



Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Tanya-Monique Kersey

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers® 1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Tanya-Monique Kersey
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Tanya-Monique Kersey,
Dates:	July 8, 2007
Bulk Dates:	2007
Physical Description:	5 Betacam SP videocassettes (2:20:30).
Abstract:	Magazine editor and magazine publishing chief executive Tanya-Monique Kersey (1961 -) is the founder and executive director of the Hollywood Black Film Festival in addition to being both publisher and editor-in-chief of Black Talent News. Kersey was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 8, 2007, in Beverly Hills, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2007_198
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Magazine editor and magazine publishing chief executive Tanya-Monique Kersey was born on March 22, 1961 in New York City, New York to Cynthia and Al Smith Kersey. She earned her B.A. degree in political science and sociology from Douglass College at Rutgers University in 1983. Kersey began her entertainment career working as a model. She then transitioned into acting, performing in commercials, voiceovers and industrial films.

Kersey appeared on several soap operas such as, "All My Children," "Search for Tomorrow" and "The Guiding Light." In 1990, Kersey published the "Black State of the Arts: A Guide to Developing a Successful Career as a Black Performing Artist." This book became a proverbial how to manual for African Americans who are launching a career in the industry. In 1994, she established the magazine "Black Talent News" that focused on news from film, television, theatre and new media industries. After two years of publication "Black Talent News" became the first African American trade magazine to be accredited by the Motion Picture Association of America and the Television Critics' Association. In 1997, Kersey participated in the annual Infotainment Conference. In 1999, "Black Talent News" launched its website www.blacktalentnews.com, which shares information about the industry via the internet. That same year, Kersey began the Hollywood Black Film Festival, a six day celebration of African American cinema. In 2002, Kersey authored and compiled "The Black Film Report" and the "Black Talent News Resource Directory." Kersey is also a frequent contributor and co-host on the "Samm Brown's for the Record" radio, show delivering the Urban Entertainment Report on RPFK radio in Los Angeles, California. Kersey is the executive producer of the entertainment newsmagazine show, "Inside Urban Hollywood with Tanya Kersey."

In 2002 Kersey was named a "Living History Maker" by "Turning Point Magazine ." In this same year, she was also named one of Hollywood's Urban Movers and Shakers by "Daily Variety" for her work as publisher and

editor-in-chief of "Black Talent News" , as well as for being the founder and executive director of the Hollywood Black Film Festival. Kersey serves on the marketing advisory board of the Independent Feature Project/West and the Pan African Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou. She is also a member of the Media Industry Advisory Board at West Los Angeles College.

Tanya- Monique Kersey was interviewed by "The HistoryMakers" on July 8, 2007.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Tanya-Monique Kersey was conducted by Ron Brewington, on July 8, 2007, in Beverly Hills, California, and was recorded on 5 Betacam SP videocassettes. Magazine editor and magazine publishing chief executive Tanya-Monique Kersey (1961 -) is the founder and executive director of the Hollywood Black Film Festival in addition to being both publisher and editor-in-chief of Black Talent News.

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:

Kersey, Tanya-Monique

Brewington, Ron (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Kersey, Tanya-Monique--Interviews

African American entertainers.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Hollywood Black Film Festival

Black Talent News

HistoryMakers® Category:

EntertainmentMakers

MediaMakers

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 Tanya-Monique Kersey, July 8, 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 8/11/2011 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, July 8, 2007

Video Oral History Interview with Tanya-Monique Kersey, Section A2007_198_001_001, TRT: 0:29:10 2007/07/08

Tanya-Monique Kersey begins the interview by discussing her family history. Her mother, Cynthia Kersey, was born in Harlem, New York. Kersey remembers her mother as a very strong woman. Her father, Al Smith Kersey, was born in Warrenton, North Carolina. George Miller, Kersey's maternal uncle, was the founder of Carver Federal Savings Bank. Carver Federal Savings Bank is the largest African American owned bank in the United States. She describes her familial relationships and her coming of age experiences in New York City. Kersey shares information about the acculturation of her West Indian family to life in New York City.

African American families--New York (state)--Harlem(New York).

New York (N.Y.)--Social life and customs.

Social life and customs--New York

Acculturation--New York (N.Y.)

Video Oral History Interview with Tanya-Monique Kersey, Section A2007_198_001_002, TRT: 0:28:40 2007/07/08

Tanya-Monique Kersey describes the surprise party she gave her mother for her seventy-first birthday. Kersey flew her extended family in as a birthday surprise for her mother. She provides details about her father, Al Smith Kersey. He was conceived out of wedlock and she describes him as an "angry black man." Her paternal grandmother was part Cherokee; Kersey learned this from her father's death certificate. After graduating from high school Al Smith Kersey enlisted in the Navy. He moved Kersey and her family to the Caucasian neighborhood of Haworth, New Jersey. After completing his service in the United States Navy, he moved to New York City. Kersey's father was a strict disciplinarian who was often mean to her mother, but Kersey still believes that he loved the family. Al Smith Kersey died in Lady Lake, Florida at the age of sixty-six.

African American fathers--New Jersey--Haworth.

African Americans--Military service--1940-1960

African American grandparents

African American families

Video Oral History Interview with Tanya-Monique Kersey, Section A2007_198_001_003, TRT: 0:28:20 2007/07/08

Tanya-Monique Kersey describes the recreational time she spent with her father, Al Smith Kersey. The father and daughter vacationed in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania, where they fished, skied and golfed. She was a member of the Dance Theatre of Harlem, an institution that was founded by Arthur Mitchell. She began dancing at about five years old and continued until she was fifteen. Kersey shares her social and racial experiences at Northern Valley Regional High School in Demarest, New Jersey. She provides details about her career history. Kersey earned her B.A. degree in political science from Rutgers University. She wanted to establish her own identity as a college student, so she completed her education independent of her father's financial support. She discusses her career in acting, modeling and print media. While working in the entertainment industry, Kersey worked with Whitney Houston,

Samuel Jackson and Morgan Freeman.
Father-daughter relationship.
Pocono Mountains (Pa.)--Description and travel.
Dance Theatre of Harlem
Racism in education--New Jersey--Demarest
African American college students--Race identity.
African American entertainers

Video Oral History Interview with Tanya-Monique Kersey, Section A2007_198_001_004, TRT:
0:28:20 2007/07/08

Tanya-Monique Kersey explains the concept of the "Black American Princess." She discussed the writing of her book, "Black State of the Arts: A Guide to Developing a Successful Career as a Black Performing Artist." This book was self published and influenced by her experiences in performing arts. In 1994, Kersey established, "Black Talent News," a four page newsletter. "Black Talent News" was formerly a monthly newsletter, but now the content is available online. Kersey believes that "Black Talent News" is successful because she provides information that other similar sources are not publishing. She held the Infotainment Conference in 1997 to appease the wishes of her "Black Talent News" users. The Hollywood Black Film Festival was borne of the Infotainment Conference.

African American women--Social life and customs

Kersey, Tanya-Monique, 1961-. Black State of the Arts: A Guide to Developing a Successful Career as a Black Performing Artist.

African American film festivals.

African American entertainers

Performing arts--Vocational guidance.

African American entertainers--Periodicals.

Video Oral History Interview with Tanya-Monique Kersey, Section A2007_198_001_005, TRT:
0:26:00 2007/07/08

Tanya-Monique Kersey discusses the differences between the Hollywood Black Film Festival and Pan African Film Festival. At the Black Film Festival, one of the volunteers, Jacqueline Brown, screens all the films. Kersey converted to Christianity in 1992, when she attended Understanding Principles, Della Reese's church. She then began attending church regularly at Faithful Central in Inglewood, California. Kersey discusses the future of Black Hollywood; she believes that African Americans need vision and knowledge about Hollywood and the film industry. She believes that African American film has become more accessible due to the internet. She discusses the dearth of film roles written for African American actresses. Kersey believes the solution to this problem is for African American women to write more scripts.

African American film festivals.

African American churches.

Faithful Central Bible Church

Black experience (Hollywood, Los Angeles, Calif.)

African Americans in the motion pictures industry--California--Hollywood.