baptist associations--South Carolina.

Links, Inc.