

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Rochelle Brown

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Brown, Rochelle
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Rochelle Brown,
Dates:	August 13, 2007
Bulk Dates:	2007
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:02:49).
Abstract:	Television producer Rochelle Brown (1949 -) is best known as the creator and first host of Insights, a public affairs program. Brown has also served as KDFW FOX-4's multicultural affairs director and community affairs director. Brown was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 13, 2007, in Dallas, Texas. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2007_234
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Television producer and journalist Ellen Rochelle Brown was born on March 10, 1949 in Denton, Texas to Earlene and John Henry Brown, a hospital manager and construction worker, respectively. After graduating from the Dallas Public School System, Brown attended Southern Methodist University in Dallas where she received her B.F.A. degree in broadcast film arts in 1971. After completing a summer fellowship at Columbia University in New York City, Brown worked as a news researcher for NBC News in New York City.

In 1975, Brown was offered a television news anchor and reporter job at WROC-TV, the CBS affiliate in Rochester, New York. After making her mark in Rochester, Brown returned home to Dallas in January of 1978 when she joined KDFW FOX-4, the Fox television affiliate in the Dallas, Fort Worth area, as the community affairs director. Since coming to KDFW, she has spent almost thirty years connecting the station to the Dallas community in positive ways.

Thousands of children in the Dallas Public School System have reaped benefits from the “Adopt-A-School” Program created by the City of Dallas. Brown made sure that her station participated in this program. As an executive producer, Brown created *Insights*, one of the longest running public affairs programs on television in Northern Texas and acted as the show’s first host. Brown has also acted as KDFW’s multicultural affairs director and has made sure that all cultures and races in the Dallas-Fort Worth area are well represented in the news coverage. Brown has gone on the road to create an ongoing travel segment committed to discovering diverse and little known local cultures. Brown is the recipient of the prestigious Alfred I. DuPont-Columbia Award, honoring excellence in broadcast journalism for her news segment “Children Having Children.”

Brown was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on August 13, 2007.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Rochelle Brown was conducted by Larry Crowe on August 13, 2007, in Dallas, Texas, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Television producer Rochelle Brown (1949 -) is best known as the creator and first host of *Insights*, a public affairs program. Brown has also served as KDFW FOX-4’s multicultural affairs director and community affairs director.

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:

Brown, Rochelle

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Brown, Rochelle--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Television Producer

HistoryMakers® Category:

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 Rochelle Brown, August 13, 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 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 Rochelle Brown, Section
A2007_234_001_001, TRT: 0:29:04 2007/08/13

Rochelle Brown was born on March 10, 1949 in Denton, Texas to Earlene Punch Brown and John Henry Brown. Her maternal grandparents, Randal and Amy Punch, had eight children and labored as field workers in Oklahoma and Texas. She has limited knowledge of her paternal ancestors. Brown's mother was born in Altus, Oklahoma and her father was born in Hillsboro, Texas. Her mother attended the Madam C.J. Walker Beauty School and operated a home beauty salon. Her father became a construction worker and bricklayer after serving in the U.S. Army during World War II. Brown talks about her parents' personalities, her earliest childhood memory and the sights, sounds, and smells of her childhood. As a child, she took piano lessons for thirteen years and attended C.M.E. churches in Denton and Dallas, Texas. Brown describes influential women in her neighborhood and her grade school years. HistoryMaker Irma P. Hall was one of her teachers. She also talks about going to black movie theaters in South Dallas.

Video Oral History Interview with Rochelle Brown, Section
A2007_234_001_002, TRT: 0:29:10 2007/08/13

Rochelle Brown remembers watching television shows like "Felix The Cat" and "Mighty Mouse," and listening to KNOK, the black radio station in Dallas, Texas. In Dallas, Brown attended Booker T. Washington High School, graduating as salutatorian in 1967. She shares her memories of President John F. Kennedy's assassination in 1963 and describes the Civil Rights Movement in Texas. Initially enrolled at North Texas University in Denton, Texas, Brown transferred to Southern Methodist University [SMU] in Dallas after she was offered a full scholarship. She talks about dating a white man, her white roommate, and her experience of racial discrimination at SMU. While at SMU, Brown joined a group of black students who met with college president Willis M. Tate to

demand reforms on campus. Brown also remembers the black student protest of Old South Week at SMU led by football player Jerry LeVias. In college, Brown changed her major from music to broadcast film arts and also interned at “The Bozo Show” in Dallas, Texas.

Video Oral History Interview with Rochelle Brown, Section
A2007_234_001_003, TRT: 0:29:40 2007/08/13

Rochelle Brown interned for “The Bozo Show” at an independent television station in Dallas, Texas during her senior year at Southern Methodist University [SMU] in Dallas. After graduating in 1971, Brown was hired as a producer and host of “Roll ‘Em” at KERA-TV in Dallas. After receiving a Michele Clark Fellowship, she spent a summer studying journalism at Columbia University in New York City, New York where she was mentored by Bob Schieffer. Upon completing the fellowship, Jim Lehrer hired Brown back to KERA in Dallas, but Brown returned to New York City soon thereafter. There, she worked as a researcher at NBC News from 1972 to 1975 before moving on to WROC-TV in Rochester, New York as an anchor report. In 1978, Brown returned to Dallas and began working for KDFW-TV, which was then a CBS affiliate. Brown recalls the beginning of KDFW’s public affairs program, “Insights” which highlighted members of the Dallas’ black community. She also talks about show’s changing timeslots and KDFW’s acquisition by FOX.

Video Oral History Interview with Rochelle Brown, Section
A2007_234_001_004, TRT: 0:28:00 2007/08/13

Rochelle Brown talks about hosting “Insights,” a public affairs program at KDFW FOX-4. She reflects upon the state of public affairs programming across the country and how “Insights” has evolved from an African American show to one covering the interests of the African American, Hispanic, and Asian communities. Since 1980, Brown has conducted memorable interviews with Richard Pryor, George Clinton, Bill Cosby, and Jimmy Carter during his presidential campaign. Brown also traveled frequently to the Caribbean as a freelance travel writer. She shares her hopes and concerns for the African American community and what she would do differently. Brown also describes her heroes in the broadcasting world

and memorable awards from her career. She concludes by talking about her legacy, her family, and how she would like to be remembered.

Video Oral History Interview with Rochelle Brown, Section
A2007_234_001_005, TRT: 0:06:55 2007/08/13

Rochelle Brown narrates her photographs.