

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Lt. Gen. Larry Jordan

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	Jordan, Larry R., 1946-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Lt. Gen. Larry Jordan,
<b>Dates:</b>	February 12, 2013
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2013
<b>Physical Description:</b>	8 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:59:59).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Lieutenant general (retired) Lt. Gen. Larry Jordan (1946 - ) is the former Commanding General of U.S. Army Armor Center, Inspector General of the Army and deputy commander of U.S. Army Europe, in Germany. Jordan was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on February 12, 2013, in Fairfax Station, Virginia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2013_040
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Retired U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Larry R. Jordan was born on February 7, 1946 in Kansas City, Missouri. Jordan graduated from Central High School in Kansas City, Missouri in 1964 and was accepted in the United States Military Academy at West Point. In 1968, he received his B.A. degree in engineering from West Point and was commissioned into the U.S. Army as an armor officer. Jordan went on to earn his M.A. degree in history from Indiana University at Bloomington in 1975. His military education includes the U.S. Army Armor School, the U.S. Marine Corps Amphibious Warfare School, the U.S. Army Command and Staff College,

the National War College at National Defense University as well as the U.S. Army Ranger Course and the U.S. Army Airborne Course. Jordan also received a certificate for completing the Harvard University Program in National and International Security Management in 1992.

Throughout his thirty-five years of service with the U.S. Armed Forces, Jordan has been assigned to a variety of staff and command assignments at the company, battalion, brigade, and installation levels. In 1993, Jordan reported to Fort Benning, Georgia where he served as the commanding general of the U.S. Army Armor Center and School. Promoted to lieutenant general in 1996, Jordan was appointed as the Inspector General of the U.S. Army where he worked closely with the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Army. In 1999, Jordan deployed as the deputy commanding general of the U.S. Army in Europe and the Seventh Army in Germany. He deployed in subsequent overseas missions to Germany, the Republic of Vietnam, Kuwait, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. His last assignment from 2001 to 2003 was as the deputy commanding general of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command headquarters at Fort Eustis, Virginia. In 2003, Jordan became senior vice president of Burdeshaw Associates.

Jordan's military honors include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the Combat Infantryman's Badge as well as the Armor Association's Order of St. George and the Field Artillery Association's Order of St. Barbara.

U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Larry R. Jordan was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on February 14, 2013.

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## **Scope and Content**

This life oral history interview with Lt. Gen. Larry Jordan was conducted by Larry Crowe on February 12, 2013, in Fairfax Station, Virginia, and was recorded on 8 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Lieutenant general (retired) Lt. Gen. Larry Jordan (1946 - ) is the former Commanding General of U.S. Army Armor Center, Inspector General of the Army and deputy commander of U.S. Army Europe, in Germany.

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## **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®.

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## **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.

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## **Controlled Access Terms**

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### **Persons:**

Jordan, Larry R., 1946-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### **Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews

Jordan, Larry R., 1946---Interviews

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## **Organizations:**

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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United States. Army

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## **Occupations:**

Lieutenant General (Retired)

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

MilitaryMakers

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## **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 Lt. Gen. Larry Jordan, February 12, 2013. 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).

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## 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.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Lt. Gen. Larry Jordan, Section A2013\_040\_001\_001, TRT: 1:27:59 2013/02/12

Larry Jordan describes his family's background. Jordan's mother, Dorothy Elizabeth Johnson Jordan, was born in August, 1914, in Jefferson City, Missouri. Her father, Dr. Herbert Johnson, was a medical doctor who had trained at Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee in the early 1900s, and her mother, Gertrude McKim Johnson, was an educator. Elizabeth Johnson attended Emporia Teachers College, and then worked as a teacher in Kansas City, Missouri. Jordan's father, Napoleon Bonaparte Jordan, was born in May, 1915, in Hugo, Oklahoma. His parents, Clarence Jordan and Ethel Trimble, divorced in 1958, and Clarence then moved to Bakersfield, California, where he worked for the city. Jordan talks about his father's service in the Philippines as a corpsman in World War II, and his parents meeting in Kansas City while his father was in the U.S. Army.

African American families.

African American mothers--Missouri.

African American fathers--Tennessee.

African American grandparents.

Divorce.

World War, 1939-1945.

Video Oral History Interview with Lt. Gen. Larry Jordan, Section  
A2013\_040\_001\_002, TRT: 2:31:22 2013/02/12

Larry Jordan grew up in Kansas City, Missouri, where his family moved from a lower middle class black neighborhood to a predominantly white neighborhood in the 1950s. Jordan describes his childhood home and neighborhood and the layout of the city, and talks about his likeness to his parents, his younger sister, Joyce, and his grandmother. Jordan recalls the familiar sights, sounds and smells of Kansas City, including Arthur Bryant's Barbecue, professional baseball game days and segregation. He attended Booker T. Washington Elementary School where he showed an interest in science and reading. Jordan describes his fascination with the space age and his favorite childhood dog, Lady. He recalls the relatively peaceful integration of his elementary school, Alan B. Ladd School, but how the integration of Central Junior High School and Central Senior High School did not go as well. Jordan discusses the changing demographics of his neighborhood after integration, with the continued undercurrents of discrimination.

Childhood--Missouri--Kansas City.

Kansas City (Mo.)--Social life and customs.

Education, Primary--Missouri--Kansas City.

Segregation in education--Missouri--Kansas City.

Education, Secondary--Missouri--Kansas City.

Video Oral History Interview with Lt. Gen. Larry Jordan, Section  
A2013\_040\_001\_003, TRT: 3:29:29 2013/02/12

After the integration of schools in the late 1950s in Kansas City, Missouri, Larry Jordan attended Alan B. Ladd Elementary School. He describes his positive experience with integration at his elementary and high school level, Central Junior and Senior High Schools. Jordan talks about his academic performance in high school, where he graduated fourth out of 500 graduating students. He also participated in running track and in the ROTC program in high school. Jordan describes his interests, his favorite teacher, Mrs. Thumland, and his childhood jobs. He also discusses his parents' faith in the Baptist Church, the Civil Rights Movement, and his decision to attend the United

States Military Academy at West Point in 1964.  
Segregation in education--Missouri--Kansas City.  
Education--Missouri--Kansas City.  
United States. Army. Reserve Officers' Training Corps.  
African American churches--Missouri.  
College choice--United States.

Video Oral History Interview with Lt. Gen. Larry Jordan, Section  
A2013\_040\_001\_004, TRT: 4:29:31 2013/02/12

From 1964 to 1968, Larry Jordan attended the United States Military Academy at West Point, where he received a B.S. degree in engineering, and learned skills in time management and prioritization. In this section of the interview, Jordan describes his time at West Point, including his experience as a plebe, the academic and military training and curriculum, and the rigors of the academic and athletic load. He discusses the mentorship he experienced, the non-commissioned officers, and the lifelong bonds that were created. Jordan also reflects upon the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, and his experience as an African American student at West Point.  
Military education--New York (State)--West Point.  
United States Military Academy.  
Civil rights movements--United States.  
College students--Social aspects--United States.

Video Oral History Interview with Lt. Gen. Larry Jordan, Section  
A2013\_040\_001\_005, TRT: 5:30:27 2013/02/12

Larry Jordan graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1968. He describes his graduation ceremony, the civil unrest and riots in the U.S. in the 1960s and the Vietnam War. Following a sixty-day leave period in his hometown of Kansas City, Missouri, Jordan attended ranger training in Georgia, armor and tank training at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and was assigned to Fort Hood, Texas. Jordan met his future wife, Nannette Pippen, in Fort Hood, and they were married a few months later. From 1969 to 1970, Jordan served in the Vietnam War, where he was stationed at the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry north of Saigon. Upon his return to the U.S., Jordan was assigned as a company commander at Fort Riley, Kansas,

trained with the Marine Corps, and assigned to Fort Benning, Georgia. In 1973, the U.S. Army offered Jordan the opportunity to teach in the history department at West Point. In preparation for this position, Jordan earned his M.A. degree in history from Indiana University.

United States Military Academy.

Vietnam War, 1961-1975.

Fort Hood (Tex.)

Fort Riley (Kan.)

Indiana University.

Video Oral History Interview with Lt. Gen. Larry Jordan, Section A2013\_040\_001\_006, TRT: 6:30:52 2013/02/12

Larry Jordan served in the Vietnam War from 1969 to 1970. He describes the indigenous people of Vietnam and their views of American soldiers. Jordan received his master's degree in history from Indiana University in 1973. He describes graduate school, where his master's thesis focused on the black experience at West Point. From 1973 to 1978, Jordan taught history at West Point. He then attended Command and General Staff College (CGSC) in 1979, and was stationed in Germany from 1979 to 1982. Jordan describes his family's positive experience in Germany, his serving at the Pentagon in 1982, his promotion to lieutenant colonel, and his assignment as a battalion commander at Fort Hood. Jordan discusses the commemorative monument to the 761st Tank Battalion at Fort Knox, reflects upon the draft and the racial problems within the U.S. armed forces in the 1960s and 1970s. He also talks about his own close-knit unit in Vietnam.

Vietnam War, 1961-1975.

Indiana University.

Military education--New York (State)--West Point.

United States. Army. European Command.

United States. Army--African Americans--Social conditions.

Fort Hood (Tex.)

Video Oral History Interview with Lt. Gen. Larry Jordan, Section

A2013\_040\_001\_007, TRT: 7:29:05 2013/02/12

From 1983 to 1985, Larry Jordan served as the tank battalion commander at Fort Hood, Texas. He was then selected to attend the National War College, and describes his experience there. Jordan talks about his mentor, General Frank Franks, and serving as his Chief of Staff in Germany. Jordan also served in Operation Desert Storm, and reflects upon the war. In 1993, he was promoted to the rank of a 2-Star general and assumed command of Fort Knox, Kentucky. After serving as the deputy inspector general of the U.S. Army for a year and a half, Jordan became the inspector general, serving from 1996 to 1999. He also talks about Colin Powell and Norman Schwarzkopf, and his involvement with the Army Task Force Report on Extremist Activity.

Fort Hood (Tex.)

National War College (U.S.)

United States. Army. European Command.

Persian Gulf War, 1991.

Terrorism--Prevention--United States.

Video Oral History Interview with Lt. Gen. Larry Jordan, Section  
A2013\_040\_001\_008, TRT: 8:31:14 2013/02/12

Larry Jordan served as the Inspector General of the U.S. Army from 1997 to 1999. He describes his experience as inspector general and his views on the U.S. Army's approval of women for combat. Jordan then talks about his promotion to lieutenant general in 1997, and his third assignment in Germany, this time as the deputy commander of the U.S. Army's forces in Europe. He goes on to discuss the changes that were made to the training and doctrine command (TRADOC) after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Jordan retired from the U.S. Army as a 3-Star lieutenant general in 2003, and has continued to support the Army through his post-retirement activities. In this closing section of the interview, he talks about his family and his sons' careers, and reflects upon his life, career and legacy. Jordan also describes his hopes and concerns for the African American community and shares how he would like to be remembered. He closes the interview by describing his photographs.

United States.--Department of Defense--Officials and employees.

United States. Army. European Command.

African American generals.

African American families.

Reminiscing.