

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Ronald Gerald Coleman

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Coleman, Ronald Gerald
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Ronald Gerald Coleman,
Dates:	March 17, 2008
Bulk Dates:	2008
Physical Description:	4 Betacam SP videocassettes (1:59:31).
Abstract:	African American Studies professor Ronald Gerald Coleman (1944 -) joined the University of Utah faculty as an instructor of history and ethnic studies in 1973, where he taught courses on African American history. Coleman has written several publications, including articles on western African American history, and has received numerous awards for his teaching, scholarship and work in civil rights. Coleman was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 17, 2008, in Salt Lake City, Utah. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2008_057
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

African American Studies professor Ronald Gerald Coleman was born on April 3, 1944, in San Francisco, California, to Gertrude Hughes, a San Francisco School District food service manager, and Jesse Coleman, a railroad waiter/bartender for Southern Pacific and Amtrak. He attended San Francisco's Pacific Heights and Emerson Elementary Schools and graduated from George Washington Senior High School. In 1966, Coleman graduated from the University of Utah with his B.A. degree in sociology. He was hired to teach in the San Francisco Unified School District and then at Sacramento City College.

In 1973, Coleman received his M.A. degree in social science from California State University, in Sacramento. Coleman joined the University of Utah faculty as an instructor of history and ethnic studies in 1973 where he taught courses on African American history. His work in history and ethnic studies has been presented at various professional meetings. He has also lectured on topics ranging from African American history to contemporary race relations in the United States. Coleman has written several publications including articles on western black history.

Coleman has served as a member of the University of Utah Senate; the Athletic Board; the faculty mentoring program; and the faculty affirmative action committee. He is also a member of the Phi Kappa Phi Fraternity and is a life member of the NAACP. He has received numerous awards and recognitions including the Calvin S. and Jeneal N. Hatch Prize in Teaching, the 2000 Governor's Award in Humanities and the Albert B. Fitz Civil Rights Worker of the Year Award.

Coleman lives in Cottonwood Heights, Utah.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Ronald Gerald Coleman was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 17, 2008, in Salt Lake City, Utah, and was recorded on 4 Betacam SP videocassettes. African american history professor Ronald Gerald Coleman (1944 -) joined the University of Utah faculty as an instructor of history and ethnic studies in 1973, where he taught courses on African American history. Coleman has written several publications, including articles on western African American history, and has received numerous awards for his teaching, scholarship and work in civil rights.

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:

Coleman, Ronald Gerald, 1944-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Coleman, Ronald Gerald, 1944- --Interviews

African American historians--Interviews

African American college teachers--Interviews

African American civil rights workers--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

University of Utah

HistoryMakers® Category:

EducationMakers

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 Ronald Gerald Coleman, March 17, 2008. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 7/10/2012 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, March 17, 2008

Video Oral History Interview with Ronald Gerald Coleman, Section A2008_057_001_001, TRT: 0:30:09 2008/03/17

Ronald Gerald Coleman was on April 3, 1944 in San Francisco, California to Gertrude (nee Welch) and Jesse Coleman. Coleman's mother, Gertrude, was born on August 29, 1922 in Monroe, Louisiana; she attended Monroe Colored High School and continued to Grambling University. Coleman's father, Jesse, was born on March 7, 1925 in Sicily Island, Louisiana. Jesse's parents moved for Sicily Island to Monroe, Louisiana. On his father's side, Coleman knows his ancestry back to his great-great grandfather, Charles (Charlie) Coleman, a slave and a sharecropper, mostly because his family kept records in their family Bible. Coleman's parents split up in 1947, and he spent time in Chicago, Illinois before starting first grade in San Francisco. His most poignant childhood memory is experiencing segregation at a train station in Houston, Texas when his family was traveling from San Francisco, California to Monroe, Louisiana.

African American families--Louisiana--Monroe.

African American fathers--California--San Francisco.

Segregation in Transportation--Southern States.

Video Oral History Interview with Ronald Gerald Coleman, Section A2008_057_001_002, TRT: 0:30:52 2008/03/17

Ronald Coleman lived in the Western district of San Francisco, now known as the Fillmore, which was a lively and vibrant community of black people in the 1950s and 1960s. He attended Emerson School in and Pacific Heights School for the fourth through sixth grade, both primarily black schools. As a result of his discipline problems, his parents sent him to the primarily white junior high school in Marina district. Coleman played football when he attended George Washington Senior High School, but his grades were not good enough to attend a university on a football scholarship. He kept playing football at a junior college and earned a football scholarship to the University of Utah in 1963. Coleman's exposure to racism in Salt Lake City and NAACP activism elevated his consciousness. He finished his degree requirements in 1965 and left Salt Lake City, Utah.

African American families--California--San Francisco.

African American children--California--San Francisco--Social life and customs.

African American college students--Political activity.

San Francisco (Calif.)--social life and customs.

University of Utah--football.

Video Oral History Interview with Ronald Gerald Coleman, Section A2008_057_001_003, TRT: 0:30:15 2008/03/17

Ronald Coleman was denied from the selective because of sports injuries. He worked for General Mills because of the progress that Whitney Young and the National Urban League had made to improve hiring practices. He earned his teaching certificate from California State University at Sacramento in 1968. He taught 7th to 12th graders, until he found a position at Sacramento City College, teaching African American history. Coleman's advisors encouraged him to pursue a Ph.D. In 1973, he worked as an instructor at the University of Utah while pursuing his doctoral degree. When he graduated, he accepted positions in the University of Utah's administration, eventually turning his attention to teaching and research. Coleman's research and experience shows that the bigotry in the Mormon Church was mirrored in the prejudice in Salt

Lake City. The racial atmosphere has improved as the church has become more progressive in recent years.

National Urban League.

African American educators--California.

California State University, Sacramento.

General Mills, inc.

Mormon Church--History--20th Century.

University of Utah. College of Humanities.

Video Oral History Interview with Ronald Gerald Coleman, Section A2008_057_001_004, TRT: 0:28:15 2008/03/17

Ronald Coleman explains why Chaplain Allen Allensworth is one of his heroes. Chaplain Allensworth served as a bridge builder in Fort Douglas. He was articulate and hardworking; essentially easing the anxieties of the whites and making the blacks feel more welcome there. Coleman discusses his hopes and desires for the black community, he focuses on the negative life outcomes of black men of all ages. Coleman's legacy is maintained in the classes that he has taught and the students who went away with more knowledge about African American history than they came in with. Paula and Ronald have been married for thirteen years; he loves her because she trusts him and gives him a strong foundation. He is proud of all three of his children, especially their strong work ethic. He hopes that people will remember him as someone who made a difference in some people's lives.

Allensworth, Allen, 1842-1914

African American college teachers.

African American families--Utah--Salt Lake City.

Fort Douglas (Utah)