

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham

PERSON

Higginbotham, Evelyn Brooks,
1945-

Alternative Names: Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham;

Life Dates: June 4, 1945-

Place of Birth: Washington, District of Columbia,
USA

Residence: Auburndale, MA

Work: Cambridge, MA

Occupations: African American History Professor

Biographical Note

African American history professor Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham was born in Washington, D.C. in 1945.

Her father, Dr. Albert Neal Dow Brooks, was the secretary-treasurer for the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History and editor of the organization's Negro History Bulletin; her mother, Alma Elaine Campbell, a high school history teacher who later served as the supervisor for history in the Washington, D.C. public school system. Higginbotham received her B.A. degree in history from the University of Wisconsin in 1969 and her M.A. degree in history from Howard University in 1974. She went on to receive a certification in Archival Administration and Records Management in 1975 from the U.S. National Archives, and a certificate in quantitative methodology in Social Science in 1977 from the Newberry Library in Chicago. She went on to earn her Ph.D. degree in history from the University of Rochester in 1984.

From 1969 to 1971, Higginbotham taught American history and served as an eighth grade counselor at Francis Parkman Jr. High School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She then moved to Washington, D.C. where she taught American history and social studies at Woodrow Wilson High School. After working briefly as a manuscript research associate at the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center at Howard University from 1974 to 1975, Higginbotham served as professor of history at several institutions, including Dartmouth College, the University of Maryland, and the University of Pennsylvania. Higginbotham joined the faculty at Harvard University in 1993 as a professor of Afro-American Studies and African American Religious History. In 1998, she was named the Victor S. Thomas Professor of History and African American Studies. In 2006, Higginbotham was appointed chair of Harvard University's African American Studies department; and, in 2008, she served as acting-director of the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for African and African American Research.

Higginbotham was appointed as the Inaugural John Hope Franklin Professor of American Legal History at Duke University Law School.

Higginbotham is the author of *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (1993). She also updated and revised the late John Hope Franklin's African American history survey *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans* (2010). Higginbotham served as the editor-in-chief of *The Harvard Guide to African-American History* (2001), and was co-editor, with Henry Louis Gates, Jr., of the expanded, twelve-volume *The African American National Biography* (2012).

The Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASAALH) honored Higginbotham with the Carter G. Woodson Scholars Medallion in 2008 and the Living Legacy Award in 2012. She was awarded the Joan Kelly Memorial Prize in Women's History from the American Historical Association and the Letitia Woods Brown Memorial Award from the Association of Black Women Historians. In 2011, she received an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters degree from Howard University. Higginbotham is a Fellow of the American Philosophical Society, and was chosen by Harvard University to be a Walter Channing Fellow in 2003.

Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on April 25, 2013.

Related Entries

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

B.A.

Howard University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.A.

University of Rochester [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Ph.D.

Slowe Elementary School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

MacFarland Middle School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

[EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1958 to 1973]

Francis Parkman Jr. High School [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1978 to ?]

**American History teacher/Eighth-Grade
Counselor**

Woodrow Wilson High School [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1972 to 1974]

American History and Social Studies Teacher

Moorland-Spingarn Research Center [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1974 to 1975]

Manuscript Research Associate

Simmons College [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1976 to ?]

Part-Time Faculty

Dartmouth College [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1980 to 1982]

Instructor

University of Maryland, College Park [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1982 to 1986]

Assistant Professor, Afro-American Studies

University of Pennsylvania [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1986 to 1992]

Assistant Professor, American History

Princeton University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1991 to 1992]

Visiting Professor of Religion

Harvard University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1983 to ?]

**Professor of Afro-American Studies and African
American Religious History**

**Harvard University Guide to African-American
History** [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1993 to 2001]

Principal Investigator and General Manager

Harvard University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1967 to ?]

**Victor S. Thomas Professor of History and of
African American Studies**

**Harvard University Guide to African-American
History** [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 2001 to 2001]

Editor-in-Chief

Duke University Law School [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 2010 to 2011]

**Inaugural John Hope Franklin Professor of
American Legal History**

Harvard University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1955 to 1958]

Part-Time Faculty, Divinity School

**Harvard University Department of African and
African American Studies** [MEMBEROF]

[from 2006 to ?]

Chair