

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Freddi Evans

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Evans, Freddi Williams
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Freddi Evans,
Dates:	June 9, 2010
Bulk Dates:	2010
Physical Description:	5 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:22:48).
Abstract:	Author and music therapist Freddi Evans (1957 -) writes children's books based on African American history and has won several awards for her work including the Special Congressional Recognition for Outstanding Contributions to the Arts. Evans was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 9, 2010, in New Orleans, Louisiana. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2010_053
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Children's book author Freddi Williams Evans was born on February 13, 1957 and grew up in Madison, Mississippi. As a child, her parents, Reverend R. L. and Carrie Cotten Williams, traveled frequently across the United States. Evans studied piano from an early age and graduated from Tougaloo College with her B.A. degrees in music and psychology. While at Tougaloo, she also was able to travel to West Africa where she studied the traditional music of Ghana. Her love of travel and the arts influenced her desire to write her stories. She continued her education at Hahnemann University in Pennsylvania where she received her Masters degree in creative arts therapy with an emphasis in music.

Evans worked in Philadelphia before marrying and moving to New Orleans, Louisiana where she began working as a music therapist. She was a Fulbright Scholar twice, going to Zimbabwe in 1995 and South Africa in 2000. In addition to working as an arts educator and administrator for the Jefferson Parish Public School System, Evans worked as an independent consultant for various organizations including: Orleans Parish Public Schools, the Amistad Research Center at Tulane University, Louisiana State Department of Education and the Mississippi Arts Commission. In 2003, she authored her first children's book, *Bus of Our Own* which received many accolades including the 2004 Mississippi Book Award. Her second and third books followed in 2005 and 2008 with *The Battle of New Orleans: The Drummer's Story* and *Hush Harbor: Praying in Secret*. Her fourth book, *Come Sunday: New Orleans' Congo Square*, a history book for general audiences, is due in 2010.

Evans has received several awards for her work in education including the Mazie Malveaux VSA Award in 1998 for her service to Louisiana students with disabilities and the Special Congressional Recognition for Outstanding Contributions to the Arts in 2002.

Freddi Evans was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on June 9, 2010.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Freddi Evans was conducted by Denise Gines on June 9, 2010, in New Orleans, Louisiana, and was recorded on 5 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Author and music therapist Freddi Evans (1957 -) writes children's books based on African American history and has won several awards for her work including the Special Congressional Recognition for Outstanding Contributions to the Arts.

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:

Evans, Freddi Williams

Gines, Denise (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Evans, Freddi Williams--Interviews

African American authors--Interviews.

Music therapists--African American--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Carolrhoda Books, Inc. (Minneapolis, Minn.) Pelican Publishing Company; University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Occupations:

Music Therapist

Author

HistoryMakers® Category:

ArtMakers|MusicMakers

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 Freddi Evans, June 9, 2010. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 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 Freddi Evans, Section A2010_053_001_001, TRT: 0:29:16 ?

Freddi Evans describes her family's background. Evans' mother, Carrie Lena Cotten Williams, was born in February of 1925, in Madison, Mississippi. Evans talks about her mother's upbringing, her relationship with her grandparents, her family's history of land ownership, and her siblings. She also discusses her maternal great-grandfather's life as a slave in Mississippi, and his life after Emancipation. Evans' father, R.L. Williams, was also born in Madison, in November of 1926. He joined the U.S. Army, then became a Baptist minister, and continued his education at Belhaven College in Jackson, Mississippi. Evans describes her home and neighborhood in Madison, her experience at Rosa Scott Elementary School, and her interest in playing the piano from a young age.

African American families.

African American mothers--Mississippi--Madison.

African American fathers--Mississippi--Madison.

Childhood and youth--Activities--Mississippi--Madison.

African Americans--Education, Elementary--Mississippi--Madison.

Slavery--Mississippi.

Video Oral History Interview with Freddi Evans, Section A2010_053_001_002, TRT: 0:29:13 ?

Freddi Evans was born and raised in Madison, Mississippi. She attended Rosa Scott Elementary School, before attending Madison Ridgefield High School soon after it was integrated in the 1970s. Evans talks about her interest in math and her favorite teachers in elementary school, and her disappointing experience at her newly integrated high school. Evans was involved in extracurricular activities such as student council, band, and music. She describes her social life, her participation in summer programs, and traveling with her family in the segregated South. In 1973, Evans graduated from high school a year ahead of her class, and enrolled at Tougaloo College, where she majored in music and psychology. She also discusses her family's involvement in church, and her parents' jobs.

African Americans--Education--Mississippi--Madison.

School integration--Mississippi--Madison.

Childhood and youth--Activities.

Traveling--Southern States.

Tougaloo College.

African American churches--Mississippi--Madison.

Video Oral History Interview with Freddi Evans, Section A2010_053_001_003, TRT: 0:29:38 ?

Freddi Evans attended Tougaloo College from 1973 to 1977, where she majored in classical music and psychology. She describes her experience there, the music department, and her trip to Ghana for her research on the traditional music of Ghana. Evans describes the similarities in culture between West Africans and African Americans, particularly in the case of religion. After graduating from Tougaloo College, Evans attended Hahnemann University, where she earned a master's degree in music therapy. She talks about the field of music therapy, her marriage, and her two children. She also describes her work at the Juvenile Court Services in New Orleans, Louisiana, as the artistic administrator in the Jefferson Parish public school system, her Fulbright scholarships, and her trips to Africa and Japan. In 2003, Evans published her first children's book, called 'Bus of Our Own', based on her family's history in Madison, Mississippi.

Tougaloo College.
Traveling.
Hahnemann University.
African American families.
Music--Study and teaching.
Children's books.

Video Oral History Interview with Freddi Evans, Section A2010_053_001_004, TRT: 0:30:04 ?

Freddi Evans published her first children's book in 2003, called 'Bus of Our Own', based on her family's history in Madison, Mississippi. She describes the inspiration for her book; her uncles' school bus business in Madison, which transported the African American students to school. Evans talks about her children providing the inspiration for her to publish her first book, being published by Albert Whitman Publishers, and her second and third books, 'The Battle of New Orleans: The Drummer's Story' and 'Hush Harbor: Praying in Secret'. She also describes her experience during Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and challenges created by the aftermath.

Children's books.
African American families--History.
Albert Whitman & Company.
Hurricane Katrina, 2005.

Video Oral History Interview with Freddi Evans, Section A2010_053_001_005, TRT: 0:24:37 ?

Freddi Evans published her third children's book, 'Hush Harbor: Praying in Secret' in 2008. She describes the storyline of her book. Evans also describes the significance of Congo Square in New Orleans, Louisiana, to African American life during slavery. Evans talks about her involvement in civic life, her awards, her decision to major in classical music, her research role model from the University of Ghana at Accra, and her message to future generations. She closes the interview with reflections upon her legacy and her family's history in rural Mississippi.

Congo Square (New Orleans, La.).
Children's books.
University of Ghana--Role models.
African American families--Mississippi.