

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Jerry Fanion

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Fanion, Gerald A., 1931-2010
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Jerry Fanion,
Dates:	July 26, 2010
Bulk Dates:	2010
Physical Description:	2 uncompressed MOV digital video files (0:44:53).
Abstract:	Civil rights activist and city government administrator Jerry Fanion (1931 - 2010) helped organize the historic sanitation workers' strike in Memphis, Tennessee in 1968, and continued to be involved with the Civil Rights Movement throughout his life. Fanion was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 26, 2010, in Memphis, Tennessee. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2010_095
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Civil rights activist and city government administrator Jerry Fanion was born in 1931 and raised by Jesse and Lucille Fanion in Memphis, Tennessee. Fanion graduated from Booker T. Washington High School and began working for the U. S. postal service. As the Civil Rights Movement reached a fever pitch in the South, the Shelby County Community Relations Commission was founded in order to attempt to relieve racial tensions within the Shelby County community. Fanion began serving as director of the commission in the early 1960s, where he worked as a liaison between the Memphis government and the community of

Memphis.

During this time, Fanion also played a role in easing the lives of many Civil Rights Movement luminaries, including James Meredith and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., by running errands for them and trying to make them more comfortable as they passed through the city. Fanion constantly worked to smooth tempers and ease relations between people throughout some of the tensest periods in Memphis.

Fanion was involved with the sanitation workers' strike that took place in 1968, and worked to get the city government to recognize the sanitation workers' union. He was present at King's "*I've Been to the Mountaintop*" speech and was attacked by policemen during marches and arrested while leaving meetings on several occasions during the strike, in spite of his position in the city's government. He was also a member of The Invaders, a militant African American political organization associated with the sanitation strikers, which eventually merged with the Black Panther Party in 1969.

After King's assassination and the subsequent favorable settlement with the sanitation workers by the City of Memphis' government, Fanion went to work as a salesman for the Chevrolet Corporation, where he remained for the next twenty-three years and received numerous awards for successful salesmanship. Fanion died on July 30, 2010 at age seventy-eight years old.

Jerry Fanion was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on July 26, 2010.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Jerry Fanion was conducted by Larry Crowe on July 26, 2010, in Memphis, Tennessee, and was recorded on 2 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Civil rights activist and city government administrator Jerry Fanion (1931 - 2010) helped organize the historic sanitation workers' strike in Memphis, Tennessee in 1968, and continued to be involved with the Civil Rights Movement throughout his life.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The

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:

Fanion, Gerald A., 1931-2010

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Fanion, Gerald A., 1931-2010--Interviews

African American politicians--Tennessee

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Civil Rights Activist

City Government Administrator

HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers|PoliticalMakers

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 Jerry Fanion, July 26, 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 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 Jerry Fanion, Section
A2010_095_001_001, TRT: 0:19:05 2010/07/26

Gerald Fanion discusses his parents, Jesse and Lucille Fanion. Fanion is not able to provide additional information about their background. Fanion recalls growing up in Memphis, Tennessee, his family was very poor. Fanion remembers playing football for Booker T. Washington High School in Memphis, Tennessee, which he loved. Fanion mentions people who touched his life. Fanion's photo collection is presented and narrated. African American families--Tennessee--Memphis. Memphis (Tenn.). Civil rights activists--United States.

Video Oral History Interview with Jerry Fanion, Section
A2010_095_001_002, TRT: 0:25:48 2010/07/26

Fanion's photo collection is presented and narrated.